

HUMAN RIGHTS Newsletter



A Monthly publication of the National Human Rights Commission, India



Cover story

Health Insurance of Persons with Disabilities



Contents

1. Monthly Recap: From the desk of the Secretary General & Chief Executive	3
2. Cover story: Health Insurance of Persons with Disabilities	4
3. Consultations	5
4. NHRC Interventions	6
• <i>Suo motu</i> cognizance	6
• Recommendations for relief	8
• Payment of relief to the victims	9
• Case studies	11
• Spot enquiries	11
5. Field visits	13
• Visits by Commission and senior members	
• Visits by Special monitors and Rapporteurs	
6. Lectures	14
7. Training of Trainers programme for police officers	16
8. Internship programme	17
9. NHRC in international arena	17
10. News in brief	18

11. Forthcoming events	19
12. Human rights and NHRC in news	20
13. Complaints in July, 2023	20



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**“A man is but a product of his thoughts.
What he thinks he becomes.”**

— Mahatma Gandhi

Monthly Recap:

From the desk of the Secretary General & Chief Executive

Persons with disabilities face many challenges in their lives even though there are supporting laws and policies to address their issues. The Commission continues to engage with its core group on persons with disabilities besides holding consultations with various stakeholders to find ways to address them. One of the major areas of concern is providing seamless insurance coverage to persons with disabilities. In this context, the Commission recently organized a one-day open house consultation on the topic of 'Health Insurance of Persons with Disabilities,' in Mumbai on 25th August, 2023.

The cover story for this month is based on the discussions in this consultation, with a focus on the difficulties that people with disabilities encounter when approaching insurance providers, particularly for retail policies, the challenges that insurance companies face in offering their policies, the difficulties that regulatory bodies like the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) face in providing end-to-end insurance services, and the difficulties that the insurance chain faces in discussing and promoting the launch of standardized insur-

ance products created by the IRDAI for people with disabilities.

The Commission also organized a lecture of the noted scholar, spiritual thinker, author and humanitarian Dr. Chandra Bhanu Satpathy on human rights at its premises, which was a new experience giving deeper insight into cosmic energy, and its link with human rights.

The month of September, 2023 is going to be very significant for the Commission as it is gearing up for the Biennial Conference and Annual General Meeting of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) in the Asia Pacific region. The conference will be attended by Heads, members, and senior officials of the NHRIs of the Asia Pacific region, observer countries along with representatives from the Union and state governments, State Human Rights Commissions, Special Rapporteurs, Monitors, various institutions involved in the protection and promotion of human rights in the country, members of civil society and NGOs, human right defenders, lawyers, jurists, academicians, diplomats, representatives of international organizations, academic institutions, etc. Earlier, in 2002 and 2014,

such an AGM of Asia Pacific Forum and conference was held in India.

The Biennial Conference will celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR) and 30 years of National Human Rights Institutions and the Paris Principles, with a sub-theme on the environment and climate change.

A seminar on Business and Human Rights will also be organized around the same time. The seminar will be divided into two thematic sessions including, 'Harmonizing climate change, human rights and business and 'Advancing human rights in business and industry.'

This edition of the newsletter carries stories on several other regular activities of the Commission including *suo motu* interventions, regular hearing and disposal of cases recommending relief, field visits to old age homes, shelter homes, prisons, observation homes by its members, Special Rapporteurs and Monitors, human rights awareness training programmes conducted in the month of August.

- Bharat Lal
Secretary General & CEO, NHRC



Cover story

Health Insurance of Persons with Disabilities

Promoting and protecting the human rights of persons with disabilities has been a key area of concern for the National Human Rights Commission, India. It also has a Core Group on Persons with Disabilities to advise the Commission on various aspects related to rights, employment, and ease of movement for the *Divyangs* (persons with disabilities). In addition to this, the Commission has been organizing conferences and consultations with them and the other stakeholders to make recommendations to the government to bring about the necessary changes in the policies, programmes, and laws to ensure persons with disabilities also realize and enjoy their rights like any other citizen in the country.

In this context, a one-day open house consultation was organized by the Commission on 'Health Insurance for People with Disabilities (PwDs)' in Mumbai on 25th August, 2023. It was aimed at understanding the problems that disabled people in the nation face with health insurance. For this, the Commission collaborated with the National Centre for Promotion of Employment of Disabled Persons and the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India.

Inaugurating the consultation, Dr. Dyaneshwar M. Mulay, NHRC Member, said that 21 specific disabilities have been enlisted as fit for insurance coverage, which leaves many forms of disabilities unattended for insurance coverage.

