

SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS THIS FORTNIGHT



In this fast-paced world, people seldom have time to read the news every day. Fortnight Human rights update is a new INSECOOnline series aimed at disseminating a brief overview of National and International Human rights situation once in every two weeks. The series will be covering severe cases of Human rights violations Nationally and Internationally.

Human rights violations noted this fortnight have been enlisted below:

NATIONAL UPDATES

1. NATIONAL CONFERENCE AGAINST CASTE-BASED DISCRIMINATION

INSEC organized a National Conference against Caste-based Discrimination on the occasion of the 57th International Day against Caste-based and Racial Discrimination (21st and 22nd March, 2022) with the involvement of more than 100 people from all seven provinces of Nepal. 16-point Kathmandu declaration was adopted at the end of the conference in the effort of eliminating caste based discrimination.

Among others, the declaration calls upon the Government of Nepal to adhere to the fundamental rights of the Constitution of Nepal 2072 including the right against untouchability and discrimination (Article 24) as well as the right to equality (Article 18), the right of Dalits (Article 40) and the right to social justice (Article 42). Similarly, it also urge the government to implement the principle of zero tolerance for caste-based discrimination and effective implementation of Article 24 and other relevant laws and policies against untouchability and discrimination.

2. INFLECTION OF TORTURE AGAINAT A DALIT GIRL

A 16-year-old girl of Manthali Municipality, 6, Bhaluwajor was tied up with a rope and tortured for 21 hours by Sher Bahadur Shrestha, 63, on the pretext of entering into the house of a non-Dalit.

Accused Sher Bahadur Shrestha said that he had tied up the victim for stealing yogurt from his house and has demanded to bear the cost for purifying the house.

According to the victim, the accused hanged her for four hours, tied her to a pillar for 17 hours and was beaten using nettle leaves.

3. UNINTENDED PREGNANCIES AND ABORTION IN NEPAL

According to the report published by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), around half of the pregnancies in Nepal are unintended and approximately two-third of them ends up in abortion.

As per the report titled 'seeing the unseen' out of 1.2 million pregnancies in 2017, half of them were unintended and around 359,000 were aborted. It further states that 'the toll of these pregnancies is and has long been unseen.'

4. COMMISSION SET TO EXCAVATE SUSPECTED BURIAL SITES

Commission of Investigation on Enforced Disappeared Persons is all set to dig up the suspected burial sites of the victims of decade-long Maoist insurgency after seven years of its formation.

According to Gangadhar Adhikari, a member and spokesperson of the commission, they have received 60 spots where disappearance victims could have been buried. The term of existing teams of the commission will be expired on July 16. However, the team is planning to complete the exhumation before the expiry of their tenure.

5. MUSHAR CHILDREN DEPRIVED OF EDUCATION AND STATE BENEFITS

A 24-year-old woman from Dumariya, a Musahar settlement in Chandrapur Municipality-9, has four daughters. All of her daughters are deprived of education and welfare schemes allowed by the government as they haven't had their birth registered in the ward office due to unavailability of citizenship certificate of their mother.

According to the Mother, her daughters of age four to nine haven't been able to go to the schools and she hasn't been able to collect nutrition allowance from the local government for her youngest one as her birth isn't registered.

Kabita Majhi, mother of four don't have a birth certificate as both of her parents are dead.

6. WORLD HAPPINESS INDEX: NEPAL TOPS THE LIST

According to the World Happiness Report published by UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network, Nepal is the happiest country in South Asia. Nepal has been ranked 87th ahead of Bangladesh at 94, Pakistan at 121, Sri Lanka at 127, India at 137 and Afghanistan at 146. This report published by UN is based on the Gallup World Poll which asks respondents to evaluate their current life as a whole using the mental image of a ladder, with the best possible life for them as a ten and worst possible as a zero.

Dambar Chemjong, head of the Central Department of Anthropology at Tribhuvan University stated that the finding of report is problematic. He further added that the survey should give a real picture.

