

# 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 INSECOnline 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. STRAY BOMB BLAST IN KALIKOT

A three-year-old, Jharana Thapa, died on the spot after a stray bomb exploded on October 29, 2022, in Tilagufa Municipality-10 Ranawada. Saraswati Rana, five, died during treatment at the Karnali Provincial Hospital of Surkhet.

As per DSP Jaishawar Rimal, other three children have severely been injured in the blast. These children were airlifted to Karnali Provincial Hospital for their treatment. The explosion occurred while the children were playing in a field. Police officials have speculated that it could be an old socket bomb.

### 2. DISPUTE BETWEEN THE YOUTHS OF SIMIKOT: 10 INJURED

Five locals and five policemen were injured in a clash between the youths in Simikot rural municipality-3 and the youth of Khadhak village located in the same area. The dispute was caused during the inter-ward football tournament of Simikot Rural Municipality that started on October 25. There was a dispute between the youths of two wards.

DSP Krishnaraj Ojha informed that three policemen were injured when they were hit by stones thrown by locals. Sushila Rokaya, the vice chairperson of Simikot rural municipality, has alleged that despite the clash between the youths, her three sons were injured when the armed police force baton-charged her and her son had to be treated at the district hospital. DSP has notified that the person behind the incident is being searched and investigated.

### 3. A YEAR HAS PASSED, FARMERS NOT COMPENSATED YET

It has been a year since the news report regarding damage of crop production was published in INSECOnline, highlighting the issue of the Right to Food. However, the government has not been able to provide relief or compensation to the farmers for the damage they suffered. Most of the farmers in Province one have not been able to receive any compensation yet.

Rajendra Upreti, Spokesperson of the Ministry of Agriculture of the state informed that in the hilly districts including Jhapa, Morang, and Sunsari, the crops were severely damaged last year due to heavy rain.

Notably, 72 people lost their lives in Province one, from October 18 to 20 due to the flood and crops worth crore were damaged. Nevertheless, because of the lack of effective implementation of the Council of Ministers' decision, most of the farmers in Province one have not been able to get appropriate compensation.

### 4. PARSA- 63 POLLING STATIONS HIGHLY SENSITIVE, 10 POLLING CENTRES ADDED

After reviewing past elections, 63 out of 167 polling stations in Parsa have been listed as highly sensitive, 85 as sensitive and 19 as normal stations by the district security committee for the upcoming election this November.

Armed Police Troop no. 13 has done this classification on the basis of political activities in the district, geographical location, communication and accessibility of roads in the local elections. SP Tej Prasad Pokhrel, of Armed Police said that there will be no shortage of security in the district during the elections. For the election, 148 centres in 162 polling stations have been designated in the district.

### 5. EQUAL BENEFITS FOR EX GURKHAS

A recent tripartite talks for the equal pension and benefits of retired Gurkha soldiers couldn't reach to any conclusion. Nepal's Ambassador to the UK, Gyan Chandra Acharya led the Nepali delegation and Andrew Murrison, Minister for Defense led the UK side for the discussion. British side refused to touch the issue raised in the discussion stating that the UK government has just been formed and the minister is new and learning.

Reportedly, the parties have agreed on having another meeting but no date has been fixed yet. The government of UK has dismissed the ex-Gurkhas' claim seeking equal pension and pay for those who had retired or had been made redundant by the British Army before 2006. Now, the government is saying that it will only reconsider the demands on welfare and medical benefits.

Hunger strike had been staged by three former Gurkha soldiers demanding for equal pay, pension and perks as provided to the British nationals.

### 6. A MAN ARRESTED FOR RAPING SIX YEAR OLD CHILD

A man in Biratnagar has been arrested in the charge of raping a six-year-old girl child. Victim has been identified as the neighbour of accused

Sajan Kamar, 38. As per the police officials, the incident occurred in the last week of October when the child was alone at home. Deepak Shrestha, DSP, informed that the accused was reportedly an electrician. The case was taken to the law enforcement officials by the neighbours when the child shared about the incident with them.