It is essential to provide insurance to all persons with disabilities without discrimination. Disability has to be looked at as a condition and not as a disease. Insurance companies need to follow an accessible and affordable approach to providing insurance policies to PwDs. He also said that insurance products tailored to the needs of PwDs are necessary and that schemes like Aayushman Bharat and Swavlamban Yojana need to be extended to cover PwDs.

Dr. Mulay said that concerted efforts should be made to further empower differently-abled persons. He expressed hope that such consultations will pave the way for finding solutions to the problems being faced by specially-abled persons in getting insurance.



The NHRC, India Member, Dr. Dyaneshwar M. Mulay inaugurating the consultation on health insurance for persons with disabilities

The conference was divided into two thematic sessions. These included 'Identification of issues of PwDs in seeking insurance facilities' and 'Identification of provisions and issues faced by insurance companies for providing insurance to PwDs and way forward'. Shri Devendra Kumar Nim, Joint Secretary, NHRC co-chairing the technical session II, stressed the need of being empathetic while granting insurance policies to the persons with special needs especially in terms of exorbitant prices of the policies.

The discussions remained focused on the challenges being faced by persons with disabilities while approaching insurance providers specifically for retail policies, the challenges of insurance companies in providing their policies, regulatory authorities such as Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI), the challenges faced by insurance chains in providing end-to-end



insurance services, and to discuss and promote the launch of standardized insurance products developed by IRDAI for persons with disabilities.

The participants included the representatives of the IRDAI, Insurance providers and third-party administrators, key members from

the National Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, National Centre for Promotion of Employment of Disabled People (NCPEDP), the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and NHRC officials. ■

Consultations

HRD and NGO core group meeting

The National Human Rights Commission, NHRC, India considers Human Rights Defenders (HRDs), Civil Society Organizations (CDOs) and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) as its key partners in promoting and protecting human rights. For this purpose, it also has a Core Group on HRDs and NGOs to advise it on various aspects of human rights. In this connection, on 22nd August, 2023, it organized a second meeting of this Core Group this year.



NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice Shri Arun Mishra chairing the consultation with the Core Group of HRDs and NGOs

The NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice Shri Arun Mishra, chaired the meeting. Members, Dr. D. M. Mulay and Shri Rajiv Jain, Secretary General Shri Bharat Lal and senior officers participated in the discussions. He said that the NGOs and HRDs can play an important role in spreading awareness about the NHRC Advisories and help assess the status of implementation thereof. He expressed the hope that they would file complaints to the Commission on human rights violations. Some of the issues raised



A scene of the consultation with the Core Group of HRDs and NGOs in progress

by the Core Group of the HRDs and NGOs included child labour,

protecting rape survivors, and elimination of the brothel system. ■

NHRC Interventions

Suo motu cognisance

The media reports have been a very useful instrument for the National Human Rights Commission to know about the incidents of human rights violations. Over the years, it has taken *suo motu cognisance* of many such issues and brought succor to the victims of human rights violations. During August, 2023, the Commission took *suo motu cognisance* in six cases of alleged human rights violations reported by the media and issued notices to the concerned authorities for reports. Summaries of some cases are as follows:

Poor upkeep and management of Jamshedpur Juvenile Home (Case No. 1092/34/6/2023)

The Commission took *suo motu cognisance* of the report of its Special Rapporteur on the lack of adequate facilities, care and

rehabilitation plans for the inmates in the overcrowded Juvenile Justice Home, run by the Government of Jharkhand. The report stated, among others, that there have been violent fights among the groups of juveniles, shortage of staff, no counsellor, overcrowding, shortage of toiletry items, absence of CCTV surveillance, etc.

The Commission has issued notices to the Chief Secretary and the Secretary, Department of Women and Child Development, Government of Jharkhand, seeking a detailed report including;

- 1.) Whether, cases have been registered, if not, what steps have been taken to register



An inspection of Jamshedpur Juvenile Home in progress

cases due to torture indulged by the police personnel upon the juveniles and under what compulsions, police personnel have been deputed in the Juvenile Justice Home. The status of the cases, if registered?

ii.) What steps have been taken to install CCTV cameras in the common places in JJH due to which incidents of torture and beating up by the police personnel remained unnoticed?

iii.) Steps taken or proposed to be taken for improving the living conditions, including proper light, fan, adequate number of bed sheets, sufficient quantity of toilets for children and road map for adequate planning for each child for his welfare about their stay in the Juvenile Justice Home.

iv.) What steps have been taken to improve the kitchen condition and to provide clean and well-cooked food to the juveniles in a conducive and conjure atmosphere?

v.) Steps taken or to be taken to segregate the children of different age groups and also children suffered from severe and heinous crimes from petty offences.

vi.) Steps taken or to be taken to facilitate the removal of children of having age of more than 18 years from JJH since it is contrary to the JJ Act.

vii.) Steps taken or to be taken to reduce the overcrowding, including children staying beyond the sanctioned capacity of the JJH.

viii.) Steps taken or to be taken to improve the skill development of children, further study, adequate playground, and increase the number of teachers to adhere to the quality education, which is the need of the hour.

ix.) Road map for time-bound filling of posts, which remain vacant, under the JJ Act.

x.) Steps taken or proposed to be taken fix up the responsibility upon the Superintendent and District Welfare Officer as to why they are not visiting JJHR frequently by submitting their reports to the authorities concerned.

