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HUMAN RIGHTS

Newsletter

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Consultation

Core Group Meeting on 'Heat wave and its mitigation in urban areas'

Open House Discussion on 'Safeguarding human rights against digital arrest scams'

Spotlight

Drug abuse: A human rights challenge requiring prevention, protection and partnership

Article

Environmental Degradation and Climate Change

Mental health and vulnerability to substance use among children and adolescents

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National Human Rights Commission, India

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► NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice V. Ramasubramanian interacting with the visiting delegates of the Chhatra Sansad



► NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice V. Ramasubramanian addressing the first Consulative Meeting of NHRIs, State Bodies and other organisations of SCO Member States



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Monthly Recap

From the desk of the Secretary General and Chief Executive

With cities becoming hotter because of rapid urbanisation and the urban heat island effect, outdoor workers, sanitation workers, street vendors, older persons, children and persons with disabilities are among the most vulnerable.

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India continues to expand the scope of human rights discourse by addressing emerging challenges that directly impact the lives, dignity and well-being of people. The activities undertaken in June 2026 reflect a broader understanding of human rights that encompasses not only traditional concerns of justice and equality but also the evolving challenges, such as climate change and technological advancement.

The Commission's Core Group Meeting in June 2026 on 'Heat wave and its mitigation in urban areas' highlighted a reality that can no longer be ignored. Heat waves are not merely seasonal weather phenomena; they have become a significant human rights concern affecting the rights to life, health, housing, livelihoods, safe working conditions and access to water. With cities becoming hotter because of rapid urbanisation and the urban heat island effect, outdoor workers, sanitation workers, street vendors, older persons, children and persons with disabilities are among the most vulnerable.

The deliberations reinforced the need for a rights-based and resilience-oriented approach through better urban planning, enhanced green infrastructure, improved heat action plans and stronger protection mechanisms for those most at risk. Ensuring that no life is lost to preventable heat-related causes must remain a collective national commitment.

Equally significant was the Open House Discussion on 'Safeguarding human rights against digital arrest scams', which examined a growing threat at the intersection of technology, cybercrime and human rights. These scams exploit fear, authority and digital vulnerabilities to target citizens, particularly senior citizens and other vulnerable groups. Beyond financial losses, such crimes undermine dignity, security, privacy and trust.

The discussion brought together policymakers, regulators, law enforcement agencies, financial institutions, technology experts and civil society representatives to deliberate on strengthening prevention, victim support and accountability. As technology becomes increasingly integrated into everyday life, protecting individuals from digital exploitation is emerging as a critical dimension of human rights protection in the 21st century.

Digital technology has further added to the menace of drug abuse and illicit trafficking. Globally, it has become a challenge to wipe out the threats posed by drugs and substance abuse, especially among youth. To highlight the challenges and encourage the world community to work together to find ways and means to check its spirit, the 'International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking' is observed on 26th June. The July Newsletter covers an informative piece under the Spotlight column on the issue that impacts the human rights of individuals, families, societies and nations.

Alongside addressing contemporary challenges, the Commission remains deeply committed to nurturing future custodians of human rights through its internship programmes. The overwhelming response to the Summer Internship Programme (SIP) 2026 from students across the country reflects the growing interest among young people in issues of justice, equality and social responsibility.

By bringing together students from diverse academic disciplines, institutions and regions, the programme creates a unique platform for learning, dialogue and reflection. Through interactions with experts, field visits and experiential learning opportunities, participants gain a deeper understanding of human rights not merely as legal concepts but as values rooted in empathy, compassion and service to others.

These initiatives collectively underscore an important truth that the protection and promotion of human rights must continuously evolve to respond to changing realities. Whether confronting the impacts of extreme heat, safeguarding citizens from emerging forms of cybercrime or preparing the next generation of leaders, the guiding principle remains the same,

i.e. upholding human dignity and ensuring that development, technology and governance ultimately serve the welfare of every individual, especially the most vulnerable.

