

Volume 31 | Number 10 | October, 2024



HUMAN RIGHTS

Newsletter

A Monthly publication of the National Human Rights Commission, India



Consultations

Digital solutions for universal healthcare
Women's Safety at Work & Public Spaces
Rights of children of sex workers and marginalized community

Focus

Silicosis
Indian Juvenile Justice System

HUMAN RIGHTS

Newsletter

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National Human Rights Commission

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► Acting Chairperson's visit to a tribal school in Andhra Pradesh

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► Secretary General's visit to KPR Mill Education Facility in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu

Monthly Recap

From the desk of the Secretary General & Chief Executive

In September 2024, NHRC, India had the privilege of connecting with a diverse range of individuals, including students, police personnel, stakeholders, and representatives at international forums. These interactions reinforced the importance of understanding different perspectives and power to network for concerted action. It also reminded that every voice matters.

The 29th annual meeting of the Asia Pacific Forum (APF) of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) in Bangkok focused on 'Human Rights Defenders & Civic Space in India.' It provided a crucial platform to reflect on India's enduring commitment to human rights and the vital role played by Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in protecting the rights of vulnerable communities.

India's legacy of social activism dates back to various social reform movements and the struggle for independence, with figures like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Dr. Karve, Lokmanya Balgangadhar Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. B R Ambedkar and other freedom fighters devoted their whole lives for the dignity of all human beings. They were the nation's first human rights defenders, and their spirit of selfless service continues to inspire us to advocate for the rights and dignity of vulnerable and marginalized people.

The Commission collaborates closely with State Human Rights Commissions and national bodies and engages with HRDs and CSOs to proactively address human rights issues. This partnership facilitates crisis response, advocacy, legal intervention, and community engagement, reflecting our shared commitment to promoting human rights across the country.

Our core group on Human Rights Defenders and NGOs fosters dialogue with human rights defenders and the government, while awareness programmes, workshops, and seminars actively involve civil society, academicians and other stakeholders. In the country, NGOs, academicians and civil society are significantly contributing to the human rights discourse by conducting research, field studies, capacity-building programmes, and advocacy on critical issues like climate change, technology, and discrimination, particularly in the Global South. As these collaborations deepen, HRDs and CSOs remain essential in ensuring that human rights are upheld for everyone. A report on this meeting is included in the newsletter.

Prior to this, in yet another opportunity to highlight NHRC, India's work at an international forum, the Acting Chairperson emphasized how Human Rights Institutions can effectively contribute to gender equality and inclusive policy development as being done by the NHRC, India while attending the three-day international conference in Kathmandu, Nepal, on 'Gender Inclusion in NHRIs.'

This month, NHRC, India also held two significant consultations on pressing human rights issues: 'Universal Access to Healthcare: Digital Solutions' and 'Women's Safety at Work & Public Spaces.' Besides the report on these two events, this edition features a report

on an open house discussion on the 'Rights of Children of Sex Workers and Marginalized Communities.'

Empowering young women through education and employment exemplifies how socially responsible business practices can transform lives, protecting and promoting human rights. Initiatives like those at KPR Mills in Coimbatore combine education, skill development, and job opportunities to help rural women achieve independence and self-sufficiency. My visit to their facility highlighted their comprehensive approach, offering formal education, exposure to sports, on-the-job training, and soft skills development. Annually, over 2,200 girls are enrolled in various courses, with around 6,500 currently pursuing undergraduate and postgraduate studies, coming from rural areas across states like Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Assam, and Madhya Pradesh. They reside in safe and secure hostels on a campus built on previously barren land, setting a fine example of sustainability, addressing climate issues, human rights and business.

In this month, the Commission also organized its highly sought-after online short-term internship programme. In this internship programme, young interns are given exposure to various dimensions of human rights including Indian ethos. As is well known, for over 5,000 years, values such as empathy, compassion, dignity, equality, fraternity, and justice have formed the core of our heritage and the foundation of our Constitution, laws, and public policies. These principles are vital for the younger generation as they strive to build a just and inclusive society.

Following the Supreme Court's directions to the National Green Tribunal regarding dust pollution and the NHRC's mandate to ensure compensation for victims, there is a renewed focus on silicosis, an irreversible lung disease caused by inhaling silica dust. This issue features an article dedicated to raising awareness about silicosis. It also carries an article on the Indian Juvenile Justice System emphasizing the need for systematic rehabilitation of children in conflict with the law.

The landscape of human rights and civic space in India is shaped by our collective commitment to inclusiveness and justice for all. Through meaningful dialogue and collaboration across sectors, we can honour the legacy of our freedom fighters, ensuring that every individual's rights are respected and protected. It is our responsibility to build a society where dignity and justice are not mere ideals but tangible realities for all. I hope the reports, articles, and regular features on the Commission's activities will provide an engaging and informative reading about various activities to protect and promote human rights of all human beings in the country.



[Bharat Lal]

Secretary General &
Chief Executive Officer

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India has constituted several core groups on various thematic issues related to human rights to hold discussions with the domain experts, academicians and senior government functionaries representing concerned ministries. Besides these core group meetings, the Commission also organizes open house discussions with different stakeholders on various issues of human rights. The Commission, from time to time, also holds national seminars to address the obstacles in existing laws and suggest amendments. In September 2024, the Commission organized three such consultations.

National Conference on ‘Universal Access to Healthcare: Digital Solutions’

A Delhi-based non-profit organization, namely the Sankala Foundation, organized a National Conference on the ‘Universal Access to Healthcare: Digital Solutions’ in New Delhi on 6th September, 2024. It was supported by the NITI Aayog, the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and the National Human Rights Commission. The conference brought together experts, government officials, and various stakeholders from the healthcare and digital health sector to discuss and firm up the strategies to achieve Universal Health Coverage by the year 2030. It concluded with several key suggestions for optimizing the use of various digital health solutions to achieve Universal Health Coverage.

Earlier, inaugurating the conference, Dr. V.K. Paul, Member (Health), NITI Aayog said that collective thinking can help in charting out a course of action to make sure that healthcare services are available to everyone in the country. To this effect, he said that there are positive developments in the public and private sectors.

He said that digital technology is playing an important role towards ensuring universal healthcare in the country. In fact, India’s leadership in the field has been accepted globally. Dr. Paul said that India launched the Global Initiative on

Digital Health (GIDH) with the World Health Organization (WHO) during the G20 Health Ministerial Meeting last year. As a WHO Managed Network, GIDH aims to consolidate and amplify recent and past gains in global digital health services while strengthening mutual accountability as a vehicle for implementing the Global Strategy on Digital Health 2020–25.

Dr. Paul stressed the need for bridging the digital gap, promoting the use of technology and scaling it up for ease of life and wellbeing. However, he said that it is also necessary to work towards protecting human rights by guarding privacy, and safety from cybercrimes and frauds.

Delivering the keynote address, Mr. Apurva Chandra, Secretary, Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare announced that India was working towards creating a life-long health record for every individual. To begin with, the Ministry would be launching the U-Win App that would record close to 2.7 crore newborns and 3 crore mothers in the country. This would be an Aadhaar-based record of the vaccinations of the baby and would be subsequently also linked to the Anganwadi Centres, Poshan tracker and even with the school health programme.

Further, to streamline and standardize health insurance claim processing and improving the patient experience, the government has also taken 41 insur-

► Dr. V.K. Paul, Member (Health), NITI Aayog addressing the participants





► Mr Apurva Chandra, Secretary, Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare addressing the conference

ance companies, 7 Third Party Administrators (TPAs) and 400 hospitals on board the National Health Claims Exchange gateway within the ambit of the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission.

Addressing the inaugural session, Mr. Bharat Lal, Secretary General, NHRC, India said that there is a need for various stakeholders in the health sector to come together to ensure affordable and quality healthcare access to all, a reality. He said that healthcare is a basic human right, and the full potential of an individual cannot be realized without ensuring quality healthcare throughout life. He said that technology holds the future of affordable and quality healthcare, and digital healthcare is the leapfrog factor.

Mr Lal highlighted that the NHRC, India is focusing on marginalized sections of society including, among others, the people suffering from mental health issues, leprosy, senior citizens, widows, beggars, etc. so that human rights can be enjoyed by every individual. It works with the approach that 'no one is left behind'.

Leveraging digital solutions for universal health coverage through the Digital Nerve Centre (DiNC) is a unique health care delivery model implemented in the Kolar district of Karnataka since 2017. It has been devised and is being imple-

► NHRC, India Secretary General, Mr Bharat Lal addressing the inaugural session



mented by the TATA Medical and Diagnostics (TATA MD) in collaboration with the Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Karnataka. The Sankala Foundation carried out a comprehensive field study and impact assessment, and the report was released on this occasion. At present, 90 healthcare facilities, including 82 primary health centres (PHCs), two community health centres (CHCs), five Taluka (Sub District) hospitals (TH), and one District hospital (DH) are covered by the DiNC. It has streamlined processes in public health facilities, reduced patient overload in secondary and tertiary hospitals, and increased the utilization of PHCs.