Witch hunting

(Case No.1110/34/22/2023)

The media reported on 22nd August, 2023 that a woman was subjected to physical torture, harassment and social boycott in the name of witch hunting in Balugram, District Latehar in Jharkhand. Reportedly, the woman was even beaten with sticks by the accused when villagers tried to save her. Considering this as a serious issue of violating human rights, the Commission has issued notices to the Chief Secretary, Government of Jharkhand and the Director General of Police, Jharkhand, calling for a detailed report on the matter.

Beating of a student by his classmates at the behest of his teacher

(Case No. 22539/24/57/2023)

On 25th August, 2023, the media reported that a private school teacher made an absurd reference to one of her students' faith and ordered his classmates to beat him. Reportedly, the boy's family has

said that he was beaten up for a mistake in the multiplication of tables in the class. The school is located at Khubbapur village in Muzaffarnagar district of Uttar Pradesh. A video of the incident went viral on 25th August 2023, leading to calls for action against the teacher and the school. The Commission has issued notices to the Chief Secretary and the Director General of Police, Uttar Pradesh calling for a detailed report on the matter.

Attack on a man asking him to leave the village

(Case No.1674/7/22/2023)

On 18th August, 2023, the media reported that a Hindu family in a Muslim-dominated village in the Palwal district of Haryana was allegedly attacked, threatened for life, and ordered to leave the village for sharing an anti-Rohingya post on social media. The man had reportedly supported the denial of citizenship to the people belonging to the Rohingya community. According to the media report, the victim resides in Sarai village, and three identified persons from the same village, along with others armed with sticks and country-made pistols, forcibly entered his house and started vandalising it. They threatened to kill the victim's family if they did not leave the village.

The Commission has issued notices to the Director General of Police, Haryana and the District Magistrate, Palwal, calling for a detailed report on the matter, including action taken against the alleged perpetrators, the status of the FIR registered in the matter, and preventive steps taken or to be taken to ensure that such incidents do not recur in future in the State.



Student hospitalized after severe beating by his teacher

(Case No.3613/30/5/2023)

On 16th August, 2023, the media reported that a student of a government school in Delhi was hospitalized after a severe beating by his teacher. Despite registering an FIR, no arrest was made by the police. The Commission has observed that despite several legislations, the incidents of corporal punishment continue with impunity, which is a cause of concern. Accordingly, it has issued notices to the Chief Secretary, Government of NCT of Delhi and the

Commissioner of Police, Delhi calling for a detailed report on the matter.

Death of student due to ragging

(Case No. 2436/25/5/2023)

On 11th August, 2023, the media reported that a first-year student of Jadavpur University, Kolkata, West Bengal became a victim of ragging, and died on 10th August 2023 after falling from the second-floor balcony of the varsity's hostel. Reportedly, the fellow students of the victim had tried to bring the matter to the notice of the Dean but unfortunately, their efforts went in vain. The

Commission has issued a notice to the Chief Secretary, Government of West Bengal calling for a report on the matter. A notice has also been issued to the Director General of Police, West Bengal regarding the status of the criminal case registered against all the responsible students and teaching/ non-teaching staff of the college concerned. A further notice has been issued to the Registrar, Jadavpur University to submit a detailed report regarding the steps taken for effective implementation of the recommendations of the Raghavan Committee report, affirmed by the Supreme Court of India, to solve the problem of ragging in the University. ■

Recommendations for relief

Hearing the cases of human rights violations and recommending relief to the victims in such matters, is one of the major functions of the National Human Rights Commission. It regularly takes up such cases and gives directions and recommendations to the concerned authorities

for relief to the victims. In August, 2023, besides the number of cases taken up daily by the Member Benches, 41 cases were heard by the Double Member Bench-I, 27 cases by the Double Member Bench-II and 23 by the Double Member Bench-III. Monetary relief of ₹ 104.35 lakh was recommended

for the victims or their Next of Kin (NoK) in the 25 cases, wherein it was found that public servants had either violated human rights or have been negligent in protecting them. The specific details of these cases can be downloaded from the NHRC website by logging the case number given in the table below:

