



HUMAN RIGHTS NEWSLETTER

A Monthly Publication of
the National Human Rights Commission, India

ISSN 0973 - 757X



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*"To give pleasure to a single heart by a single act is better than |
a thousand heads bowing in prayer" – Mahatma Gandhi*

Meeting of Core Group members on Bonded and Migrant Labour

The Supreme Court of India entrusted the National Human Rights Commission, NHRC, India with the responsibility of monitoring and overseeing the implementation of its directions as well as provisions of the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976 in all States/UTs.

Accordingly, the NHRC took stock of the situation and the following charter of activities were taken up by the Commission on the issue of Bonded Labour:

1. Constituted Core Group on Bonded Labour to review existing Act, Rules and Schemes of the Central and State Governments on Bonded Labour;

2. Organized National Level Seminars and Regional workshops in Bonded Labour prone States to sensitize various Stakeholders;

A Meeting of Core Group members on Bonded and Migrant Labour was scheduled for 1st May, 2020: -

The main issues to be discussed in the meeting were:

- a. Issues for clarification regarding authentic interpretation of the Bonded Labour (Abolition) Act, 1976
- b. Issues of concern in Implementation of Central sector Scheme for rehabilitation of Bonded Labourers-2016.
- c. Clarifications on Central

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Identification and Rescue of Bonded Labourer and Prosecution of Offender, circulated by Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India on August 17, 2017.

- d. Observations on State Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) on Bonded Labour brought out by the State Government of Karnataka on 10th February 2020.

However, due to the prevalent corona lockdown, this meeting was postponed. It will be organized through Video Conferencing.

Conference on Integrating Women's Development with Nation's Development

The NHRC, India organised a conference on Role of Stakeholders held on 17th January, 2020 at NALSAR, Hyderabad.

The main objectives of the conference were: (i) to raise awareness among various stakeholders of the various issues specific to women's development, (ii) to start a dialogue among stakeholders at various levels – students, academics, practitioners – of the ways in which women's development shall positively impact the development of the country, (iii) to attempt to identify various areas that need the attention of society and law-making bodies which shall bring about the results aforementioned.

The conference saw the participation from practitioners,

academics, women as entrepreneurs, industry experts and law students and others civil society members to discuss issues under the following broad themes; (1) Sociological Dimensions, and (2) Women's 21st Century Stories. Each of the panel discussions were further divided in to sub-themes. The themes for the paper presentation sessions were (1) Economics Through the Lens of Feminism, and (2) Women in Democracy.

The Commission has approved the recommendations of this conference. Some of the major recommendations are as follows:

1. To conduct research to study the impact of economically independent/ working women on relation between mother

and children, relation between father and children, elderly in families, relatives, financial/ social status of family, relations between husband and wife etc.

2. Proposal for universal basic income should be made. In order to alleviate the issue of gender inequality across the country, the universal basic income is crucial to address the issue of not paying women for the unquantifiable tasks that they regularly perform. Wage disparity in unorganized sector should be tackled by strict implementation of related laws and breaking social stereotypes surrounding women.
3. Proper and prompt redressal of violations of rights of women should be done, especially at

workplaces. In cases of human rights violations, putting the victim as the centre of the criminal justice system (instead of merely focusing on the perpetrators) might be a more effective way of helping women, especially the ones who fall a prey to the cruelties of migrations gone wrong.

4. Suitable infrastructure in schools and at workplaces

should be setup for maintenance of hygiene and sanitation. This will also discourage dropout of girl students from schools.

5. Women's education and entrepreneurship should be encouraged. This is the single most important tool for bringing out change.
6. Self-help groups should be

encouraged. In relation to the role of women, self-help groups could act as a tool for women's development and help in building confidence in them.

7. Encouraging men to share the responsibility of household as women are sharing the outside responsibilities, by awareness programs.

Important Interventions

The Commission took suo motu cognizance in 10 cases of alleged human rights violations reported by media during 1-31st May, 2020 and issued notice to the concerned authorities for reports. Summary of the cases is as follows:

Case No. 1023/1/21/2020

NHRC notice to Andhra Pradesh Government and Centre over deaths and sufferings to several people due to styrene gas leakage in Vizag District

The National Human Rights Commission, NHRC, India took suo motu cognizance of media reports about the death of eight persons and over five thousand others falling sick due to leakage of styrene gas in Vizag District of the State of Andhra Pradesh early morning on 7th May, 2020. The leakage of the gas reportedly affected people within a radius of about 3 kilometers. Many people could be seen lying on roads, while some complained of difficulty in breathing and rashes on their bodies.

The Commission observed that though prima-facie, there were no reports regarding human error or negligence till the time of its suo motu cognizance of the matter but the fact that at least 8 innocent

citizens lost their life and thousands had fallen sick, was indeed a serious issue of violation of human rights. Right to life of the victims was grossly violated. At a time when the human lives across the country were at stake due to spread of Covid-19 virus and everyone was forced to stay indoors, the gruesome tragedy had come as bolt from the blue for the people.