Later, chairing the first technical session on 'Models of Change in Healthcare', Mr Bharat Lal said that technology had a profound impact on the lives and livelihoods of people ensuring basic services. Healthcare sector is not untouched by this technological revolution. Mr Basant Garg, Additional CEO, National Health Authority (NHA) said that digital technology has helped in reaching out to 55 crore people under the Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojana and many among them were those who would otherwise not have been able to access and achieve specialized healthcare services. Spelling out various technology-driven initiatives under the NHA, he said that the patient is always at the centre. Mr. Madhukar Kumar Bhagat, Joint Secretary (E-Health), Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare said that inaccessibility and unaffordability of quality healthcare services was a violation of human rights and technology can help in overcoming this along with capacity building and standardization. Mr. Girish Krishnamurthy, CEO and Managing Director, Tata MD said that adoption of technology in



healthcare has always been slow though it has the potential to be the core of healthcare services and not just an enabler. Talking about Andhra Pradesh's Telemedicine Programme, Mr Chevuru Hari Kiran, Director, Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare said that 60 – 65% of people in the State were opting for public health services.

Chairing the second technical session on 'Future Frontiers in Digital Health,' Dr Rajiv Bahl, Secretary, Department of Health Research and Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) focused on the ethical use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in health research. He said that the National Institute of Health and Artificial Intelligence set up by the Council can play a significant role in this regard. Advocating for the integration of data, Mr. Lav Agarwal, Resident Commissioner, Andhra Pradesh Government said that data in India was available in silos and technology was frugal. Ms Debjani Ghosh, President NASSCOM, cautioned that India should not become the market for expensive health solutions.

In the third technical session on 'Technology-enabled Universal Health Coverage,' Mr. C.K. Mishra, former Secretary, Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and Advisor, IPE Global, said that technology should reduce the healthcare cost. Mr. S. Krishnan, Secretary, Union Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, said that technology can be an enabler in healthcare, but it cannot substitute for healthcare workers. He spoke about India's AI Mission that would help in crunching large volumes of data and making this

database usable. The largest chunk of the database is from the health and insurance sector.

Mr Manohar Agnani, Professor, Public Health, Azim Premji University and former Additional Secretary, Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare said that several models such as the DiNC Model of Kolar in Karnataka could be replicated. He highlighted the need for creating institutional frameworks and stringent regulations for the use of technology. The conference concluded that India was ready to roll out the 'Amritkaal' version of technology and the time was right for the comprehensive use of technology and AI in primary healthcare. In this endeavour, validation of data is critical, and India cannot be a market for expensive healthcare solutions and there is a need for a change in medical education.

National Symposium on Women's Safety at Work & Public Spaces

On 9th September, 2024, the NHRC, India organized a national symposium on 'Women's Safety at Work & Public Spaces' at the India Habitat Centre in New Delhi. The discussions concluded with many suggestions to improve women's

safety. Chairing it, Acting Chairperson, Mrs Vijaya Bharathi Sayani said that there have been a lot of efforts in terms of the legal provisions and policies for women's empowerment in the country. However, they continue to face barriers both at the workplace and in public spaces which need to be addressed with a holistic approach.

She said that the incidents of violent sexual abuse of women are not isolated in nature and require collective efforts to ensure an effective response. She stressed on strengthening the implementation of existing laws for holding perpetrators accountable. This, she indicated, must be done by improving the criminal justice system, sensitizing the public, and creating better support mechanisms for survivors, through collaboration between all stakeholders.

Earlier, triggering the discussions, NHRC, India Secretary General, Mr Bharat Lal said that with the career-expanding opportunities for women in India, they are increasingly joining the workforce. More and more women are entering public spaces in the country. However, several incidents of crimes against women, particularly in the 18–30-year age group, are also happening. A collective effort in society is required to deal with this situation and contribute towards the safety and security of women.

Mr Ajay Bhatnagar, Director General (Investigation), NHRC, India spoke about how the violence against women is driven by unequal power dynamics. He stressed the need to look for equity rather than equality, to recognize and be sensitive to the needs of women and girls. He also noted that the media and movies also need to ensure that incidents like stalking do not get glorified as these have a direct bearing on the psyche and mentality of society at large. He also emphasized the need to involve men and boys at all levels to make society safe for women.

Mrs Anita Sinha, Joint Secretary, NHRC, India said that the trauma faced by a woman can directly affect her psychological well-being, as well as prevent other women and girls from stepping out of the house. Referring to some of the recent incidents of sexual assault, she said that it is time to work collectively for the prevention of such incidents.

During the discussions, Shri Devendra Kumar Nim, Joint Secretary, NHRC, India spoke about the important role upbringing plays, especially in the case of male children, who must be taught to be more sensitive. He also noted that involvement of law enforcement agencies should be increased at a preventive level before the crime is committed. He concluded by stating that there is an imminent need to sensitize the top management of organizations/ companies across sectors on such issues.

► The meeting chaired by NHRC, India Acting Chairperson, Mrs Vijaya Bharathi Sayani in progress



While stressing that a lot needs to be done to ensure women's safety, the representatives from various Ministries, National Commissions, and Police organizations also reflected upon several initiatives that have been taken by the government to ensure their safety in the workplace and public spaces. Some of the initiatives discussed include the Nirbhaya Fund, Mission Shakti, the Safe City Project, SHE-Box 2.0, increased surveillance by police through CCTV cameras, lighting of dark spots in the city, gender sensitization programmes at the school and college level, and other similar programmes.

Some of the suggestions, among others, that emanated during the discussions were as follows:

- I.) Safety and social audits of cities and institutions need to be carried out to get a better idea about the lags and issues that currently exist in terms of ensuring women's safety when they enter the workplace and public spaces, preferably in collaboration with professional institutions and organizations;
- ii.) Better implementation of laws is needed to make sure that policies translate into tangible outcomes to improve the safety of women both at home, and outside;
- iii.) Have gender sensitization at all levels including schools, colleges, workplaces, and top management of all major organizations, as well as in law enforcement systems, to adopt a preventive approach towards women's safety with the help of civil society;
- iv.) Media in all its manifestations also needs to have guidelines for reporting crimes against women;



- v.) Concerted efforts need to be made to encourage bystander intervention in reporting crimes;
- vi.) As a society, the issue of women's safety must be seen as a collective responsibility of all. It is imperative to collaborate productively rather than reacting once a major incident has occurred;
- vii.) Ensure all workplaces have working and proactive Internal Complaints Committees (ICC) to make women feel safe and comfortable.

The Commission will further deliberate upon more such inputs to finalize its recommendations. The symposium was attended by Ms Meenakshi Negi, Member Secretary,

NCW, Ms Rupali Banerjee Singh, Member Secretary, NCPCR, Mr. Pritam Yashwant, Joint Secretary, MoWCD, Ms Chhaya Sharma, Spl. Commissioner (Training), Delhi Police, Ms Meeran Chadha Borwankar, former IPS, Ms Kanta Singh, Deputy Representative, UN Women India, Mr Virat Bhatia, Managing Director, Apple India, Ms Jai Shri Sharma, GM-HR, Delhi Metro Rail Corporation, Ms Shilpa Lavania, VP-Human Resources, Invest India, Ms Kiran Bishnoi, Sr AVP – Legal, Invest India, Prof. Ritu Gupta, Professor of Law at National Law University, Delhi, Ms Suneeta Dhar, Co-founder SAWF IN, Ms Barsha Chakravorty, Head of Media, Breakthrough Trust, Ms. Amrita Thakur, Project Manager, Jagori, Ms Poulomi Pal, Programme Specialist – EVAW, UN Women India.

Open house discussion on the rights of children of sex workers and marginalized communities

On 30th September, 2024, the NHRC, India organized an open house discussion in hybrid mode that concluded with several suggestions to ameliorate the cause of human rights of children of sex workers and marginalized communities. The discussion aimed to foster a comprehensive understanding of the systemic issues at play and to generate actionable solutions for ensuring a more equitable future for all children.

Chairing the discussion, Mrs Vijaya Bharathi Sayani, Acting Chairperson, NHRC, stressed the importance of safeguarding the rights of children of sex workers and marginalized communities. She highlighted India's rich cultural heritage, which has historically valued the protection and empowerment of children and referenced various constitutional provisions and laws that uphold child rights. Despite these safeguards, she noted that many children continue to face significant challenges, including stigma, poverty, and limited access to essential resources, which perpetuate cycles of vulnerability and discrimination.

Mrs Vijaya Bharathi Sayani called for a collaborative effort among policymakers, educators, and community members to foster supportive environments and advocate for equitable access to education and healthcare, enabling all children to reach their potential and aspire for a brighter future. She emphasized the NHRC's vital role in protecting rights for all, including children, and urged the evaluation of existing programs to identify gaps and promote inclusivity and equitable development for children from marginalized communities.

Before this, in his opening remarks, Mr Bharat Lal, Secretary General, NHRC, India emphasized the crucial role of critical services like education and healthcare in the lives of vulnerable children to enable them to excel. He highlighted the importance of prioritizing children's health and



nutrition while recognizing the government's ongoing initiatives in these areas. He pointed out the disparities in children's rights that stem from geographic and socio-economic factors and discussed efforts to improve education for tribal children through the Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS). These plans include establishing a school in each block and allocating significant funding for both urban and remote regions.