S. No.	Case No.	Nature of Complaint	Amount (in ₹ lakh)	State/ UT
1.	79/33/13/2022-JCD	Death in judicial custody	05.00	Chhattisgarh
2.	891/30/9/2020-JCD	Death in judicial custody	05.00	Delhi
3.	638/7/19/2021-JCD	Death in judicial custody	05.00	Haryana
4.	1495/34/24/2021-JCD	Death in judicial custody	05.00	Jharkhand
5.	737/34/20/2019-JCD	Death in judicial custody	02.00	Jharkhand
6.	411/13/16/2019-JCD	Death in judicial custody	05.00	Maharashtra
7.	10/18/28/2021-JCD	Death in judicial custody	05.00	Odisha
8.	295/20/14/2021-JCD	Death in judicial custody	05.00	Rajasthan
9.	1538/25/5/2016-JCD	Death in judicial custody	07.00	West Bengal



S. No.	Case No.	Nature of Complaint	Amount (in ₹ lakh)	State/ UT
10.	338/25/26/2021-JCD	Death in judicial custody	07.00	West Bengal
11.	692/25/5/2021-JCD	Death in judicial custody	05.00	West Bengal
12.	859/25/22/2020-JCD	Death in judicial custody	05.00	West Bengal
13.	317/3/3/2022	Children	02.00	Assam
14.	3941/4/32/2022	Death due to consumption of illicit liquor	04.00	Bihar
15.	642/33/6/2018	Hazardous employments	04.00	Chhattisgarh
16.	4289/30/9/2021	Alleged custodial deaths in judicial custody	07.00	Delhi
17.	1617/36/2/2020-AD	Alleged custodial deaths in judicial custody	04.25	Telangana
18.	492/18/3/2023	Death in custody of forest officials	07.00	Odisha
19.	3999/18/27/2022	Death due to electrocution	05.00	Odisha
20.	1721/24/39/2023	Corporal punishment in schools/ other education institutions	00.60	Uttar Pradesh
21.	1867/24/63/2023	Illegal arrest	00.50	Uttar Pradesh
22.	24874/24/69/2022-WC	Indignity of women	01.00	Uttar Pradesh
23.	29842/24/45/2019	Medical negligence	02.00	Uttar Pradesh
24.	1127/35/4/2022	Children	03.00	Uttarakhand
25.	2716/1/29/2022	Children	03.00	Andhra Pradesh
		TOTAL	1,04,35,000	

Payment of relief to the victims

The Commission closed 38 cases, either on receipt of the compliance reports and proof of payment from the public authorities or by giving other

observations/directions. An amount of ₹ 1,77,100/- was paid to the victims or their Next of Kin (NoK) on the recommendations of the Commission. The specific

details of these cases can be downloaded from the NHRC website by logging the case number given in the table below:

S. No.	Case No.	Nature of Complaint	Amount (in ₹ lakh)	State/ UT
1.	3535/4/25/2021-JCD	Death in judicial custody	10.00	Bihar
2.	79/33/13/2022-JCD	Death in judicial custody	05.00	Chhattisgarh
3.	26/6/1/2020-JCD	Death in judicial custody	03.00	Gujarat
4.	547/6/21/2021-JCD	Death in judicial custody	05.00	Gujarat
5.	638/7/19/2021-JCD	Death in judicial custody	05.00	Haryana