Accordingly, the Commission issued a notice to the Chief Secretary, Government of Andhra Pradesh calling for a detailed report in the matter including status of the rescue operation, medical treatment provided to the people fallen sick and relief and rehabilitation provided by the state authorities to the affected families.

A notice was also issued to the Director General of Police, Andhra Pradesh to inform within four weeks about registration of FIRs in the matter and status of the investigation being conducted.

The Commission also considered it appropriate to bring the matter to the notice of the Union Ministry of Corporate Affairs and asked through its Secretary to examine whether the norms laid down under relevant provisions of the law were being implemented at

the particular industrial unit and to submit a report to the Commission.

As per early reports in the media, the incident occurred at a chemical plant at LG Polymers Industry at RR Venkatapuram near Naiduthota area of the district around 3.00 AM on 7th May, 2020. The unit manufactures polystyrene and its co-polymers. An evacuation drive had reportedly been started by the police authorities and the District Collector was monitoring the situation. The NDRF and SDRF teams were also deployed in the area as mentioned in the news report.

Case No.518/13/4/2020

Mowing down of 16 migrant workers by a goods train

The National Human Rights Commission, NHRC, India issued notices to the Chief Secretary, Government of Maharashtra and the District Magistrate, Aurangabad after taking suo motu cognizance of media reports about mowing down of 16 migrant workers by an empty goods train in the early hours on 08th May, 2020. The incident happened between Badnapur and Karmad stations in Nanded Division.

The officers were directed to

submit a detailed report, within four weeks to the incident. It should also include details of the steps taken by the State and the district authorities to provide food, shelter and other basic amenities to the poor people, especially the migrant laborers, who were facing extreme difficulties. The details of the relief and rehabilitation provided to the victim laborers and their dependents along with status of the medical treatment provided to the injured was also required to be given in the report.

The Commission observed that prima facie, the mishap could be termed as a train accident, as normally it is not expected by anyone that some people would be sleeping on the railway tracks. However, the crucial aspect was that the poor laborers, who were already facing many hardships amid countrywide lockdown, were forced to walk on foot for a very long distance, due to non-availability of any mode of transport, and lost life due to apparent negligence by the district administration. Had some arrangements been made for their shelter or halt during their tiring journey, the painful tragedy could have been averted.

The Commission in its recent orders passed in different cases has observed and expressed that there is a need for the government agencies to deal with the situation arising out of country wide lockdown, very sensibly, particularly for people belonging to vulnerable sections of the society. Death of poor migrant laborers in such a painful tragedy, was indeed an issue of violation of human rights.

According to the media reports, fourteen laborers died on the spot

and two others succumbed to injuries later. The workers, who were walking to Bhusawal from Jalna to board a "Shramik Special" train to return to Madhya Pradesh, were sleeping on the railway line when the mishap occurred between Badnapur and Karmad stations in Nanded Division. Reportedly, about 20 workers were walking from Jalna to Bhusawal, which is about 150 kilometers. They stopped after walking for about 45 kilometers to take some rest and fell asleep on the tracks. At around 5:15 AM, a goods train ran over them. The loco pilot, as mentioned in the news report, had noticed some persons along the tracks. He honked and also tried to stop the train but failed to contain the speed before hitting the victims lying on the tracks. An inquiry in the matter has been ordered by the Ministry of Railways.

[Case No.1782/30/0/2020](#)

Negligence in the treatment of Delhi Police constable who died due to Corona

The National Human Rights Commission, NHRC, India issued notices to the Chief Secretary, Government of NCT of Delhi and Union Home Secretary after taking suo motu cognizance of a complaint accompanied by a media report alleging negligence in the treatment of Delhi Police constable Amit Kumar who died due to Corona infection. They were asked to submit a report within four weeks. The report is expected to include the Standard Operating Procedure adopted by the hospitals for the Covid-19 patients and status of its implementation.

Issuing the notices, the Commission observed that the police personnel, doctors, paramedical staff of the hospitals

are the ones, who are frontline fighters to curb the spread of Covid-19 virus. Alleged denial of admission in the hospital to a policeman, who had been doing his duty sincerely, is a matter of concern for the Commission. Timely treatment to the young constable might have saved his life. They reported incident, seemingly, also sends a message that the patients were, perhaps, not being attended by the hospitals and Covid-19 centers, as per standard protocol set by the agencies concerned. It showed reckless and negligent attitude of the hospital authorities.

The Commission further observed that the reported incident also indicates that perhaps, the hospital authorities were lacking in infrastructure and right approach to deal with the Covid-19 patients. The hospitals were required to tackle the situation very sensibly with a humane approach.

The complainant had stated that the deceased, aged 32 years was taken to the Deep Chand Bandhu Hospital by one of his colleagues where a test was conducted on him for Covid-19 and he was returned back. He was not admitted in the hospital. The victim, later, complained of breathlessness and he was taken to the RML hospital but he could not reach hospital and died on the way.