Despite these advancements, he acknowledged the ongoing challenges in enhancing basic services and educational opportunities for marginalized children. He also noted the Commission's active involvement, including visits to various schools and childcare institutions, to suggest measures for improvements. He commented on the potential of technology to provide equitable and quality educational access to children from Nomads, Semi-nomads and Denotified Tribes, helping to align their opportunities with those of urban children. He stressed the need for concerted efforts to bridge gaps in various child development indicators compared to the national average.

There is an urgent need for empirical data, necessitating research focused on the wide range of challenges faced by the children of sex workers and marginalized communities.



Mrs Anita Sinha, Joint Secretary, NHRC, India gave an overview of the open house discussion and highlighted the significant challenges the children of sex workers and marginalized communities face—such as social stigma, limited access to education and healthcare, and increased vulnerability to exploitation while emphasizing the importance of creating supportive environments for their development. She also highlighted the initiatives of the NHRC, India on the issues concerning the Rights of Children. The first session explored the rights of children of sex workers and their challenges, including social stigma, lack of access to education and healthcare, and increased vulnerability to exploitation. In the second session, the rights of children from marginalized communities were discussed, highlighting their specific needs and barriers to accessing essential services. Finally, the discussions focused on the way forward, innovative strategies and collaborative efforts among the various stakeholders—including policymakers, NGOs, and civil society organizations—to enhance the protection and promotion of these children's rights.

► A section of participants



Some of the key suggestions that emerged during the discussions were as follows:

- I.) There is an urgent need for empirical data, necessitating research focused on the wide range of challenges faced by the children of sex workers and marginalized communities, along with an impact assessment of various government schemes;
- ii.) Capacity-building and sensitization programs for teachers, police officers, social workers and law enforcement officials are necessary to sensitize them to the unique backgrounds and experiences of these children, facilitating better communication and understanding;
- iii.) Proper documentation, such as Aadhaar cards, should be made accessible to these sex workers and their children to facilitate their admissions to schools and the processes of obtaining their necessary identification and documentation should be streamlined;
- iv.) The government portals should make mentioning of the mother's name mandatory instead of the father's name. The option to give the name of the guardian should be added;
- v.) Ensure proper implementation of existing schemes and laws designed to protect the rights of children of sex workers and marginalized communities;
- vi.) Developing community-based care models tailored to the unique needs of these groups is required to provide holistic support to these children;

The government portals should make mentioning of the mother's name mandatory instead of the father's name.

- vii.) There is also a crucial need for the employment and active engagement of trained social workers to foster trust and facilitate access to necessary services for the children of sex workers and marginalized communities.

The open house discussion was attended by Mr Ajay Bhatnagar, Director General (Investigation) and Mr Joginder Singh, Registrar (Law), NHRC, Mr Sanjeev Kumar Chadha, Addl. Secretary, Union Ministry of Women and Child Development, Mr Ganga Kumar Sinha, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, Mrs Meenakshi Negi, Member Secretary, National Commission for Women, Mr Ajay Srivastava, Economic Adviser, Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Ms Naseema Khatoon, Founder Parcham, Ms Lalita SA, Vice President Society for Participatory Integrated Development, Mr Prabhat Kumar, Child Protection Specialist, UNICEF, Prof. (Dr.) Asha Bajpai, Former Professor of Law & Founding Dean, School of Law, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mr Jaya Singh Thomas, Founder General Secretary, Chaithanya Mahila Mandali, Prof. Neena Pandey, Department of Social Work, University of Delhi, Prof. (Dr.) Paromita Chatteraj, Professor of Law, National Law University, Odisha, Dr. Veerendra Mishra, (IPS) Director, Samvedna, Mrs Uma Subramanian, Director, Rati Foundation, Mr Siddharth Pillai, Co-Founder, Rati Foundation, Advocate Sneha Singh, Child Rights Lawyer, Mr. Ajeet Singh, Founder and Director, Guria, Prof. Jyoti Dogra, University of Delhi, Ms Priya Krishnan, Representative from Kat-Katha, Mrs Subhasree Raptan, Programme Manager, Goranbose Gram Bikash Kendra, Mrs Bishakha Laskar, Secretary, Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee.

Article

Silicosis: A Looming Health Crisis

Silicosis is a serious lung disease caused by long-term inhalation of dust containing crystalline silica particles, found in various natural and industrial materials such as sand, rock, artificial stone, and quartz. In India, the rampant infrastructural development and mining activities, which provide substantial employment in the largely informal sector, have made this a pressing health concern.

Understanding Silicosis

Empirical studies indicate that silicosis primarily affects individuals exposed to silica dust for five to ten years, though heavy exposure in industries like mining, sandblasting, quarrying, glass cutting, ceramics, and construction can lead to an earlier onset. The inhalation of silica dust progressively blocks lung function, causing breathlessness and leading to irreversible lung damage. Currently, silicosis is incurable; the only effective strategy is preventive measures against dust inhalation. According to the 2023-24 annual report from the Union Ministry of Labour and Employment, airborne diseases like asbestosis, coal worker's pneumoconiosis and silicosis are preventable but not curable. Symptoms often overlap with those of tuberculosis, such as coughing and shortness of breath, complicating diagnosis. Early diagnosis of silicosis is difficult because standard X-rays often fail to reveal the disease. This can delay the necessary medical advice that might prevent further deterioration, even if it cannot cure the condition, ultimately helping to prolong the patient's life.

The Global Perspective

Silicosis is not an exception to India, as it's a global health concern given rapid all-round development and construction activities. According to a report on Global Health Metrics by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation in 2019, around 2.65 million people globally were diagnosed with silicosis, leading to over 12,900 deaths that year. Silicosis accounted for 75% of lung diseases caused by dust exposure. A 2023 study by Mihir P. Rupani in the Journal of Occupational Medicine and Toxicology projects that by 2025, India will house about 25% of the global workforce (approximately 0.8 billion), with roughly 92% engaged in the informal sector. The number of workers employed in silica dust-related occupations in India is estimated to grow from 11.5 million in 2015-16 to 52 million by 2025-26.

In India, Rajasthan, known for its sandstone mining, accounts for over 23% of silicosis cases. The National Institute of Occupational Health (NIOH) estimates that around 10% of workers in high-risk sectors have silicosis, though actual

Silicosis is not an exception to India, as it's a global health concern given rapid all-round development and construction activities.

numbers may be significantly higher due to underdiagnosis and the lack of effective data reporting. This is affirmed by the 2023-24 annual report of the Union Ministry of Labour and Employment indicating only a few hundred cases of silicosis over a period of more than a decade, which is quite unlikely.

The role of the NHRC

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India has worked to elevate awareness of silicosis within the public health sector besides looking into the complaints of human rights violations due to silicosis since 1995. However, discussions around the disease remain limited, primarily due to a lack of public discourse. Many workers engaged in high-risk sectors are unaware of the dangers they face, leading to significant financial stress on families and an unnecessary burden on the healthcare system.

A significant recent development occurred on 6th August, 2024, when the Supreme Court of India directed the National Green Tribunal (NGT) to monitor industries at risk for silicosis. This ruling emerged from a 2006 writ petition filed by the Peoples Rights and Social Research Centre (PRASAR) and others. The Court also mandated that the NHRC streamline the compensation process for affected individuals and their families across various states.

In a major complaint about 238 silicosis victims in 2007-08, the NHRC recommended monetary relief to them. They were from the then Jhabua and now Alirajpur district in Madhya Pradesh and contracted the disease while working in the quartz-crushing factories of Godhra and Balasinor in Gujarat. It proactively took up the cause of silicosis victims on a remit from the Supreme Court in 2009 while hearing the same petition as referred above. The Commission in 2009, constituted an Expert Group on Silicosis and with its assistance prepared a set of recommendations on Preventive, Remedial, Rehabilitative and Compensation aspects of Silicosis.

It also vigorously sought, through a questionnaire from all the States, the status of the silicosis-affected people and details of specific budgetary

provisions to meet the healthcare and financial needs of its victims and their families besides putting in place preventive measures to check dust in the air. While states like Haryana, Rajasthan, and Gujarat have made some progress, others have yet to develop concrete policies.

The NHRC, India has also presented a status report on silicosis before the Parliament, emphasizing the need for proactive intervention from political leaders. These various initiatives were compiled in the book 'NHRC Interventions on Silicosis' in 2016 as a resource material. More recently, while hearing a *suo motu* case regarding air pollution in Delhi- NCR due to stubble burning, the Commission expanded its ambit to ascertain from the respective Chief Secretaries, in the online hearing, the arrangements made by various states and union territory administrations to check dust also in the atmosphere.

Legal and Legislative Measures

India has enacted various laws aimed at controlling occupational health hazards, but enforcement remains a challenge. Key legislative measures include:

Factories Act, 1948: Mandates the control of hazardous substances and requires employers to implement effective measures to prevent inhalation of dust.

Mines Act, 1952: Specifically addresses mining operations and includes provisions for controlling dust in mines.

Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020: Consolidates labour laws related to occupational health and safety, focusing on protecting workers from hazardous substances.

Employees' Compensation Act, 1923: Provides compensation for workers suffering from occupational diseases like silicosis. However, many workers in high-risk sectors often remain uncompensated due to the informal nature of these jobs.