S. No.	Case No.	Nature of Complaint	Amount (in ₹ lakh)	State/ UT
6.	111/34/11/2020-JCD	Death in judicial custody	05.00	Jharkhand
7.	1495/34/24/2021-JCD	Death in judicial custody	05.00	Jharkhand
8.	393/34/16/2021-JCD	Death in judicial custody	05.00	Jharkhand
9.	561/12/44/2021-JCD	Death in judicial custody	05.00	Madhya Pradesh
10.	411/13/16/2019-JCD	Death in judicial custody	05.00	Maharashtra
11.	3/14/14/2020-JCD	Death in judicial custody	05.00	Manipur
12.	18/17/5/2020-JCD	Death in judicial custody	03.50	Nagaland
13.	606/22/31/2021-JCD	Death in judicial custody	05.00	Tamil Nadu
14.	13196/24/3/2019-JCD	Death in judicial custody	05.00	Uttar Pradesh
15.	17864/24/14/2021-JCD	Death in judicial custody	05.00	Uttar Pradesh
16.	30100/24/44/2017-JCD	Death in judicial custody	05.00	Uttar Pradesh
17.	3197/24/53/2019-JCD	Death in judicial custody	03.00	Uttar Pradesh
18.	33437/24/21/2019-JCD	Death in judicial custody	10.00	Uttar Pradesh
19.	5863/24/53/2019-JCD	Death in judicial custody	05.00	Uttar Pradesh
20.	7491/24/43/2021-JCD	Death in judicial custody	05.00	Uttar Pradesh
21.	1538/25/5/2016-JCD	Death in judicial custody	07.00	West Bengal
22.	1937/25/21/2020-JCD	Death in judicial custody	05.00	West Bengal
23.	859/25/22/2020-JCD	Death in judicial custody	05.00	West Bengal
24.	166/33/14/2019-PF	Death in firing	05.00	Chhattisgarh
25.	1348/1/11/2021	Death in police firing	10.00	Andhra Pradesh
26.	107/3/23/2020	Custodial violence	03.00	Assam
27.	36/4/5/2022	Inaction by the State/ central Govt. officials	02.50	Bihar
28.	3788/30/5/2019	Non- registration of FIR	01.00	
29.	874/12/8/2021	Irregularities in Govt. hospitals / primary health centres	05.00	Delhi
30.	902/13/37/2020	Failure in taking lawful action	01.00	Maharashtra
31.	1579/1/17/2020	Abuse of power	02.00	Andhra Pradesh
32.	3707/18/17/2022	Death due to electrocution	07.00	Odisha
33.	4233/18/5/2022	Death due to electrocution	05.00	Odisha
34.	1721/24/39/2023	Corporal punishment in schools/ other educational institutions	06.00	Uttar Pradesh
35.	22453/24/71/2021	Harassment of prisoners	07.50	Uttar Pradesh
36.	29842/24/45/2019	Medical negligence	02.00	Uttar Pradesh
37.	6215/24/30/2020	Children	01.00	Uttar Pradesh
38.	1127/35/4/2022	Children	03.00	Uttarakhand

Case studies

In many cases, the Commission received compliance reports from the respective state authorities. Summaries of such cases are as under:

Death after police assault

(Case No. 1579/1/17/2020)

The matter pertained to the death of a 26-year-old man after he was allegedly beaten by police for travelling without a mask at Chirala town, Prakasam district, Andhra Pradesh in 2020. On the basis of the report, the Commission found that the human rights of the victim were violated due to the lackadaisical behavior of the police personnel. The Commission recommended the Government of Andhra Pradesh to pay Rs. 2.00 lakh as relief to the NoK, which was paid.

Denial of post-natal care at hospital

(Case No. 6215/24/30/2020)

The matter pertained to the death of a newborn child due to denial of post-natal care by the Govt. Hospital, Gautam Budh Nagar, Uttar Pradesh in December, 2019. Based on the material on record, the Commission found that the child was delivered at

home on 3rd December, 2019, as the mother could not reach the hospital. The father of the newborn immediately took his wife and the infant to the government district hospital in Noida for post-natal care but the hospital officers refused to attend her. The child was suffering from some complications, so the parents took her to the hospital again on 5th December, 2019 but by this time, the complications had increased and the baby was unable to open one of her eyes. The Commission observed that there was not only medical negligence but also harassment of the parents of the newborn child. A notice was also issued to the staff of the hospital for negligence. Therefore the Commission recommended that the Government of Uttar Pradesh pay relief of Rs. 1.00 lakh to the victims of human rights violations, which was paid.

Death due to torture

(Case No. 902/13/37/2020)

The matter pertained to the death of a man after he was harassed, blackmailed, tortured and given threats by his four business partners in 2020. It was alleged that the police were not doing a fair investigation into the matter. Given the serious allegations made by the relatives of

the deceased against police officials, the Commission recommended the matter to the Home Secretary, Government of Maharashtra for further investigation. Based on the report, the Commission found that the human rights of the victim were violated due to the lackadaisical behaviour of the police personnel. The Commission recommended the Government of Maharashtra to pay Rs. 5,00,000 lakh as relief to the NoK, which was paid.