This month, I completed three years as Secretary General of the NHRC, India. It has been an immensely humbling and deeply enriching journey, contributing towards the promotion and protection of human rights. The pursuit of human rights is an unfinished journey for every society. It calls upon each of us to look beyond ourselves, to empathise with those who are vulnerable and to ensure that no person's dignity is diminished for any reason. Our collective responsibility and duty is to continue striving for a more just, compassionate and inclusive society.

This is the essence of India's civilisational ethos and the enduring spirit of constitutional values. I convey my heartfelt gratitude to all those who extended their support, encouragement and cooperation, enabling me to discharge my responsibilities to the best of my abilities. The shared commitment to protecting and promoting human rights must continue, guided by the enduring values of justice, dignity and compassion.

This edition of the Newsletter also captures the Commission's regular activities and interventions during the month, reflecting its continued commitment to the protection and promotion of human rights. We hope readers will find the content informative, insightful and engaging and that it will contribute to the understanding of contemporary human rights issues and the collective efforts being made to address them.



[Bharat Lal]
Secretary General &
Chief Executive Officer

Consultation

Heat wave and its mitigation in urban areas

Extreme heat is increasingly emerging as a serious threat to public health, livelihoods and human well-being, with its impacts being felt most acutely by vulnerable and marginalised communities. Rising temperatures, rapid urbanisation and changing climatic conditions have heightened the risks of heat-related illnesses, mortality, loss of productivity and environmental stress, underscoring the need for urgent and coordinated action. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach that combines scientific assessment, institutional preparedness, climate-resilient urban planning, healthcare strengthening, social protection measures and public awareness to safeguard lives and build long-term resilience against heat-related risks.

On 3rd June 2026, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India organised a meeting of its Core Group

on Environment and Climate on the theme 'Heat wave and its mitigation in urban areas' in hybrid mode at Manav Adhikar Bhavan, New Delhi. The meeting generated significant interest among various stakeholders and witnessed active and meaningful participation. Presiding over the meeting, NHRC Chairperson, Justice V. Ramasubramanian said that there is a recurring annual discourse on pollution in winter and heat waves in summer for some time now without any visible effects of the mitigation efforts to protect human life from the impact of these crises. NHRC Members, Justice (Dr.) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani; Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal; Director General (Investigation), Dr. Anupama Nilekar Chandra; Joint Secretary, Smt. Saindingpuii Chhakchhuak; Core Group members, Special Rapporteurs, Special Monitors, senior functionaries of

Government of India and various parastatal organisations; Municipal Commissioners of Ahmedabad and Indore, eminent domain experts and members of civil society organisations were present in the meeting.

Justice Ramasubramanian said that the evolution of human rights initially focused on civil, political, social, cultural and economic rights after the First and Second World Wars, while environmental rights remained largely overlooked. Although the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted in 1948, serious discourse on environmental rights began around 1970, following growing awareness of environmental degradation and major ecological disasters.

He said that the industrial revolution contributed significantly to climate change and the resulting heat wave, but people only began to recognise



► NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice V. Ramasubramanian chairing the Core Group Meeting in the presence of Members, Justice (Dr.) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani, Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal, senior officers and experts



► A section of participants

once it started affecting their daily lives. He said that if you read about the Gandhian economy, it never contemplated the industrialisation of the entire country. It propounded the idea that every village should be self-reliant, but the reverse happened, resulting in migration from villages to urban areas. He said that unliveable rural conditions and the growth of 'concrete jungles' in cities have further contributed to rising temperatures and heat wave-related challenges. The damage caused to the environment over the decades cannot be reversed and the focus must be on mitigating its impact. It is not possible for us to put the clock back. He emphasised that the destruction of water bodies and forests is the primary cause of increasing heat stress, advocating for stronger protection of existing natural ecosystems, stricter regulation of construction around water bodies and actionable recommendations focused on sustainable urban development.

NHRC Member, Justice (Dr.) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi said that there is a need

to balance urban development with environmental protection, urging collective action to conserve nature, expand green areas and safeguard resources for future generations.