NHRC Guidelines: The NHRC has issued guidelines for the prevention, diagnosis, and

Awareness campaigns are essential to educate both workers and employers about the dangers of silica dust and the necessary protective measures.

compensation of silicosis victims, advocating for mandatory health check-ups and timely compensation for affected workers and their families.

Supreme Court Intervention: The Court has intervened in cases to ensure compensation and rehabilitation for silicosis-affected workers, including a notable ruling that directed the Gujarat state government to provide compensation and medical care to the victims.

Government Initiatives and Challenges

The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched a National Programme for Control and Treatment of Occupational Diseases in 1998 to manage diseases like silicosis. However, its implementation has been inconsistent across states. Some states, such as Rajasthan, Haryana, and Gujarat, have developed policies to address silicosis, including financial compensation for victims and mandatory health check-ups for workers in high-risk industries.

For instance, Rajasthan has introduced a comprehensive policy that provides compensation and establishes rehabilitation centres for the people suffering with silicosis. Similarly, Haryana has a scheme for identifying and compensating victims, offering financial assistance to those diagnosed and ex-gratia payments to the families of deceased workers.

Despite these legislative frameworks, enforcement remains challenging. A lack of comprehensive national data on silicosis impedes effective policymaking, and safety regulations are often not adhered to, particularly in the informal sector. This oversight can lead to significant health hazards for workers and their communities.

The Way Forward

Preventive measures may offer greater benefits than treating existing cases of silicosis. Establishing a comprehensive national health program focusing on silicosis within the public health system is crucial. Such a program would enhance surveillance, notification, and management of workers exposed to silica dust.

Awareness campaigns are essential to educate both workers and employers about the dangers of silica dust and the necessary protective measures. The workers having symptoms of breathlessness need to be assisted for timely diagnosis of silicosis for appropriate medical advice and to approach the NHRC if financial assistance is not provided by the state for the same. Their proactive integration with digital healthcare through the Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA) under the Ayushman Bharat Scheme holds the key to

providing medical care to all. Therefore, collaboration among government agencies, civil society, and medical experts is imperative, particularly in light of recent Supreme Court rulings and NHRC guidelines. By prioritizing awareness and prevention, India can effectively tackle the silicosis crisis and protect the health of its workforce. For this, strengthening legislation and improving enforcement will be key to ensuring that the rights and well-being of workers are safeguarded in an era of rapid industrial development.

Article

Indian Juvenile Justice System:

Need for stress on rehabilitation and reintegration

- **Mr Mahesh Singla**
Special Rapporteur, NHRC



The Juvenile Justice Act in India has evolved significantly over the years, starting with legislative efforts in the 19th century, such as the Indian Penal Code of 1860, which stated that, “nothing is an offence if committed by a child under seven years old or by a child between seven and twelve years old who has not attained sufficient maturity to understand the consequences of their actions.” But in a real sense, Juvenile Justice Act of 1986, which was replaced by the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000, established the Indian Juvenile Justice System.

Subsequently, the evolution culminated in the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, which was influenced both by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the infamous 2012 Delhi 'Nirbhaya gang rape and murder case,' which compelled the Government to address issues including heinous crimes by children, delays in the adoption process, the high number of pending cases, and the accountability of institutions. The Act emphasizes a reformed approach focused on rehabilitation and reintegration, with a stress on minimizing contact with the conventional criminal justice system. This led to specific provisions such as involving the Juvenile Justice Board in decision-making processes and establishing mechanisms for rehabilitation, aftercare, and foster homes to facilitate the reintegration of Children in Conflict with the Law (CCLs) into society. Efforts are being made to ensure adequate implementation of the Act's provisions, facilitate robust follow-up programs, and address shortcomings in Child Care Institutions (CCIs).

The Act places enough importance on rehabilitation through a restorative justice lens, underlining the need for a multidimensional approach to address various aspects of a child's life, including emotional, physical, relational, intellectual, creative, and spiritual needs. Children who come into contact with the juvenile justice system often grow up in difficult circumstances and environments and are deprived of a safe and secure childhood. Because of this, the Act recognizes the role of various stakeholders, such as CCIs, probation officers, social workers, aftercare and foster homes, in ensuring successful rehabilitation and reintegration.

Furthermore, it mandates the engagement of the education system to provide opportunities for the academic development of CCLs. Further, the Act removed anomalies noticed

during the 'Nirbhaya Case,' which addresses the need for a trial of juveniles aged 16 to 18 in the context of heinous offences and includes provisions for their treatment as adults in such cases.

According to the Supreme Court of India, 'the Act was promulgated to deal with offences committed by minors in a manner different from the law applicable to adults.' It also introduces inclusive adoption regulations and grants powers to the Juvenile Justice Board to issue orders related to the child's participation in group counselling, community service, probation for good conduct, and attendance at educational or vocational institutions. The Act is firmly rooted in the principle of restorative justice, aiming to ensure humane treatment, no corporal punishment, and separation from adult criminals for CCLs.

During the visits to Child Care Institutions (CCIs) in Punjab and Haryana, specific issues were identified regarding the implementation of the Juvenile Justice Act of 2015. The facilities often resemble jail cells, are overcrowded, and lack proper infrastructure and recreational spaces, which hinder rehabilitation efforts. There is also a shortage of qualified counsellors and vocational training. The emphasis should be on holistic rehabilitation, including education, mental health care, and skill development. One major issue, as pointed out, is the lack of adequate

Overall, the JJ Act of 2015 presents a comprehensive legal framework that prioritizes reform and rehabilitation over punishment for juvenile offenders.

infrastructure and trained personnel to support rehabilitative measures. There is a need for coordinated follow-up programs to prevent recidivism, along with the involvement of the Government and NGOs in these initiatives.

Overall, the JJ Act of 2015 presents a comprehensive legal framework that prioritizes reform and rehabilitation over punishment for juvenile offenders. It also underscores the necessity of a collective and proactive effort to ensure the effective implementation of its provisions, particularly in areas such as mental health care, vocational skill development, education, and post-release support programs.

However, as revealed during ground visits, additional measures are essential to realize the Act's vision of a reformatory justice system that prepares CCLs for successful reintegration into society. There is a pressing need to prioritize rehabilitation and reintegration. A child-centric approach that emphasizes care, protection, and support can help in transforming the lives of juvenile offenders and integrating them into society. Improving the system includes investing in infrastructure and resources, providing training for stakeholders, involving the community in the rehabilitation process, adopting individualized approaches for each juvenile, and regularly monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs.

Suo motu cognizance

Themedia 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* cognizance of many such issues and brought succour to the victims of human rights violations. During September 2024, the Commission took *suo motu* cognizance in five 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:

Hidden cameras found in girls' hostel washroom

(Case No. 1333/1/10/2024-WC)

The media reported that over 300 photos and videos were allegedly

taken with the help of a hidden camera in the washroom of the girls' hostel of an Engineering College in the Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh. The incident unfolded when a group of students discovered the camera and

raised an alarm triggering a protest. Reportedly, some students in the boy's hostel bought these videos for which a student was being questioned by the police.

The Commission has issued notices to the Chief Secretaries and Directors General of Police of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka calling for a detailed report including the status of the FIR registered by the police. The report is also expected to mention the steps taken/ proposed by the authorities to ensure that such incidents do not recur.

Communal tension

(Case No. 745/36/19/2024-WC)

On 5th September, 2024, the media reported that an attempt to rape and murder a woman escalated into a situation of communal tension and violence amidst a protest by the Tribal organizations in the Jainoor town of Kumuram Bheem Asifabad district, Telangana on 4th September, 2024. Some shops and commercial establishments were burnt, and a religious place was pelted with stones. The administration had to impose a curfew and a ban on internet services in the affected region; additional forces were also deployed. Reportedly, the accused perpetrator was arrested, and the elders of the communities pacified the situation.

The Commission has issued notices to the Chief Secretary and Director General of Police, Telangana calling for a detailed report. It is also expected to include the status of the FIR, the health, counselling and compensation to the victim by the State authorities.

Death of the baby due to medical negligence

(Case No. 918/34/6/2024)

The media reported that a woman in labour pain was not attended for about 27 hours at MGM Hospital, Jamshedpur, Jharkhand after she was referred by a Community Health

Centre for better medical care. Reportedly, she had to lie on the floor as there was no bed available in the hospital. However, having received no treatment, her child died in the womb the next day. It was also reported that another woman who had given birth to a child was also being treated on the floor in the hospital. The Commission has issued notice to the Chief Secretary, Government of Jharkhand calling for a detailed report. It is also expected to include the status of health of the victim woman and the availability of beds as well as other facilities in the government hospitals in the State. The report should also mention if any compensation was paid to the aggrieved family by the authorities.

Death due to excessive workload in a multi-national company

(Case No. 1977/13/23/2024)

On 18th September, 2024, the media reported that a 26-year-old chartered accountant girl from Kerala died in Pune, Maharashtra on 20th July, 2024, allegedly, due to excessive workload at Ernst & Young. She had joined the company only four months ago. Reportedly, the mother had written a letter to the employer claiming that long hours of work had taken a heavy toll on her daughter's physical, emotional and mental health, a charge denied by the company.