Death of pregnant woman at hospital

(Case No. 29842/24/45/2019)

The matter pertained to the death of a pregnant woman at Govt. Hospital Tamkuhi Raj in Uttar Pradesh due to the negligence of doctors and staff on 23rd September, 2019. Based on the material on record, the Commission found that due to the strike of the ambulance services, the victim could not be transported to a higher set-up as per the medical protocol, which resulted in her death. It held that there was negligence on the part of the Government hospital and recommended the Government of State Uttar Pradesh to pay Rs 2 lakh as relief to NoK, which was paid. ■

Spot enquiries

The following spot enquiries were conducted by the Commission's officers in its Investigation Division:

1.	1313/1/5/2019	Despite directions of the Commission, the continued misuse of power violating human rights of the complainant by police in East Godavari, Kakinada Districts and Secundrabad City of Andhra Pradesh.	1 st -4 th August, 2023
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2.	709/20/22/2022	Death of a youth due to torture by police personnel of PS Surpaliya, District Nagaur, Rajasthan.	1 st -4 th August, 2023
3.	2968/30/11/2023	The Station House Officer Vivek Vihar police station in Delhi, abused, assaulted, unlawfully searched the senior citizen's house, and forcibly took him to the police station.	16 th – 18 th August, 2023
4.	4/37/2/2021	Police inaction on a complaint of assault in Leh.	17 th – 18 th August, 2023 21 st – 25 th August, 2023
5.	3524/30/7/2023	Girls were teased and harassed in Kidwai Nagar School(s), Delhi, by rowdy youth/miscreants, and local police took no action despite complaints from the parents of the girls and the Principal of the school.	22 nd – 24 th August, 2023



Spot enquiry in progress



Spot enquiry in progress

Field visits

The National Human Rights Commission, India, has appointed 15 Special Rapporteurs to keep watch on the human rights situations in different geographical zones in the country. They visit shelter homes, prisons,

observation homes, etc. and submit reports to the Commission on their observations and suggestions for further course of action. Besides this, the Commission has also appointed 12 Special Monitors who have been assigned thematic issues

of human rights to keep a watch on the related development in the country and report the Commission accordingly. During August, 2023, several places were visited by the Special Rapporteurs and Special Monitors.

Special Rapporteurs

On 1st - 3rd August, 2023 and between 7th - 10th August, 2023, Smt. Suchitra Sinha (Retd. IAS) visited various institutions in Jamshedpur, Ranchi, Gumla and Chaibasa in Jharkhand. It was observed that in Chaibasa district Jail, inmates were not satisfied with the functioning of the District Legal Aid Committee, however, other conditions appeared to be satisfactory. She also visited a residential school for the students of the Scheduled Castes in Kamre, and the residential school for the students of Scheduled Tribes in Baridih, Ranchi and observed that living conditions were miserable. The suggestions for required improvements have been reported for consideration by the Commission.

From 1st - 12th August, 2023, Smt. Nirmal Kaur (Retd. IPS) visited Patna and Saharsa in Bihar in connection with the matter of young children from Bihar being taken to Madrasas in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. The enquiry revealed that many districts of Bihar are sending their children to Madarasa education outside the State. Seventeen districts of the State are severely affected. The children had brutal beating marks and following the intervention they were taken to a hospital. The observations have been reported for consideration by the Commission.

From 14th - 19th August, 2023, Shri Umesh Kumar (Retd. IPS) went for the inspection of the Community Health Centre at Sohra (Cherrapunji) and a children's home run by an NGO at Shillong in Meghalaya, and to present a report on the areas of the required improvements for consideration of the Commission.

From 21st - 26th August, Dr. Ashok Kumar Verma (Retd. IPS) visited Central Jail, Kot Bhalwal, Jammu and District Jail, Udhampur. He took stock of the human rights situation and the facilities for the inmates in the jails to suggest areas of improvement for the consideration of the Commission to make necessary recommendations to the concerned authorities.

From 28th - 31st August, 2023, Shri Mahesh Kumar Singla (Retd. IPS) visited Observation Homes in Faridabad and Delhi under the Dept. of Women & Child Development. During his visit, he observed that there should be more focus on giving education to the inmates, and there is a requirement for teachers, classrooms, and study materials. He also observed that vocational classes as per market demand needed to be introduced besides some other areas of required improvement for the consideration of the Commission.



Special Monitors

From 1st-4th August, 2023, Shri Balkrishan Goel visited the Observation Homes, CCIs, Old Age Homes & Govt. Schools, AWC etc. located at Raipur, Mahasamund, Durg, and Rajnandgaon in Chhattisgarh. His thematic areas of observation, inspection and reporting include the issues related to child rights, the rights of elderly citizens and the situation on the ground. From 22nd – 25th August, 2023, Shri Prem Singh Bisht, (Retd. IPS), visited Public Sector Units prone to inspect human rights violations in Rajasthan. His thematic areas of observation, inspection and reporting include the issues related to business and human rights and the situation on the ground.

From 6th-11th August, 2023, Shri Sudhir Choudhary, (Retd. IPS) visited Juvenile Home Detention, Anti Human Trafficking Units in Ambala, Karnal, Faridabad and Gurgaon in the State of Haryana. His thematic areas of observation, inspection and reporting include the issues related to human trafficking and the situation on the ground.