The Commission also come across news reports regarding this incident stating that the deceased constable was taken to a Covid-19 centre at Haidarpur from where he was diverted to the Baba Saheb Ambedkar Hospital. The patient was kept waiting for hours and then he was taken to Deepchand Bandhu hospital from where he was referred to a Covid-19

centre at Ashok Vihar, where the doctors agreed to admit him on condition that he will have to manage everything on his own. The colleague, accompanying him, told them that the patient was not even able to talk and would not be able to manage.

He was taken back home and the matter was taken up with the higher authorities of the Delhi Police. Later, the patient was directed to be taken to the RML hospital, New Delhi, where he could not reach and died en-route.

Case No.544/13/0/2020-WC

On way back from Maharashtra, migrant woman from M.P. delivers on road

The National Human Rights Commission, NHRC, India has taken suo motu cognizance of media reports carried on 12th May, 2020 that a pregnant migrant woman, who was walking on foot from Maharashtra to Madhya Pradesh, delivered her baby on road. She rested for 2 hours after the delivery, and then continued walking for the remaining 150 kilometres of the journey. The pregnant woman and her husband had reportedly started their journey from Nashik in Maharashtra and were walking towards their home in Satna in Madhya Pradesh.

The Commission observed that this incident amounted to sheer negligence of the state authorities resulting in violation of human rights of the victim woman. Rights to life and dignity of the poor woman were grossly violated. It also caused indignity to the motherhood.

Accordingly, notices were issued to the Chief Secretaries of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh calling for a detailed report in

the matter, within four weeks, including the health status of the woman and her child and also, if any, relief and rehabilitation was provided by the state authorities to the aggrieved family.

The Commission would like to know about the measures being taken by both the states to ensure that the migrant laborers were not subjected to harassment and hardships during the lockdown. The Commission would like to know as to what actions had been initiated against the erring public servants by the state authorities for their apathy & culpable negligence for not implementing the government orders and various measures mentioned in interstate Migrant Workmen Act, during lockdown period.

The Commission observed that the contents of the news reports, which were replete, almost daily, with hardships being faced by the public during countrywide lockdown. There were news reports that the migrant workers still forced to walk thousands of kilometers to reach their homes. It is disheartening to know the plight of the migrant laborers, particularly women, children, old age people and the pregnant women falling prey to states' apathy. A pregnant woman, who needs rest, medical checkup and special care, was not only forced to walk hundreds of kilometers but also to deliver her baby during her painful journey.

Case No. 839/7/5/2020-WC

Improper police action in the matter of racial abuse and beating by some locals in the city

The National Human Rights Commission, NHRC, India has taken suo motu cognizance of media reports that a 20-year-old girl hailing from Manipur, was

subjected to racial discrimination and brutally attacked by some locals from Faizapur, Gurugram in Haryana just for passing through the locality on Sunday afternoon. Reportedly, she was eventually saved by some people, and police was called. But the police officials, who reached the spot asked the victim to compromise the matter with the tormentors. The victim then had to call the North East Support Centre & Helpline (NESCH). The NESCH members reached the spot at 8:30 PM and then only the statement of the victim was recorded for registration of an FIR.

The Commission observed that the contents of the media reports, if true, amount to serious issue of violation of human rights of the victim. The police instead of initiating the requisite legal process, asked the victim to compromise. Accordingly, a notice was issued to the Chief Secretary, Government of Haryana and the Commissioner of Police, Gurugram calling for a detailed report in the matter, within four weeks along with status of the investigation being conducted by the police after registration of the FIR and relief/counselling provided by the authorities to the victim. The Commission would also like to know about present health condition of the victim and the status of the medical treatment being provided to her by the district authorities.

The Commission further observed that it is disgusting that a woman from North-Eastern part of her own country was subjected to racial discrimination and physical assault by a local family in the NCR region. Apparently, the police personnel failed to do justice with the situation and take necessary action. They should have realized

the impact of trauma and mental agony, the woman was undergoing due to the tragic incident.

According to the media reports, the victim was stopped by an elderly woman, who rudely interrupted her from passing through the road stating that it was a private property. The old woman reportedly abused her in a racial tone and, as the altercation started, the victim was called "corona". In the meantime, the other family members of the old lady also came out and started beating the victim with sticks. The girl, who was also hit on her head, was somehow saved by some local people and the police was called. Reportedly, the victim was undergoing medical treatment and her CT scan results were awaited.

Case No.8474/24/1/2020

A migrant mother pulling a suitcase with her child sleeping half hung thereon on Agra Highway

The National Human Rights Commission, NHRC, India took suo motu cognizance of media reports about a mother pulling a suitcase with her small child sleeping half hung on it on Agra Highway. Reportedly, the migrant woman was walking all the way from somewhere in Punjab to Jhansi in Uttar Pradesh till she caught the attention of the media persons.