The Commission has observed that the death of the young employee due to overwork has indicated that there is an immediate need to take steps by all the stakeholders in this regard in the country. Accordingly, it has issued a notice to the Union Ministry of Labour and Employment, calling for a detailed report. The Commission would also like to know the outcome of the investigation, reportedly, being conducted in the instant matter. Apart from this, the Commission would also like to know the steps being taken and proposed to ensure such incidents do not recur.

Death due to electrocution

(Case No. 1921/12/15/2024)

On 26th September, 2024, the media reported that two students, belonging to a Scheduled Tribe, got electrocuted to death while cleaning a water tank of a government-run hostel on the instructions of the Superintendent in the Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh on 25th September, 2024. Reportedly, the students came into contact with a live wire connected to a water pump inside the tank. The Commission has issued a notice to the Chief Secretary and the Director General of Police, Government of Madhya Pradesh, calling for a detailed report. It is also expected to include the status of the police investigation and compensation, if any, paid to the aggrieved families of both the victims.



Recommendations for relief to the victims

One of the primary responsibilities of the National Human Rights Commission is to address cases of human rights violations, listen to the grievances of victims, and recommend appropriate relief in such instances. It regularly

takes up various such cases and gives directions and recommendations to the concerned authorities for relief to the victims. In September 2024, monetary relief of more than Rs. 67.5 lakh was recommended for the victims or their next of kin (NoK) in the 14

cases, wherein it was 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:

S. No.	Case Number	Nature of complaint	Amount (Rs. in lakh)	Authority
1.	315/30/0/2021-JCD	Death in judicial custody	7.00	Delhi
2.	295/7/2/2023-JCD	Death in judicial custody	5.00	Haryana
3.	1967/34/6/2021-JCD	Death in judicial custody	5.00	Jharkhand
4.	77/34/24/2021-JCD	Death in judicial custody	5.00	Jharkhand
5.	809/34/6/2023-JCD	Death in judicial custody	5.00	Jharkhand
6.	331/20/26/2023-JCD	Death in judicial custody	5.00	Rajasthan
7.	29317/24/32/2023-JCD	Death in judicial custody	5.00	Uttar Pradesh
8.	26695/24/53/2022-DH	Death in juvenile home	5.00	Uttar Pradesh
9.	21/18/7/2024	Starvation deaths	3.00	Odisha
10.	27668/24/54/2020-WC	Abduction, rape and murder	15.00	Uttar Pradesh
11.	3263/12/8/2022	Sexual assault by school bus driver	2.00	Madhya Pradesh
12.	1802/30/8/2022	Inaction by authorities leading to cyber fraud	1.50	Delhi
13.	805/4/11/2024	Death due to negligence of civic agencies	3.00	Bihar
14.	415/18/7/2024	Injury to students in roof collapse at a school	1.00	Odisha

Payment of relief to the victims

The Commission closed 10 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 Rs. 30.75 lakh 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 Number	Nature of complaint	Amount (Rs. in lakh)	Authority
1.	2844/7/15/2022-JCD	Death in judicial custody	5.00	Haryana
2.	295/7/2/2023-JCD	Death in judicial custody	5.00	Haryana
3.	3207/7/3/2022-JCD	Death in judicial custody	5.00	Haryana

S. No.	Case Number	Nature of complaint	Amount (Rs. in lakh)	Authority
4.	117/7/5/2021-AD	Death in judicial custody	5.00	Haryana
5.	3161/30/9/2019-PCD	Death in police custody	5.00	Delhi
6.	2267/1/10/2022	Non-payment of pension/ compensation	0.50	Andhra Pradesh
7.	7044/30/4/2022	Non-payment of pension/ compensation	0.50	Delhi
8.	4847/25/11/2022	Non-payment of salary/ wages	0.25	West Bengal
9.	2660/18/4/2021	Suicide of an inmate in a government-run NGO	4.00	Odisha
10.	5186/24/42/2022	Non-registration of FIR in a case of abduction	0.50	Uttar Pradesh

Case studies

In many cases, the Commission, contrary to the claims of the concerned State authorities found that the human rights of the victims were violated due to their lawful action, inaction or omission. Therefore, the Commission, under the Protection of Human Rights Act, not only recommended punitive action against erring officials on a case-to-case basis but also recommended monetary relief to the victims of human rights violations or their next of kin. The Commission also received reports of compliance with its recommendations by the respective state authorities. Summaries of some of these cases are as under:

Non-settlement of Employees Deposit Linked Insurance

(Case No. 2267/1/10/2022)

The matter pertained to the non-settlement of the Employees Deposit Linked Insurance (EDLI) claim by the Employees Provident Fund office after the death of an employee in 2018 in Krishna District of Andhra Pradesh. Even after multiple requests, his wife was not able to claim the amount from the concerned authorities. The Commission took cognizance of the matter and sought a report from the State authorities. Based on the material on record received in response to the notices, the Commission found the reason for the delay was mainly due to the submission of delayed clarifications by the employing private company on the objections raised by the EPFO vis-a-vis the date of exit and name in the muster roll of the deceased employee.

It also noted that the private employer did not fulfill the victim's legal

obligations as mentioned in the Employees' Deposit-Linked Insurance Scheme, 1976. The failure to update the victim's service and other details during his employment and more than four years after his death resulted in the delay of payment. The Commission recommended that the Commissioner, EPFO, pay Rs. 50,000/- as a relief to the victim's wife, which was paid.

Death of a man at a government-funded NGO

(Case No. 2660/18/4/2021)

The matter pertained to a complaint alleging the death at a government-funded NGO 'Chetana' under Gondia Police Station in Dhenkanal, Odisha in 2021. Reportedly, the deceased was admitted to the facility on the evening of 24.10.2021 and was found hanging inside a toilet of this centre the next morning. The complainant alleged that her son was killed by the authorities of the NGO and thereafter they hanged his dead body inside the toilet

to destroy the evidence and to mislead the police.

Based on the material on record, received from the concerned State authorities in response to its notices, the Commission did not find any evidence of physical torture or foul play confirming the allegations in the complaint. The cause of death of the inmate was due to suicide committed by him. However, it observed that the negligence on the part of the NGO and dereliction of duty on the part of the District Social Security Officer cannot be ruled out for which the State was vicariously liable. Accordingly, the Commission recommended that the Government of Odisha pay Rs. 4 lakh as relief to the next of kin of the deceased, which was paid.

Non-payment of salary

(Case No. 4847/25/11/2022)

The matter pertained to the non-payment of the salary of an employee for 12 months. He had been working

under the Gramin Krishi Mausam Scheme funded by the India Meteorological Department in collaboration with the Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR). The issue remained unresolved despite approaching the concerned authorities several times. The Commission issued notices to the concerned authority and based on the material received in response, it was informed that now the pending salary of the complainant was released, and the delays were primarily caused by the revised procedures for fund disbursement under the CSS, along with the involvement of multiple agencies. However, the Commission, not satisfied with the response behind the delay in disbursement of the salary, recommended that the DG, Department of Meteorology pay Rs. 25,000/- as interim relief to the complainant, which was paid.

Delay in family pension

(Case No. 398/30/7/2023)

The matter pertained to the failure to appoint the complainant's son on a compassionate basis after her husband's death, who was a state government employee in New Delhi in 2022. She also alleged that due to the state government not releasing his pension and other benefits, her family

faced financial difficulties. Based on the material on record, in response to its notices, the Commission found that, as this is a service matter, the complainant has the right to pursue legal options regarding her request for a compassionate appointment for her son. However, the Commission took a serious view of the non-payment of pensionary dues to the family of the employee even after a year of his demise. Therefore, the Commission directed the Chief Secretary, Government of Chhattisgarh to look into the issue and ensure the release of all pensionary dues including the gratuity of the deceased, which was paid.

Death due to electrocution

(Case No. 30575/24/7/2023)

The matter pertained to the non-payment of any relief to the family of a victim of electrocution due to the negligence of public authorities in Badaun, Uttar Pradesh on 28.05.2023. The victim's wife made complaints with the authorities concerned but no relief was paid. The Commission issued notices to the concerned authorities to know the status of the case. It was eventually informed that a lineman and another contractual employee were found guilty of violation of Rules 29 and 36 of the

Electricity Rules, 1956. The victim's wife was also paid monetary relief of Rs. 5 lakh.

Death in police custody

(Case No. 1142/13/34/2021-ad)

The matter pertained to the death of one of the three accused in a theft case in police custody in Gondia district, Maharashtra in 2021. Based on the material on record, received in response to its notice in the matter to the concerned state authorities, the Commission found that the Enquiry Magistrate concluded that the victim's death was caused by the injuries on his head, ill-treatment and physical violence in the presence of five police personnel including the Inspector of the police station. Further, they did not provide timely treatment to the victim of their atrocity and removed CCTV footage to conceal the evidence of the offence. The Commission recommended that the Government of Maharashtra pay Rs. 7.5 lakh to the next of kin of the deceased, which was paid. The State Government also informed that a criminal case 155/2021 was registered at the Amgaon police station against all the accused police personnel under Sections 302, 330, 34 of the IPC.