From 9th-12th August, 2023, Dr. Yogesh Dube visited Mangaluru & a field visit to Block / Taluka Kadaba, Dakshina Kannada district (Karnataka). His thematic areas of observation, inspection and reporting include the issues related to women and disability rights and the situation on the ground.

Lectures

Understanding human rights

The National Human Rights Commission, India organized a lecture of the noted scholar, spiritual thinker, author and humanitarian Dr. Chandra Bhanu Satpathy on human rights at its premises in New Delhi on 7th

August, 2023. NHRC Chairperson, Justice Shri Arun Mishra, Members, Dr. Dnyaneshwar. M. Mulay and Shri Rajiv Jain, Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal, senior officers and staff were present.

Through analogies and questions, Dr. Satpathy dwelled deep into a holistic understanding of human rights. The true embodiment of democracy can be described as optimum happiness to the maximum number of people for the

longest period in a society. Opinions masquerading as knowledge do not necessarily bring the essence of life to the fore; instead open new complexities. In this context, he said that the internet has done many goods but it has to be used and accessed with caution lest it becomes a reason for violation of human rights.

He said that human rights cannot be understood in isolation but about whatever is in this universe; it is to be understood with empathy and not by sympathy alone. He said that the idea of perfection doesn't work as life is constantly evolving and that the concept of human rights is not new but existed since the birth of humankind. It can be better understood by reasoning whether human rights call for sympathy or empathy and whether these have the genesis in our duties or rights as human beings.

Dr. Satpathy said that without addressing the root cause behind the violation of the rights of the



Noted spiritual thinker Dr Chandra Bhanu Satpathy delivering a lecture on human rights at NHRC, India

people, one-time help might not address the problem relating to the rights to food, drinking water, livelihood, life with dignity etc. The proper rehabilitation of the victim of human rights violation is necessary to ensure that the person does not fall back into the trappings of the vagaries of his existence. Providing viable solutions to improve the overall situation using

education, and livelihood opportunities, among others, is necessary. The NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice Shri Arun Mishra said that Dr. Satpathy's books give deeper insight into cosmic energy, and its link with human rights has motivated several people across the globe to understand the concept of life and dharma. ■

Gender sensitization

On 17th August, 2023, the National Human Rights Commission, NHRC, India organized a gender sensitization program for its officers and staff. Inaugurating it, Shri Bharat Lal, Secretary General, NHRC said that ensuring a safe and respectful workplace culture is key to enhanced participation of women in the economic growth of the country. Prof. Ritu Gupta, Director, CBFL, NLU, Delhi, as the guest expert, said that overcoming gender stereotypes needs to be avoided in our day-to-day conversa-



NHRC, India Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal addressing the gender sensitization programme

tions. She gave examples of avoidable expressions and

mindsets, which undermine the dignity of women at workplaces. ■

Training of Trainers programme for police officers

The National Human Rights Commission, NHRC, India, organized its first five-day residential 'Training of Trainers' programme on Human Rights for the officers of the different State/UT police organizations on 21st August, 2023. The NHRC Chairperson Justice Shri Arun Mishra, inaugurated it in the presence of Member Shri Rajiv Jain, Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal and senior officers. The training module has been developed by the Commission's officers in its Investigation Division after wide-ranging discussions with various stakeholders, including the Bureau of Police Research & Development (BPR&D).

Justice Mishra said that training is very significant in every professional field to update knowledge and upgrade skills to improve performance. He said that police personnel play a major role in implementing law & order and the criminal justice system. Therefore, there is always pressure on them to perform. Human rights have to be

given utmost importance in the line of their duty. He also said that even the accused has human rights, which are to be respected.

Referring to the challenges posed by the internet-aided dark web, e-commerce frauds, data hacking, trafficking, etc., he said that the lawbreakers are more advanced than the researchers. There is a need to put in place a solid mechanism for checking these offences. It was the first residential training

course in the series of four courses planned, with one such to be conducted in each quarter of the year. Forty police officers of the level of SPs, Addl. SPs, Dy. SPs were shortlisted from 20 States and 1 Union Territory to attend. The expected outcome of this training course is to prepare the first batch of trainers with a better understanding of human rights, who will be deployed by their respective organizations to impart human rights training to their colleagues. ■



NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice Shri Arun Mishra inaugurating the Training of Trainers programme for police officers



NHRC, India Chairperson, Members and senior officers with the participants of Training of Trainers programme

Internship programme

The National Human Rights Commission, India organized its 15-day Online Short Term Internship programme from 21st August, 2023. 85 undergraduate and post-graduate level students from different parts of the country were selected for the internship. It was inaugurated by the NHRC Member Dr. D. M. Mulay in the presence of Shri Bharat Lal, Secretary General and other senior officers.