The Commission observed that it is aware of the unprecedented situation and that the Central and the State governments were working sincerely to address every issue coming up during the lockdown but it was strange that the pain of the child and the family could be seen and felt by many enroute, except the local authorities. Had the local authorities been

vigilant, some relief could immediately be provided to the aggrieved family and the others, facing similar hardships. The incident amounted to violation of human rights and required its intervention.

Accordingly, the notices were issued to the Chief Secretaries of Punjab and Uttar Pradesh and the District Magistrate, Agra, Uttar Pradesh calling for a detailed report within four weeks in the matter including the action taken against the responsible officers/officials and relief/ assistance provided to the victim families.

The Commission further observed that several news reports about miseries of people had come to its notice during the lockdown forcing it to intervene in order to sensitize the Central and the State authorities to deal with the situation with an approach of respect to human rights of the public at large, particularly, the vulnerable sections of the society. However, media reports suggest continuing sufferings of the people, particularly the migrant laborers, whose journey long, was not coming to a halt.

Such incidents only indicate towards carelessness and inappropriate approach of the local public authorities who do not bother to come forward to see the reality at the ground.

Case No.8755/24/5/2020

Dead and injured carried in the same vehicle

The National Human Rights Commission, NHRC, India issued a notice to the Chief Secretary, Government of Uttar Pradesh after taking suo motu cognizance of media reports that the bodies of Auraiya road accident victims were

being carried along with the injured migrant laborers in the same vehicle by the authorities on 16th May, 2020. He was asked to submit a detailed report in the matter within four weeks.

The report is expected to be comprehensive, giving the details of the action taken against the delinquent officers and relief/ rehabilitation provided to the victim migrant laborers and their families by the state authorities. The Commission would also like to know about the health status of the injured migrant laborers and status of their medical treatment.

Issuing the notice, the Commission also observed that it was indeed unethical and inhuman on the part of the authorities to put the dead bodies in the same vehicle in which the injured migrant laborers were asked to travel. The injured persons had suffered not only physical injuries but they were also under tremendous trauma of the fatal accident and in that painful condition, they were forced to sit in the same vehicle where the bodies of the deceased were also kept. Apparently, the public servants failed to deal with the situation sensibly and acted in a cruel manner violating right to dignity of the poor laborers.

Reportedly, 26 migrant laborers lost life and more than 30 sustained injuries in the fatal accident when two trucks, one coming from Punjab and the other from Rajasthan, collided on the highway in Auraiya district of Uttar Pradesh.

Later, as the photographs of the truck carrying the dead and the injured in the same truck went viral on social media, the authorities, sensing the outrage, transferred the dead bodies in the ambulance vehicles at Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh.

Case No.8944/24/64/2020

Death of a migrant worker due to hunger in Saharanpur

The National Human Rights Commission, NHRC, India issued a notice to the Chief Secretary, Government of Uttar Pradesh after taking suo motu cognizance of a media report that 19-year-old migrant worker Vipin Kumar, died in Saharanpur due to hunger after walking six days covering 350 kilometres from Ludhiana. He was headed for his home in Hardoi, Uttar Pradesh.

The report sought from the State Government in four weeks is expected to provide details about the present status of the migrant laborers of Uttar Pradesh stuck in different states, who are willing to come back to their native places in and the steps being taken to ensure their smooth journey back home.

Describing Vipin's death as a serious issue of human rights violation, the Commission has observed that it is not the first time that it came across such an incident relating to painful conditions of the migrant laborers, their illness, delivery of babies on roads and their deaths during their journey back home in the wake of Corona lockdown.

It further observed that there were media reports that the Government of Uttar Pradesh had directed to provide shaded shelter, food and drinking water to the migrant laborers at toll plazas on national highways and in the buses they will travel. However, it seems that the announcements made by government agencies were not being implemented on the ground due to which the migrant laborers were still suffering.

According to the media report, Vipin Kumar used to work at a shop in Ludhiana. He had embarked on a long journey to his home in Sursa, Hardoi on foot on 12th May, 2020. But walking continuously for six days without food and covering over 350 kilometers, he fell on the road near Saharanpur. An ambulance spotted him lying on the road and shifted him to a district hospital. But he could not be saved. Doctors said he died of hunger.

Reportedly, the victim, Vipin had informed his family on 12th May, 2020 that he was returning home. His father, as mentioned in the news report, stated that Vipin had no other option but to walk down home as the government transport, for which he was waiting for long, was not practically available for journey.

It is further mentioned in the media report that the family had received a phone call from the hospital from Saharanpur about the ill condition of Vipin and the next day, they received a phone call from the Meerut Hospital that he had died due to hunger. The villagers, reportedly, collected the money for the family so that they could bring body of the deceased to his home.