7. MERCILESS BEATING OF STUDENT IN DHADING

A student of grade 11, Sahadev Prasad Upreti, studying at Nilkantha Secondary School was beaten by his teacher Prakash Chhetri. The teacher took a leave and left the school on the same day.

The victim was taken to Dhading Hospital and was referred to Annapurna Neuro Hospital in Kathmandu for further treatment. Principal of the School, Dhurba Adhikari said that the incident was normal and the student was taken to the hospital for treatment. The victim’s family has not lodged any complaints against the accused.

Sources: INSEConline, The Himalayan Times, Setopati, The Kathmandu Post

INTERNATIONAL UPDATES

1. BAN ON HIJAB IN CLASS

Upholding the hijab ban decision, Chief Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi of that Karnataka High Court stated that ‘wearing hijab by Muslim women doesn’t form a part of essential religious practice’. He further added that the government holds power to prescribe uniform guidelines, dismissing various petition challenging the order.

As per the students who were challenging the ban in the court, wearing hijab was a fundamental right guaranteed under India’s constitution and an essential practice of Islam. Lawyer Anas Tanwir said that they are planning to challenge the decision in the Supreme Court.

2. 64 HOSPITALS ATTACKED SINCE INVASION IN UKRAINE : WHO

According to the World Health Organization, there have been around 64 attacks on health care facilities between February 24 and March 21 in Ukraine since the Russian invasion. Reportedly, there were two to three attacks each day killing at least 15 people.

Russia has also been accused of committing war crime by bombing children and maternity hospitals in the besieged city of Mariupol. According to the United Nations, nearly four million people have been forced to flee the country following the invasion.

3. RIGHT TO BE FORGOTTEN ONLINE : A FIGHT IN INDIA

An Indian actor Ashutosh Kaushik who was arrested for drunk driving. He has now filed a petition in the Delhi high court requesting for the removal of about 20 online news and video clips of his arrest highlighting a wider push in India for the legal ‘right to be forgotten online.’

A lawyer representing Kaushik, Akshat Bajpai stated that his client has already paid the price for a minor incident that occurred a decade ago and he shouldn’t be paying price every time someone googles his name. Reportedly, there are dozens of similar petitions in India seeking removal of information from the internet on the ground of no longer being relevant.

4. HIGH SCHOOLS REMAINS CLOSED FOR GIRLS IN AFGHANISTAN

Taliban has announced that the high schools would remain close for girls above class six until a plan is drawn up in accordance with Islamic law and Afghan culture. Girl students who went to the school in excitement were ordered to go home.

Education for girls has been a key demand from the International community for the future recognition of Taliban administration.

A student, whose name hasn’t been disclosed for security reason stated, ‘we all got disappointed and became hopeless when the principal told us to return home.’

5. UN CHIEF ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Antonio Guterres, UN Chief stated that the world is sleepwalking to climate catastrophe with major economies allowing carbon pollution despite the alarming need of drastic cuts. He added that the goal of capping global warming at 1.5 degrees Celsius is already on ‘life support.’

According to UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), 45% drop in the emissions of carbon by 2030 is required to meet the set goal.

6. AFGHANS IN NEED OF \$4.4 BILLION TO FIGHT HUNGER

In the launch of UN aid office’s biggest-ever funding drive for a single country, the head of UN stated that Afghanistan needs \$4.4 billion to fight food crisis in the country.

According to the UN Secretary-General, some people in Afghanistan have even resorted to sell their children and their body parts to generate money for food. Following the shift of focus on Russia-Ukraine war, around \$9 billion have been frozen by some wealthy nations in Afghan assets overseas so the Taliban cannot access them.

Sources: Aljazeera, BBC, OHCHR

Informal Sector Service Centre (INSEC)

Nagarjun Municipality-10, Shyuchatar, Kalanki, Kathmandu, Nepal

Tel: +977-01-5218770, Fax: +977-01-5218251

Email: insec@insec.org.np

Web site: www.insec.org.np, www.inseconline.org