Field visits

The Chairperson, Members and senior officers of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India visit various places in the country from time to time to assess the human rights situation and the status of the implementation of the Commission's advisories, guidelines and recommendations by the respective state governments and their concerned authorities. They also visit shelter homes, prisons, observation homes, etc. and sensitize the government functionaries to make necessary efforts towards ameliorating the cause of human rights. Submission of timely reports by the state authorities to help the Commission in the early disposal of cases of human rights violations is also emphasized.

NHRC Acting Chairperson visits institutions and student hostels

On 17th September, 2024, NHRC, India Acting Chairperson, Mrs Vijaya Bharathi Sayani conducted a surprise visit to Tribal hostels for boys and girls in Kadiri in Sri Sathya Sai District, Andhra Pradesh. She interacted with the members of the Bar Association, social activists, teachers' group, youth association and



district officials. She also briefed them about various aspects of human rights and the functioning of the Commission.

On 24th September, 2024, she also made a surprise visit to the government-run BC Girls Hostel in Gollagudem, Tadepalligudem in West Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh. She interacted with the girls and noted their grievances. This visit came after NHRC's *suo motu* cognizance of the reported malnutrition and sexual harassment of girls in the hostel. The students are of Higher Secondary, Degree and PG courses.

After the surprise inspection, the District Administration swung into action and ordered the immediate shifting of the hostel to a new building on 25th September, 2024. She noted that despite the Government spending crores on the maintenance of hostels, this facility had cramped rooms for 52 students, and lacked cleanliness, proper food facilities, toilets, drinking water and lighting. She asked the District Administration to take corrective measures.

NHRC intervention at the highest level resulted in the Joint Collector, T. Rahul Kr Reddy visiting the hostel. He was appalled to see its condition and cautioned staff that action would be taken against them for negligence.

Special Rapporteurs and Special Monitors

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India has designated 14 Special Rapporteurs to monitor human rights conditions across various regions of the country. They conduct visits to shelter homes,

prisons, observation homes, and similar institutions, compiling reports for the Commission that detail their observations and suggestions for future action. Additionally, the Commission has appointed 21 Special Monitors tasked with overseeing specific thematic human rights issues and reporting their findings to the Commission. Throughout September 2024, both Special Rapporteurs and Monitors conducted visits to numerous locations.

Special Rapporteurs

- From 11th to 13th September, 2024, Mr. Mahesh Kumar Singla visited government run Training Centers for Adult Blind, Panipat, Haryana to assess the condition of the inmates and the facilities made available to them.
- From 22nd to 28th September, 2024, Mr. Umesh Kumar visited the Health Care Institutions catering to Primary, Secondary and Tertiary levels of healthcare in Gwalior, Chhatarpur and Datia districts of Madhya Pradesh to assess the human rights situation and the condition of the inmates at the facility.
- From 25th to 30th September, 2024 Mrs Suchitra Sinha visited various institutions including Cheshire Home, National Association for Blind, School of Hope



& Parents Association of Mentally Handicapped, Asha Kiran, Gynaecology Department of MGM Hospital in Saraikela Kharsawan and East Singhbhum districts, Jharkhand to assess the human rights situation and facilities available.



- On 27th September, 2024 Mr. Ashit Mohan Prasad visited the open jail in Bangalore City, Karnataka to assess the facility made available to the inmates.
- From 25th to 30th September, 2024, Mr. Umesh Kumar visited the Blind Institute, School for Hearing Impaired, Children Home and Adoption agency in Jorhat, Assam to assess the facilities and human rights situation.

Special Monitors

- From 17th - 22nd September, 2024, Mr. Veerendra Singh Rawat visited the police training institute prone to human rights violations in Bihar.
- From 17th - 20th September, 2024, Dr. Yogesh Dube District Varanasi and Jaunpur (Uttar Pradesh) for on-the-spot inspection of various public premises and data collection regarding the implementation of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.
- From 16th - 22nd September, 2024, Mr. Balkrishan Goel visited Old Age Homes, Child Care Institutions, Observation Homes & Senior Citizen Helpline Centre etc. in Uttarakhand to see the facilities made available to the inmates.

Capacity building

Online short-term internship concludes

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India organized its two-week online short-term internship program from 17th to 30th September, 2024, and 77 students from various universities and regions of the country,

► NHRC, India Acting Chairperson, Mrs Vijaya Bharathi Sayani addressing the valedictory session



including remote areas, completed it. The online format enabled the participation of students without incurring any expenses related to travel or accommodation in Delhi.

Addressing the valedictory session, Mrs Vijaya Bharathi Sayani, Acting Chairperson, NHRC, India encouraged the interns to evolve into human rights defenders for promoting and protecting the rights of the weaker sections of society. She urged them to understand the challenges faced by vulnerable groups and be proactive in addressing their concerns. Highlighting the NHRC's mandate, she reiterated that the Commission is committed to

► NHRC, India Acting Chairperson, Mrs Vijaya Bharathi Sayani, Secretary General, Mr Bharat Lal and Joint Secretary, Mr D.K Nim



organizing such internship programs to sensitize students about the importance of protecting basic human rights.

Before this, congratulating the interns on their successful completion of their internship, Mr. Bharat Lal, Secretary General, NHRC expressed the hope that the interns would internalize the knowledge gained during the internship and make the best use of it in promoting and protecting human rights. He asked the interns to get inspiration from the lives and works of great human rights defenders like Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King, who dedicated their lives to the selfless service of the people. He encouraged the participants to reflect on the positive changes they could bring to society by practicing the human rights values and principles learnt during the internship.

Mr. Devendra Kumar Nim, Joint Secretary, NHRC, presented the internship report during the session and announced the winners of the book review, group research project presentation, and declamation competition. Five interns spoke on this occasion and shared their valued experiences. The ceremony concluded with a vote of thanks by Lt. Col. Virender Singh, Director, NHRC.

The NHRC is mandated to protect and promote human rights throughout India. To expand its outreach and awareness initiatives, the Commission conducts internship programs in both online and offline modes. Through these programs, the NHRC continues to strengthen its commitment to educating and empowering the next generation of human rights defenders.

Collaborative programmes

Outreach in southern India to train trainers for expanding human rights awareness

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India has been making concerted efforts to expand its outreach to build human rights awareness in various parts of the country. The Commission organized a three-day training of trainers' programme on human rights in Telangana for about 50 officers including police personnel and representatives from the Women & Child Development and Social Welfare Departments, Government of Telangana from 9th to 11th September, 2024. It was held in collaboration with the Centre for Law and Public Administration at Dr. MCR Human Resource Development Institute of Telangana. It aimed at equipping participants with the knowledge to further promote human rights advocacy in their respective domains.

The programme brought together experts from academia, law enforcement, and the judiciary. Addressing the valedictory session, Dr. Shashank Goel, Director General and Special Chief Secretary of the Government of Telangana, emphasized the importance of collective responsibility in protecting human rights, especially for vulnerable groups. He commended the participants for

their dedication and acknowledged the NHRC's efforts in organizing such training programmes.

The training sessions covered various aspects of human rights, including among others, constitutional provisions, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, national and international mechanisms for the protection of human rights, women's rights, children's rights, and the rights of other vulnerable groups. The programme also included discussions on the functioning of the NHRC, India and various State Human Rights Commissions.

The day one session included an overview of the course, constitutional provisions on human rights, followed by interactive sessions by Professor A. S. Ramachandra, Professor (Retd.), Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LABASNA). This was followed by sessions focussing on women's rights, with a presentation by Mr. Srinivas Madhav, Consultant at MCR HRD Institute. He discussed women's rights under the Constitution and international law. Later, Mr. Umapathy, IPS, led a session addressing critical women's issues, including



► A training session in progress



► Participants of the training of trainers' programme

trafficking, domestic violence, and female foeticide.

On day two, Mr. Damodhar, IPS (Retd.) gave an overview of human rights institutions in India and the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993. Mr. Srinivas Madhav focused on the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007, and the rights of persons with disabilities and transgender. This was followed by discussions on female foeticide, the Persons with Disabilities Act, and the Protection of Human Rights Act.

On day three, Mrs G. Jhansi Rani, Course Coordinator, Dr. MCR Human Resource Development Institute took a session on Active Bystander Intervention and the importance of intervening in cases of human rights violations. Dr. Madhavi Ravulapati, Senior Faculty &

Head - Centre for Public Administration (CPA), Dr. MCR HRD IT, spoke about sexual harassment in the workplace, and the mechanisms available for addressing complaints.

The training of trainers' programme represents a significant step in advancing human rights promotion and advocacy in the southern region, reflecting the NHRC's steadfast commitment to fostering respect and understanding of human rights. The NHRC continues to work with renewed vigour in collaboration with central and state governments, their parastatal organizations, academic institutions, NGOs, and human rights defenders to protect and promote the human rights of all. The Commission remains dedicated to ensuring individual dignity and respect, advancing the cause of human rights as an essential pillar of a just and equitable society.

Workshops

Besides this, the Commission also supported four other collaborative human rights awareness workshops during September, 2024, which were held by the College of Horticulture and Forestry, Central Agricultural University (CAU), Pasighat, Arunachal Pradesh, Indian Law Institute, New Delhi, and Jeppiar Institute of Technology, Kunnathur, Sriperumbudur, Kunnathur, Tamil Nadu. More than 400 participants attended the training programmes.