Case No.1182/4/23/2020

Hardships to labourers on board misdirected special trains, devoid of water, food and basic facilities causing sickness and death

The National Human Rights Commission took suo motu cognizance media reports that the trains ferrying the migrant laborers were not only starting late but were taking many additional days to reach destination. In one of the

reports, it was alleged that many migrant laborers lost life during their journey by train due to longer duration and no arrangements for drinking water and food etc.

Reportedly, 2 persons died in Muzaffarpur and one each in Danapur, Sasaram, Gaya, Begusarai and Jehanabad in Bihar including a 4 year old boy. All of them, reportedly, died due to hunger. In another incident, a train reportedly started from Surat district in Gujarat for Siwan in Bihar on 16th May, 2020 and reached Bihar on 25th May, 2020 i.e. after 9 days.

The Commission observed that the contents of the media reports, if true, amounted to gross violations of human rights. The aggrieved families suffered irrevocable loss. The state had failed to protect the lives of the poor laborers on board the trains.

Accordingly, notices were issued to the Chief Secretaries of Gujarat and Bihar, Chairman, Railway Board and Union Home Secretary calling for a detailed report in the matter. The Chief Secretaries of the Government of Gujarat and Bihar are expected to specifically inform as to what steps were taken to ensure basic facilities including medical facilities for the migrant laborers, who boarded the trains. The response from all the authorities is expected within 4 weeks, positively.

Issuing the notices, the Commission has observed that the Rail network in India is the largest in the world and well equipped with the modern technology, trained staff and other infrastructure. A train getting late due to bad weather etc. for some hours is always considered beyond control of the authorities but

trains getting lost during journey, reaching unexpected destinations and taking more than a week to reach its scheduled station is hard to believe and require a thorough investigation into the matter.

It further observed that the poor labourers, who have already suffered a lot in distant places and are desperate to reach their homes to meet family members. It is a matter of concern for it, as they were being subjected to such a treatment by the Railway authorities, which bordered around barbarism. The poor laborers cannot be treated in such an inhuman manner just because they were poor and the government had paid for their tickets. Any shortcoming on the part of the government agencies cannot be covered under excuse of unprecedented situation amid countrywide lockdown.

The Commission noted that a large number of people had fallen prey to Covid-19 virus in India and hundreds lost life so far. The situation is unprecedented leaving the government agencies, scientists and the public at large totally clueless. Several measures were taken by the Central and the State governments in accordance with the guidelines issued by the World Health Organization, NDMA and the ICMR. The country had been put under lockdown since 23.03.2020 to stop the spread of the Covid-19 virus. From time to time on the basis of review reports, the government had eased the norms of lockdown and various facilities had been restored.

Nevertheless, it noted that, the complaints are being received from different parts of the country regarding unnecessary harassment of people by the public authorities. It has emerged from the entire scenario that the people belonging

to vulnerable classes have suffered the most. Daily wages workers, small shop owners, rickshaw pullers, cab operators and poor laborers have become the worst victims in the recent days. As the lockdown was announced, it was stated by the central government that wherever a person is staying he/she should stay there only so that the social distancing could be maintained and the spread of the virus could be contained up to maximum.

The Commission observed that it is evident that, due to whatsoever reasons, the migrant laborers started feeling uncomfortable and started protesting to reach their native places. It was mandatory on the part of the host state to take care of them and to provide them basic amenities but the things gradually went out of control and the laborers, in large numbers, started moving on their own by different modes of transport and thousands of them chose to walk on foot. Many laborers lost life during their journey on foot and suffered badly. After reviewing the situation, the central government announced that special trains will start from different parts of the country to take the migrant laborers to their native places.

The trains started operating and the ticket charges were being borne by the central and the state governments but the sufferings of the poor laborers are not seemingly coming to an end. There have had been several media reports stating that in many cases, the laborers were being called to board the train. They were brought to the railway stations in buses without maintaining social distancing. They were put to wait for hours without any arrangements of drinking water, food, shaded shelter and toilets for them. The

female laborers, old aged persons, ill persons, small children and specially-abled persons were reportedly, suffering a lot. Many times the poor laborers were told to go back as the trains got cancelled.

Case No.356/6/0/2020

The Commission has come across a video clip posted on his twitter account by Aam Aadmi Party leader, Shri Sanjay Singh stating that the migrant laborers are being subjected to cruelty and physical torture by the police authorities in the State of Gujarat. The video clip shows that the driver of a commercial vehicle and its other occupants are being dragged out by the police and they are being beaten up with the sticks. The reason of beating is neither known from the video nor Shri Sanjay Singh has elaborated the details of the incident. However, it is apparent that the poor people, as seen in the video clip, are being beaten up on the road by the police personnel.

The Commission has thoroughly gone through the contents came before it. The video clip, if genuine, indicates towards highhandedness and abuse of power by the police authorities making it a fit case for intervention by the Commission as the human rights of the victims have apparently been violated by the public servants.