77 interns completed the internship and they were exposed to various aspects of human rights through the interactive sessions addressed by the NHRC Members, senior officers, core group members, senior officers representing the



social sector Ministries, armed forces, and representatives of

regulatory bodies, experts and civil society organizations. ■

NHRC in the international arena

On 29th & 30th August, 2023, NHRC Member Shri Rajiv Jain and Joint Secretary Shri Devendra Kumar Nim

addressed the participants of the workshop on 'Advancing the Human Rights of Older Persons in Asia Pacific' in Manila. On the

second day, a draft convention on 'Human Rights of Older Persons' was also discussed during the workshop. ■



NHRC, India Member, Shri Rajiv Jain and Joint Secretary, Shri D. K. Nim addressing different sessions of the workshop

News in brief

On 8th August, 2023, Dr. Vijay Kumar Datta, Chairperson, Madheshi Commission, Nepal visited NHRC, India and met with the Chairperson, Justice Shri Arun Mishra, Members, Dr. D. M. Mulay, Shri Rajiv Jain and senior officers. They had insightful discussions on the functioning of the Commission and various human rights issues.



On 27th August, 2023, the NHRC Registrar (Law), Shri Surajit Dey addressed a seminar on 'Access to Justice and Legal Aid' organized by the 'Human Rights Front India' at Puri, Odisha. He said that access to justice strengthens the rule of law, and social cohesion and promotes trust in institutions of governance. It ensures that human rights violations are addressed, perpetrators are held accountable and victims receive restitution. Shri Dey said that access to justice is not just a legal concept, but it's a vital human rights mechanism that underpins a fair, just, equitable and rule-based society. It ensures that no one is left behind to get affordable, easy and reliable justice.



On 29th August, 2023, NHRC Director, Lt Col Virender Singh addressed a National sensitization workshop on 'Module for holistic psychosocial well-being of LGBTQIA+ community' organized by the National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences, NIMHANS at Bengaluru. He emphasized that sensitization of the LGBTQIA+ community with a human rights perspective is necessary. In this connection, he also released a module prepared by NIMHANS.



Forthcoming events

Human rights defenders and NGO core group meeting

On 5th September, 2023, the NHRC, India, will organize a meeting of its Core Group on Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) and NGOs. It will be the third meeting this year. The group was constituted to advise the Commission on the issues of human rights.

28th Annual General Meeting and Biennial Conference of the APF

The National Human Rights Commission, India, will host the 28th Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Biennial conference of the National Human Rights Institutions of Asia

Pacific in collaboration with the Asia Pacific Forum (APF) at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi, on 20th – 21st September, 2023.

Besides the representatives of NHRIs of 25 countries from the Asia Pacific region, the conferences will also be attended by five observer member NHRIs of Asia Pacific Forum, other participants including the Secretary of Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GAHNRI), its Geneva representative, National Institutions and Regional Mechanisms Section (NIRMS) Chief, APF Secretariat, LLBW & Partners- Auditor, Pacific Community, representatives from governments, civil society, academics and UN agencies.

The Asia Pacific Forum was established in 1996 with the collaboration of five NHRIs including the NHRC, India, to encourage the formation of independent NHRIs in the Asia Pacific region and to help them in their work to promote and protect human rights as effectively as possible.

NHRC Foundation Day

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India will celebrate its 30th Foundation Day on the 12th October, 2023. The celebration is a reminder of the Commission's commitment to the cause of protection and promotion of human rights.

Human rights and NHRC in news

During August, 2023, the Media & Communication Wing of the Commission prepared and issued 11 press releases. 2,851 news clippings on various human rights issues were culled out from different/select editions of major English and Hindi

newspapers and some news websites out of which in 582 news clippings a reference was made to the NHRC. News clippings related to the incidents of alleged human rights violations were brought to the notice of the Commission. News stories having specific reference to

the interventions by the NHRC can be seen at 'NHRC-in-News' on the website of the Commission. 'NHRC X handle' was abuzz with 253 posts including threads & re-posts on the Commission's interventions & activities.



Complaint management in August, 2023

Complaints received	6,944
Disposed off	6,994
Under consideration of the Commission	7,719

Important telephone numbers of the NHRC for filing complaints

Toll Free No.: 14433 (Facilitation Centers)

Fax No.: 011-2465 1332

For Filing online complaints: www.nhrc.nic.in, hrcnet.nic.in, Common Service Centres

Email: irlawnhrc@nic.in (For complaints), cr.nhrc@nic.in (For general queries/ correspondence)

Focal point for Human Rights Defenders:

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