► NHRC, India Joint Secretary, Mr Devendra Kumar Nim addressing a session on the role of the Commission in promoting and protecting human rights in the two-day training programme for Police Personnel at the Indian Law Institute, New Delhi.

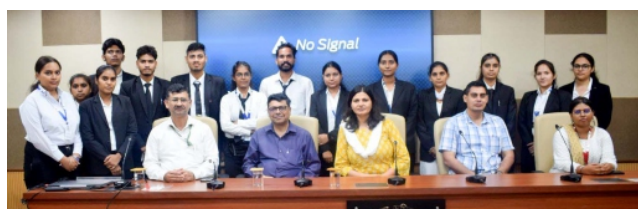
Moot Court

On 20th September, 2024, the Commission organized a moot court competition in collaboration with Hidayatullah National Law University, Raipur, Chhattisgarh. Acting Chairperson, Mrs Vijaya Bharathi Sayani presided over the function as the Chief Guest. NHRC Registrar (Law), Mr. Joginder Singh was also present. About 20 teams from various parts of the country competed in the 3-day moot court competition with a focus on issues concerning Tribal Rights.



Students' visit

To promote human rights awareness among college-level students and their faculties, the National Human Rights Commission invites them to visit the Commission to understand human rights, their protection mechanism, and its functioning for this purpose in line with the Protection of Human Rights Act, (PHRA) 1993. During September 2024, more than 350 students and their faculty members from 8 colleges visited the Commission. They were briefed by the senior officers on the functioning of the Law & Investigation Divisions and the Complaint Management System of the Commission and related aspects. They were also administered the human rights pledge. They included students and faculty from JIMS Engineering Management Technical Campus, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh, Law Centre-II, Faculty of Law, University of Delhi, Institute of Home Economics, University of Delhi, Janki Devi Memorial College, University of Delhi, Guru Kashi University, Bhatinda in Punjab, Faculty of Law, SGT University, Gurugram, and Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi.



NHRC Hindi Fortnight

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India organized Hindi Fortnight (Hindi Pakhwada) on 17th September, 2024 in commemoration of Hindi Diwas celebrated on 14th September every year since 1953. Inaugurating it, Mr. Bharat Lal, Secretary General said that the Hindi language connects people in the country. It played a major role in the country's freedom struggle.

He said that a language reflects the culture of a society. Therefore, it is necessary to promote the use of Hindi and all the regional languages to spread awareness about Indian culture and society. He said that we must all try to

learn the Hindi language as well as at least one regional language. For all of us, expression in the mother tongue is always easier, more personal and truer to our thoughts, and therefore should also be used. On the occasion, Mr. Devendra Kumar Nim, Joint Secretary, NHRC said that a language creates a national identity. Therefore, it is a collective responsibility to promote the use of the Official Language in our day-to-day lives and official work. The Hindi Diwas commemorates the adoption of Hindi as the official language by the Constituent Assembly. The Commission organized several competitions during the fortnight for its officers and staff to promote the use of Hindi in their work.



NHRC in the International arena

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India continues to engage with various international programmes to foster an exchange of ideas on various aspects of human rights. Several foreign institutional delegates visit the Commission and meet the Chairperson, Members and senior officers to understand the functioning of the Commission for the promotion and protection of human rights. The Commission's Chairperson, Members and other senior officers also visit various international forums to share their thoughts on the achievements of the Commission, interact with other NHRIs, and discuss the challenges to human rights in the fast-evolving world.

NHRC, India delegation attends 3-day international conference in Nepal

From 3rd to 4th September, 2024, NHRC, India Acting Chairperson, Mrs Vijaya Bharathi Sayani visited Kathmandu to attend the inaugural function of the 3-day international conference organized by NHRC, Nepal on 'Gender inclusion

in NHRIs' wherein the Prime Minister of Nepal, Mr. K.P. Sharma Oli was the Chief Guest. On the next day, she participated in a panel discussion on 'Integrating Gender Perspective in Policy and Legislative Review by NHRIs' as part of this conference.

Emphasizing how NHRIs can look into gender equality and inclusive policy issues, she highlighted that NHRC, India has always strived to make suggestions for such matters and draft Bills to protect women's rights. These include, among others, the Prevention of Sexual Harassment Act, 2013, the Protection from Domestic Violence Bill and the Surrogacy Bill.

The Acting Chairperson said that the Commission has conducted numerous research studies to understand challenges to women's empowerment including reviewing the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The Commission also ensures gender equality through various interventions. She said that the NHRC, India has a core group on women to discuss issues relevant to protecting their rights to make recommendations to concerned ministries. An advisory was issued during COVID-19. Recently, an advisory was issued on protecting the rights of widows.

NHRC, India delegation attends the 29th APF of the NHRIs in Bangkok

On 25th September, 2024, Secretary General, Mr Bharat Lal accompanied by Joint Secretary, Mr Devendra Kumar Nim represented the NHRC, India at the 29th Annual General Meeting of the Asia Pacific Forum (APF) of the National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) in Bangkok, Thailand. India is a founding member of APF and an 'A' status accredited NHRI having voting rights. The AGM approved the entry of 2 new members Pakistan & Uzbekistan with A and B accreditation status respectively in the APF.

Among other agenda items, the election to the post of Chairperson of the APF Governance Committee was also conducted. Chairperson, the Board of Trustees of the Jordan National Centre for Human Rights, Ms Samar Haj Hasan was elected as the new Chairperson of the APF Governance Committee. NHRC, India congratulated her.



► NHRC, India Acting Chairperson, Mrs Vijaya Bharathi Sayani attending the conference at Kathmandu, Nepal



► Secretary General, Mr Bharat Lal, Joint Secretary and Mr D.K. Nim attending the APF of the NHRIs



► NHRC, India Secretary General, Mr Bharat Lal delivering a talk on 'Human Rights Defenders and Civic Space in India' in Bangkok

Later, Mr Bharat Lal, Secretary General delivered a talk on 'Human Rights Defenders and Civic Space in India' at the annual meet of APF of NHRIs. He highlighted how India has a long and unique tradition of selfless service by social workers and reformers and making meaningful contributions towards improving the lives of the people, which continues to be valued and respected by the society. Citing examples of Mahatma Gandhi and thousands of freedom fighters and social reformers, Mr Lal emphasized their selfless service to ensure dignity for all.

He said that Indian Parliament through Standing Committees and Select Committees invites NGOs to contribute to the making of laws as well as to setting the governance agenda. Many programmes and schemes at the national and state levels have provisions to involve NGOs in the implementation.

He said that the Companies Act, 2013 mandates annually 2% of the net profits, made during the preceding 3 years, to be spent as a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) fund, which is one of the ways, among many others, to support such selfless service by the civil society and NGOs for the welfare of the society.

Citing other provisions enabling NGOs' work in India, Mr Lal highlighted Section 12 of the PHR Act 1993 which encourages their efforts in the field of human rights. The Right to Information Act has immensely empowered civil society. He said that Public Interest Litigation is a novel concept in India. Lokpal and Lokayukta Act, 2013 have enlarged the role of civil society.

Delegation visit to NHRC, India

On 10th September, 2024, NHRC, India Secretary General, Mr Bharat Lal had a meaningful meeting with Ms Miapetra Kumpula-Natri, MP, Finland. They had an insightful discussion about children, especially orphans. She shared her work on them. He highlighted the comprehensive work being done in India to improve children's lives.



News from State Human Rights Commissions

The promotion and protection of human rights is always a work in progress given the ever-expanding dimensions of human life and related challenges. In India, besides the democratically elected governments constitutionally committed to ensuring the welfare of the people by protecting their basic human rights, there are institutions of legislature, judiciary, a vibrant media, the National Human Rights Commission and State Human Rights Commissions, as well as the other National Commissions and their state counterparts working as watchdogs of rights issues of various segments of society. This column intends to highlight the exceptional activities of the SHRCs undertaken to protect and promote human rights.

Punjab Human Rights Commission

Visit to Central Jail Ludhiana

PSHRC Chairperson, Justice Sant Parkash visited the Central Jail in Ludhiana in September, 2024. The prison has 4,093 male inmates and 245 female inmates, including 925 convicts and 3,168 undertrial prisoners. He interacted with the inmates and inspected various facilities, including the kitchen, where he noted that the food quality was satisfactory, and the hospital, which provided adequate medical care, including treatment for Tuberculosis. Besides this, on-the-spot grievance redressal was also conducted. Following the inspection, a meeting was held with the district officials to discuss issues in the jail, including mobile phone misuse, staff shortages, and medical escort concerns. District officials assured that these concerns would be addressed promptly to ensure the prisoners' welfare.

Visit to Mental Hospital in Amritsar

On 14th September 2024, the PSHRC Chairperson also made a visit to the Mental Hospital in Amritsar, Punjab. He

assessed the condition of 233 patients (142 male and 91 female) and revisited issues from his previous visit in August, 2023. These included patients who had recovered but were not taken back by their families, as well as the increasing number of psychiatric patients wandering in public areas. Despite assurances, these issues remained unaddressed. The Sub-Divisional Magistrate assured that these issues would be addressed. Justice Sant Parkash also inspected the food provided to the patients, confirming it met the hospital's dietary standards.