The Commission, therefore, takes suo-motu cognizance of the matter and directs issuance of notice to the Director General of Police, Gujarat calling for a detailed report in the matter, within four weeks. The report is expected to include the details of the incident, present health status of the victims and status of the action taken against the delinquent police personnel.

Cases of Human Rights Defenders

The Commission registered 11 cases of alleged Harassment of Human Right Defenders during the month of May 2020. Summary of some of these cases is as under:

Case No. 387/6/21/2020

The complainant, Mr. Dhana Kumar, convenor of the Campaign Against Torture (CAT), Delhi based NGO, in an online complaint, has made an appeal to the Commission for urgent intervention on an alleged custodial torture of a farmers' activist identified as Pal Ambaliya (55 years) by police while in the custody at Pradyumnagar Police Station under Rajkot District of Gujarat on 20th May 2020. It is stated that the victim, an activist and a resident of Rajkot area under Rajkot District of Gujarat, was first arrested by the police on 20th May 2020 along with four other persons for allegedly holding demonstration at the Collector's office over the plight of onion and cotton growers. Soon after their arrest the police released all five persons but, in the evening, the said activist was again arrested and taken to the Pradyumnagar police station where he was mercilessly beaten by the police. The victim suffered serious injuries and he was taken to the Rajkot Civil Hospital for treatment. The case is under consideration of the Commission.

Case No. 84/8/11/2020

The complainant, Mr. Rajhans Bansal, Director of NGO- Center for Human Rights, in a complaint to the Commission, has alleged that during lockdown period, 14 FIRs were registered against six journalists by Administration of Solan and Mandi Districts of Himachal Pradesh, for their reporting in print and social media, wherein they had highlighted

the problems of migrant workers in the state. It is alleged that the registration of FIRs against such journalists, who were merely discharging their duty as human rights defenders, amounts to an attempt by the state to throttle the freedom of press. The case is under consideration of the Commission.

Case No. 8486/24/32/2020

The complainant, Mr. Henri Tiphagne, National Working Secretary of HRD Alert- India, in a complaint to the Commission, has made an appeal for urgent action on an issue involving arbitrary arrest of around 10 HRDs of whom nine were students of BHU and one was social activists, along with a woman journalist by Uttar Pradesh Police in Ghazipur District for their involvement in Padhyatra (Foot march) from Chauri-Chaura near Gorakhpur to Rajghat in Delhi, against CAA and on charges of sharing misleading information on CAA and National Register of Citizens (NRC). It is also stated that though SDM had granted conditional bail to these HRDs but the imposed conditions, namely bail bond of Rs. 2.5 lakhs each and two gazetted persons per individuals as guarantors has made it difficult to get a bail as no gazetted officer is ready to become a guarantor for them. Currently, these HRDs are in Ghazipur Jail. It is alleged that the arbitrary arrest, harassment and unusual bail conditions imposed on those HRDs are a direct attack on the Human rights of the Human Rights Defenders. The case is under consideration of the Commission.

Case No. 8488/24/48/2020

The complainant Mr. Henri Tiphagne, National Working Secretary of HRD Alert- India in a

complaint to the Commission for urgent intervention has alleged about detention and harassment of one Dr. Sandeep Pandey, who is said to be Raman Magsaysay awardee and nine others by Uttar Pradesh Police, for distributing pamphlets wherein Citizenship Amendment Act was criticized, during anti CAA protests in Lucknow. The case is under consideration of the Commission.

Case No.1008/12/5/2020

The complainant, Mr. Henri Tiphagne, National Working Secretary of HRD Alert- India in a complaint to the Commission for urgent intervention has alleged about false implication of one RTI activist Pawan Malviya by Police of Betul District, Madhya Pradesh on ground of spreading fake news regarding distribution of food grains by public authorities during lockdown period. It is also alleged that till date the victim has not received a copy of FIR which amounts to violation of guidelines of Apex Court in D.K. Basu Case. The case is under consideration of the Commission

Case No. 1075/4/4/2020

The complainant, Mr. Henri Tiphagne, National Working Secretary of HRD Alert- India in a complaint to the Commission for urgent intervention has alleged about false implication and torture of one 75 years old RTI activist Girish Prasad Gupta by Public authorities of Beghusarai District, Bihar for using RTI as mechanism to defend human rights. The case is under consideration of the Commission.

Case No. 324/6/23/2020

The complainant, Mr. Henri Tiphagne, National Working

Secretary of HRD Alert- India in a complaint to the Commission for urgent intervention has alleged about harassment, intimidation and detention of one Adv. Bilal Kazi by the police personnel of Kosamba Police Station, District-Surat, Gujarat when he was trying to carry out his work as lawyer in a case involving damage to Mosque property. The case is under

consideration of the Commission.