Sources: INSECOline, Online Khabar and The Kathmandu Post

## INTERNATIONAL UPDATES

### 1. SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS AND BRAZIL ELECTION

Amid the election season in Brazil, Superior Electoral Court signed memorandum of understanding with Twitter, TikTok, Facebook, WhatsApp, Google, Instagram, YouTube, and Kwai in order to restrict the flow of misinformation/disinformation during the electoral process. However, the platform have largely failed to meet their responsibilities.

On the day of election, posts and videos containing mis/disinformation and allegation of election fraud circulated on social media. WhatsApp and Telegram groups with supporters of President Bolsonaro circulated message stating that 'if Bolsonaro didn't win the first round, it would be because of the fraudulent election'. As per the Superior Electoral Court, report of disinformation hiked by 1,671% in comparison to the 2020's municipal election.

### 2. MINIMUM WAGE DIFFERENCE AND THE POVERTY

Fair Labor Standards Act of US requires employer to pay minimum of \$2.13 an hour to the tipped workers and \$7.25 to the non tipped workers. Further, the employers are required to make up to the difference if the tipped workers' earning is less than \$7.25 an hour. Nervelessness, the second mandate is often ignored.

While some of the US states have abolished two-tiered minimum wage system (\$2.13 for tipped workers and \$7.25 for others), 43 states still allow sub-minimum wage for a tipped workers. Nearly 70% of these workers are female and disproportionately black and brown.

Revealed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, workers in the restaurant occupy four of the ten lowest paying jobs in the USA and are twice as likely to live in poverty.

Researches published by the Economic Policy Institute, One Fair Wage campaign and others have shown that tipped workers in states that eliminated the sub-minimum wage enjoy higher earnings, face less harassment on the job and are less likely to live in poverty. It is also expected to reduce race and gender inequities at the workplace.

### 3. GIRLS IN PAKISTAN DEPRIVED OF EDUCATION

As per the Human rights watch report titled 'Shall I Feed my Daughter, or Educate her? Barriers to Girl's Education in Pakistan,' the government of Pakistan has massively failed to educate the girls in the country. Report revealed that the girls in Pakistan have no access to education. Nearly 22.5 million of Pakistan's children are out of school among which 23% are girls and 21% are boys. By ninth grade, only 13% girls are still in the school.

HRW further revealed that many of the girls they interviewed are desperate to study. Some of the factors contributing to rise of this issue have been identified to be government's under investment in schools, lack of schools, prohibitive school fees and related costs, corporal punishment, and a failure to enforce compulsory education.

### 4. TWO FINGER TEST BANNED IN INDIA

Supreme court of India has ruled that anyone who conducts the regressive and invasive two finger test on survivors of sexual assault or rape will be guilty of misconduct. Two finger test involves the examination of vagina of rape survivors inserting two fingers to assess whether the girl/woman is sexually active.

Rulings in the past had found the test to be unscientific however, it was still in practice. Supreme Court has now directed the central and state government to ensure the 2014 guidelines are circulated to all hospitals, to conduct training workshops for healthcare providers and to review medical school curriculum.

### 5. NO COMPENSATION FUND FOR THE MIGRANT WORKERS

Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have been urging FIFA and QATAR to create a compensation fund for workers matching the \$440 million World Cup Prize money. Qatar has rejected this demand and the country's labour minister has called it a 'publicity stunt.' Al bin Samikh Al Marri, Labour Minister, stated that Qatar has a fund to deal with worker deaths and injuries. FIFA however, has revealed that there is 'ongoing dialogue' about the fund, but in the government's first public comment, Marri said the proposal was unworkable.

Marri also stated that 'if there is a person entitled to compensation who has not received it, they should come forward and we will help them.'

### 6. FIFTY UN COUNTRIES AGAINST CHINA'S TREATMENT TO UYGHURS

Total of fifty UN member states have issued a joint statement condemning the Chinese government's persecution of Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang. It was the largest group of states to publicly denounce Beijing's human rights violation in Xinjiang.

The statement urged the government of China to implement the recommendations of the groundbreaking August 31 report by the Office of the UN OHCHR. This includes taking prompt action to release all individuals arbitrarily deprived of their liberty in Xinjiang, and to urgently clarify the fate and whereabouts of missing family members and facilitate safe contact and reunion.

Sources: Human Rights Watch and Aljazeera

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