Voices of victims getting relief

Since its inception on 12th October 1993, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India has brought succour to several victims of human rights violations or their next of kin through its interventions. This column carries a brief extract of the voices of such victims who have been the beneficiaries of the NHRC's recommendations implemented by the different government authorities.

Demanding fees from EWS students

(Case No. 3416/30/6/2024)

The complainant from Rohini, Delhi alleged that a school illegally demanded fees from his son despite being admitted under the category of a student from Economically Weaker Sections. He was not given an admit card for the coming term-1 exams scheduled for 09.09.2024, causing mental harassment to his son and all his family members. After the Commission's notices to the concerned authorities, the complainant's son and the students were allowed to appear for the remaining examinations. The complainant has conveyed his gratitude to the Commission for its intervention in the matter due to which eventually not only his son, but other such students were allowed to write their exams.

Guidelines for media persons covering natural disasters

(Case No. 2197/18/3/2021)

The Commission received a communication from Mr Radhakant Tripathy, conveying that due to the NHRC's interventions on his complaint, the family of a young TV news reporter, who drowned to death in a river while covering an assignment, was paid monetary relief of Rs 4 lakh on 25.9.2021. Besides this, the Commission's notice to the Union Ministry of Information & Broadcasting also resulted in the Press Council of India issuing a guideline for the media persons covering news during natural disasters.

News in brief

- On 13th September, 2024, Mr Bharat Lal, Secretary General inaugurated the induction programme for 1st year UG & PG girl students of KPR Mill Limited, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. The company gives them formal education with exposure to sports, on-the-job training, soft skills and job placement. Every year, more than 2,200 young women join different courses and on completion of their education, half of them join other companies during campus placement. Presently, about 6,500 young women are pursuing UG and PG courses and are also working. The company has created excellent sports facilities. They are from rural areas of different states viz. TN, Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Assam, MP, etc. They stay in a hostel at a safe and secure campus which is built on barren land. So far, more than 41 thousand young women have got higher education from this initiative of the KPR Mill. Presently, more than 27 thousand of them are employed in the KPR Mills itself. An

excellent example of girl empowerment.

Mr Bharat Lal after the induction programme of students, visited the KPR Mill campus, Coimbatore, which was built after turning a barren land into an oasis with greenery, rainwater harvesting and sewage treatment plant for reuse- A fine example of sustainability, addressing climate issues, human rights & business. He also interacted with the officials & students and saw their training, sports and recreational facilities.

- On 14th September, 2024, NHRC, India Acting Chairperson, Mrs Vijaya Bharathi Sayani held a meeting with senior officers in Hyderabad to address the issue of encroachment & pollution in Kapra Lake, Hyderabad. The senior officers included the Principal Secretary, Irrigation & CAD Department, Telangana, District Magistrate, Medchal, officers of Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation, Hyderabad Metropoli-

tan Development Authority & Pollution Control Board. She also visited the lake area and interacted with local residents to understand their concerns.

- On 17th September, 2024, Acting Chairperson Mrs Vijaya Bharathi Sayani accompanied by Mr. Ajay Bhatnagar, DG (I) along with the NHRC team visited Bengaluru and Mysore Districts in Karnataka to participate in the Awareness Programme on Safety of Women at the Workplace organized by the Veeravratam Foundation at Mahajana Auditorium, Mysuru in Bengaluru.
- On 20th September, 2024, Mr. Bharat Lal spoke about clean drinking water as a basic human right at an event organized by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and the Sankala Foundation to release their study report on the Jal Jeevan Mission – Har Ghar Jal titled 'A study of access to clean tap water to every rural home in India' at New Delhi. In his

address, he highlighted the next stage in the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector to improve the water and sanitation services with the use of technology and by empowering local self-government and Village Water and Sanitation Committees (Pani Samitis) for assured public service. He said that there is a need to help, PRIs to work as a local water utility at the village level.

- On 21st September, 2024, NHRC, India Acting Chairperson, Mrs Vijaya Bharathi Sayani attended 'All India Women Academicians Conference on Envisioning New Bharat' as a guest, organized by Akhil Bharatiya Rashtriya Shaikshik Mahasangh, Telangana at Tagore Auditorium, Osmania University, Hyderabad. Mr. Jishnu Dev Varma, Governor of Telangana was the Chief Guest and Mrs Sudha Murthy, MP was among other distinguished guests.
- On 21st September, 2024, Mr Bharat Lal, Secretary General delivered the keynote address at the 99th Skoch Summit held at New Delhi on 'Future of Business: Harmonizing Human Rights and Sustainability.' He highlighted today's complex global scenario and for businesses to constantly evolve to stay competitive as major economies and technology are shaping a rapidly changing business environment posing new challenges. He said that non-tariff barriers - including human rights, labour laws, sustainability, and environmental considerations - will be critical factors for businesses moving forward. Future growth hinges on our ability to align these elements with economic development.

Mr Lal said that we also need to focus on the work environment for

young people joining the workforce. We must ensure that they are not put in stressful working conditions leading to mental health issues. As the country is developing as a global business hub, businesses in India should make us proud of their commitment to sustainability and adherence to constitutional values. The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India is working to ensure that businesses embody these principles, recognizing that growth must be both inclusive and sustainable. He urged the businesses to have a look at their strategies, not merely for compliance, but to genuinely embrace these principles as a guiding force to fulfil their corporate social responsibility and help the most vulnerable and marginalized sections of society.

- On 23rd September, 2024, NHRC, India Acting Chairperson, Mrs Vijaya Bharathi Sayani was the Chief Guest of a seminar on 'Women safety at work and public places' organized by the Spandana Foundation at the National Institute of Technology, Tadepalligudem Town, West Godavari in Andhra Pradesh.
- On 23rd September, 2024, NHRC, India Acting Chairperson, Mrs Vijaya Bharathi Sayani interacted with the students of the Sasi Engineering College, Tadepalligudem, West Godavari, Andhra Pradesh. About 1,000 students were given an orientation about the functioning and interventions of the Commission. She encouraged students to evolve as human rights defenders to promote and protect human rights, especially of marginalized sections of society.
- On 24th September, 2024, Acting Chairperson, Smt Vijaya Bharathi

Sayani made a surprise visit to GTW Ashram School in Anthevelligude, Eluru, Andhra Pradesh which has 210 Tribal students. She assessed the infrastructure & services and directed the school & District officials to address the shortcomings.

- On 27th September, 2024 Mr. Ajay Bhatnagar, DG (I), NHRC attended the '4th National Conference on Uniformed Women in Prison Administration' at Central Detective Training Institute, Jaipur, BPR&D, MHA.
- On 27th September, 2024, NHRC, India Secretary General, Mr. Bharat Lal delivered a talk at Manipal University, Jaipur on the 'Evolution and Institutional Framework for the Protection of Human Rights in India,' with active participation from law students and faculty. He highlighted how human rights are embedded in Indian culture, focusing on empathy and societal responsibility. Vedic texts emphasize communal good over individual rights, while the Upanishads, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism stress equality, kindness, and non-violence. India's values champion social reform, women's empowerment, and refugee protection, as seen in offering refuge to Polish children during WWII and refugees from Tibet, then East Pakistan, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and more. Mr Lal said that India has produced many social reformers and freedom fighters and encouraged the students to continue this legacy by working to improve others' lives, making their own lives meaningful. They were also given an understanding on various facets of promoting and protecting human rights.

Forthcoming events

On 3rd October, 2024 NHRC, India will organize its 2-day residential capacity-building program on human rights for senior police officers from Tamil Nadu & Karnataka in Coimbatore.

On 4th October, 2024 a group of Muscular Dystrophy warriors will visit the Commission.

The 12th October is the Foundation Day of the NHRC. However, this time being a holiday, the Commission has decided to organize a function to mark the day with a conference on older persons' rights on 18th October, 2024.

17th to 20th October, 2024 the Sankala Foundation in partnership with the National Tiger Conservation Authority, MoEF&CC, Government of India and supported by the International Big Cats Alliance (IBCA) and the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India, is organizing a tribal arts exhibition titled 'Silent Conversation – From Margins to the Centre' at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. On this occasion, External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar will be the Chief Guest and Union Minister, Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Mr. Bhupinder Yadav will be the Guest of Honour. The inauguration on 17th October, 2024 will be followed by a cultural evening where artists from tribal areas will be performing and Mr. Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Union Minister, Tourism and Culture will be the Chief Guest. This exhibition is promoting tribal culture and arts, their relationship with nature, and Indian Conservation ethos.



Complaints in September, 2024

New complaints received	5,050
Disposed off including old cases	3,656
Under consideration of the Commission	8,426

Human rights and NHRC in news



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National Human Rights Commission

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

Focal point for Human Rights Defenders:

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Publisher & Printer: Secretary General, NHRC

Printed at Viba Press Pvt. Ltd., C-66/3, Okhla Indl. Area, Phase-II, New Delhi-110020 and

Published from National Human Rights Commission, Manav Adhikar Bhawan, Block-C, GPO Complex, INA, New Delhi-110 023

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RNI No. 59340/94