Case No. 741/20/2/2020

The complainant, Mr. Henri Tiphagne, National Working Secretary of HRD Alert- India in a complaint to the Commission for urgent intervention has alleged about brutal assault with intention to kill a local senior journalist and human rights defender Daulat

Bharti, editor of newspaper "Kishangarh Times", in month of June 2019 in Kishangarh Bas area of Alwar District, Rajasthan, by goons hired by local political leader for publishing news in respect of his land dispute, unauthorized road construction and other unfair business practices. The case is under consideration of the Commission.

Cases handled by Focal Point of HRD during Lock down

As a result of the National Lockdown due the COVID 19 Pandemic, the Commission, as per the Government guidelines did not open the office but has functioned mainly online on complaint handling till the office opened partially on 20th April, 2020. The law officers assisted the Commission with the help of online software in processing the complaint receipts online through HRCNet Portal and sent the directions of the Commission to the concerned authorities through e-mails. These cases also included the cases of Human Rights Defenders in which the focal point for them in the Commission took up the matter with the concerned Government agencies. Some of the complaints related to lockdown problems are as under:-

Date 29-4-2020-Regarding HRDA complaint in respect of Ms. Safoora Zargar, Member of Jamia Coordination Committee and wherein inter alia one of the concerns was regarding her health condition in Tihar Jail, Delhi particularly in view of her pregnancy condition

Action -The matter was taken up with IG Prison Delhi, who conveyed that the jail administration had received her medical prescription and jail doctors were examining it and will provide the medicine accordingly.

As per Jail manual, she was also being provided Food as applicable to other pregnant jail inmates.

Date 1-5-2020 - Complaint was given by HRDA regarding arrest of one Zubair by A&N Island Police and call was received to help in the matter from Delhi Based representative of HRDA.

Action- The matter was taken up with IG, Law and Order, A&N Island who assured for help in the matter and the very same day he informed that the said person had been released by the police.

Date 3-5-2020- Mail was received on HRD mail that despite applying for E-pass to Kanyakumari Collectorate, the authorities are not issuing e pass to pay a visit by family for cremation of one of the sons of the family

Action- Matter was taken up with Collector, District-Kanyakumari for release of E-Pass and extending help to the family. Within half an hour received a mail from the Complainant that an E-pass was issued to him.

Date 11-5-2020 -Regarding complaint apprehension of threat of life to a senior journalist and his wife in West Champaran District of Bihar

Complaint- On 11-5-2020, at around 21.45 hrs, whatsapp message was received by Focal

Point wherein help was sought by the caller, who identified himself as Ramesh Thakur and claimed that he is a senior journalist and is from SC/ST section of the society. He was apprehending that named persons mentioned in his message were bent upon to cause a harm to him and to his wife. It was also alleged that they had threatened that they would rape his wife before going to jail. He requested for immediate help from Focal Point.

Action -The matter was immediately taken up at around 22.30 hrs with SP, District-Bagaha, West Chaparan, Bihar who assured that he would look into the issue and give direction for ensuring police protection to him.

Date 11-5-2020 - Complaint was received on Whatsapp from one Ms. Sangita Chakraborty, a HRD from West Bengal for her support to Local News Channel that she may be arrested by local Police.

Action -The matter was taken up with SP, Burdwan and SP, Hoogly West Bengal who had assured for enquiry in the matter. It was also conveyed that she had not been arrested by the Police as that was her apprehension only. After due enquiry the later authority had submitted a report, which is under consideration of the Commission.

Date 17-5-2020 - Regarding

alleged arrest of President of Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee

Complaint details – Complaint was received on Whatsapp of Focal Point that one Adv Sunil Kumar, Chairman Legal & Human Rights, DPCC that one Chaudhary Anil Kumar, President Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee has been illegally detained by Delhi Police at his residence at Dallupura, Mayur Vihar, New Delhi. Kindly take urgent action.

Action – The matter was taken up with DCP East- District who informed that the person in issue on 16th May, 2020 had instigated migrant workers as a result of which at Gajipur Border of Delhi, large nos. of migrant workers gathered without having proper movement passes, which created Law and order situation. It was denied that the said person had been arrested by Delhi Police rather

the police had advised him to remain at home. The District, due to confusion created by that person in mind of migrant workers, is now facing even more problems. The police was having video recording of the whole incident and will be registering an FIR soon. So as of now no arrest has been made.

The complainant was accordingly informed who rather thanked the Commission for taking up the issue with the Police.

Date 27-5-2020 – The Complaint was received from One Sangita Chakraborty regarding issue that she had arranged relief camp on 27th May, 2020 at Nimchi Village in District-Basirhat, West Bengal and she was roughly treated by police and local administration and that her relief material had been taken by the administration.

Action – Matter has been taken up with DM, Basirhat, West Bengal,

who assured for enquiry in the matter. Further, request has been made to her to rather extend a help to her for her relief efforts in recent situation due to cyclone in that area. Yesterday itself, relief material has been handed over to her.

Date 27-5-2020– Telephonic call was received from one Ms. Archana Saxena, claiming to be Group A Officer of UP Govt for help as at present she stated that she was penniless, without any shelter and was like a beggar seeking help of her earlier students for survival. It was alleged that UP Govt has not paid her dues despite direction by the Allahabad High Court.

Action– The case has been registered in the Commission, in time the NHRC Focal Point has given a mail to Chief Secretary Office, UP Govt for intervention in the matter. Reply awaited.

Cases from Investigation Division

Due to corona lockdown the Investigation Division of the Commission could not conduct any spot enquiry during May, 2020.

However, a continued to examine the reports and materials collected by in connection with analysis of 158 cases. Six cases of human rights

violations, requiring Rapid Action, were also handled successfully besides processing of various case files at different stages of disposal.

Recommendations for relief

Apart from the large number of cases taken up daily by individual Members 45 cases were taken up during 01 sitting of the Divisional Bench-I. On 06 cases, listed in the table below,

the Commission recommended monetary relief amounting to a total of Rs.7,31,10,000/- for the victims or their next of kin, where it found that public servants had either violated human rights or

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:*

NHRC RECOMMENDED MONETARY RELIEF FROM 01/01/2020 TO 31/01/2020				
Sr No	File No	Inc. Name	Amount (in Rs.)	State
1	221/3/1/2016	INACTION BY THE STATE GOVERNMENT / CENTRAL GOVT.OFFICIALS	6,00,000	ASSAM
2	1115/6/23/2015-PCD	CUSTODIAL DEATH (Police)	10,00,000	GUJARAT
3	300/6/25/07-08	HAZARDOUS EMPLOYMENTS	7,14,00,000	GUJARAT
4	640/20/8/2018-WC	RAPE	50,000	RAJASTHAN
5	23091/24/31/2015	FAILURE IN TAKING LAWFUL ACTION	10,000	UTTAR PRADESH
6	32935/24/16/2016	FAILURE IN TAKING LAWFUL ACTION	50,000	UTTAR PRADESH

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Payment of Relief on NHRC Recommendations:

The Commission closed 01 case on receipt of compliance reports from different public authorities, furnishing proof of payment,

it has recommended, totaling Rs.3,00,000/- the victim of human rights violations or their next of kin. The specific details of these cases, closed

in May, 2020, can be downloaded from the NHRC website by logging the case number given in the table below:

FROM 01/05/2020 TO 31/05/2020

Sr No	File No	Inc. Name	Amount (in Rs.)	State
1	67/25/19/2014-PCD	CUSTODIAL DEATH (Police)	300000	WEST BENGAL

Other important seminars/programmes/conferences

Events	Delegation
Lecture on "Human Rights of Migrant Workers" through Webinar organized by DME Media School, Delhi Metropolitan Education, Noida on 20th May, 2020	Ms. Jyotika Kalra, Member, NHRC
Lecture on "Career Opportunities in the Human Rights" through Webinar organized by Placement & Internship Committee of Law Centre I, Faculty of Law, University of Delhi on 26th May, 2020	Ms. Jyotika Kalra, Member, NHRC

Human Rights and NHRC in News

During the month of May, 2020, the Media & Communication Wing of the Commission prepared and issued 10 press releases. More than 3500 news clippings on various human rights issues were culled out from different/ select editions of major English and

Hindi newspapers and some news websites. News clippings related to several incidents of alleged human rights violations were brought to the notice of the Commission, which it considered and found fit for suo motu cognizance. Many News stories, wherein there

was a specific reference to the interventions by the NHRC can be seen at 'NHRC-in-News' on the website of the Commission. NHRC Twitter handle was also abuzz with regular tweets on the Commission's intervention & activities. Its followers continue to increase.

Complaints in May, 2020

Complaints received	3998
Disposed	5437
Under consideration of the Commission	20184

Important Telephone Numbers of the Commission:

Facilitation Centre (Madad) Incharge: **Satish**
NHRC Toll Free No: 14433
For Complaints: Fax No. 011-2465 1332
For Filing online complaints: www.nhrc.in, hrcnet.nic.in, Common Service Centres

Other Important E-mail Addresses

jrlawnhrc@nic.in (For complaints), cr.nhrc@nic.in
(For general queries/correspondence)

Focal point for Human Rights Defenders: **Debindra Kundra**

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This Newsletter is also available on the Commission's website www.nhrc.nic.in

NGOs and other organization are welcome to reproduce material of the Newsletter and disseminate it widely acknowledge the NHRC

Printed & Published by Jaideep Govind, Secretary General, NHRC on behalf of the National Human Rights Commission and Printed at Power Printers 2/8A, Ansari Road, Daryaganj, New Delhi-110002 and published at National Human Rights Commission, Manav Adhikar Bhawan, Block-C, GPO Complex, INA, New Delhi-110023. Editor: **Jaimini Kumar Srivastava, Dy. Director (M&C), NHRC**

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The front cover: Painting in 2018 by **Ms. Durti Singh**, DLF Public School, Class X-F, Sahibabad, U.P.