Earlier, NHRC Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal in his opening remarks, highlighted the background of convening the meeting of the Core Group on Environment and Climate. He underscored heat waves as a growing human rights concern linked to environmental degradation and climate change. He said that its impact is more on vulnerable groups, including construction workers, outdoor labourers, gig workers, the elderly, pregnant women and those without adequate housing or access to cooling facilities. He said that heat waves are becoming an increasingly acute challenge in urban areas and expressed concern over the rising number of heat-related deaths across the country in recent years.

Emphasising that the rights to life, health and a clean environment are

inherent human rights, he said that the NHRC has been urging States and UTs to take proactive measures. He said that several states and municipal corporations have taken initiatives to mitigate the impact of extreme heat. However, despite this, the number of deaths caused by heat waves continues to increase as per the NCRB data.

He also gave an overview of the three thematic sessions of the meeting, which included a.) Understanding heat waves and their impact on human rights; b.) Governance frameworks and city-level response to heat waves in urban areas and c.) Rights-based pathways for resilient and inclusive cooling in urban areas. He requested the participants to suggest measures - short, medium and long-term to mitigate heat waves and save people's lives and their livelihoods, particularly in urban areas.

Prof. (Retd.) N. H. Ravindranath, Centre for Sustainable Technology, Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru called for a broader heat wave defini-

tion incorporating humidity, vegetation and land-surface factors, alongside ward-level forecasting, AI-driven vulnerability mapping, stronger heat action plans, dedicated heat officers and protection for vulnerable workers. Dr. Akhil Srivastava, DG, IMD said that above-normal heat wave days are expected in June across several states and outlined IMD's multi-tier forecasting and warning system and highlighted efforts to deliver heat alerts and advisories directly to vulnerable groups such as street vendors and gig workers.

Shri S. Rakesh Kumar, Advisor (Policy & Plan and CBT), NDMA said that all 23 states vulnerable to heat waves now have Heat Action Plans and advocated stronger district and city-level planning, institutionalisation of the implementation mechanism, enhanced early warning systems, robust reporting mechanisms and dedicated funding for heat wave mitigation. Smt. G. S. Chitra, Joint Secretary, Public Health, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare said that

the Ministry is strengthening health-sector preparedness through advisories and climate-health programmes while emphasising the need for coordinated action to address the growing health impacts of climate change and heat waves.

Dr. Aakash Shrivastava, Additional Director, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare cautioned that heat-related health risks are projected to rise significantly by 2035 and called for expanded Heat Health Action Plans, stronger surveillance systems, greater healthcare capacity, wider training of medical personnel and improved hospital preparedness to reduce fatalities. Shri V. K. Chaurasia, Advisor, MoHUA advocated integrating heat resilience into urban planning through cooling action plans, water body rejuvenation, urban greening, cool roofs, sustainable transport and climate-resilient city infrastructure.

Shri Rajneesh Sareen, Programme Director, Sustainable Building & Habitat Programme, CSE called for

worker-centric heat safety protocols, expanded city-level temperature observatories, distributed green and blue infrastructure and performance-based standards to reduce urban heat and improve climate resilience. Dr. Anil Kumar Mishra, Additional Secretary, National Rainfed Area Authority suggested modifying working hours to avoid peak heat exposure, expanding the use of treated wastewater for cooling urban green spaces, enhancing rainwater harvesting and groundwater recharge and increasing heat-mitigating vegetation cover in cities.

Dr. Aarti Khosla, Founder-Director, Climate Trends stressed the need for vulnerability-based prioritisation of heat action plans, promotion of affordable and structural cooling solutions, protection of gig and informal workers from heat-related impacts, improved data transparency on heat-related health effects and stronger cross-sector coordination and public awareness to address rising climate and heat risks. Shri Vimal



► The meeting in progress

Meena, Director (Safety) & HOO, Regional Labour Institute, Faridabad highlighted provisions under the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code and Social Security Code for worker welfare. He emphasised equal workplace protections for contractual and unorganised workers and called for greater awareness of the early symptoms and prevention of heat stress and heatstroke.

Ms. Prerna Ojha, Research Analyst, CEEW highlighted their work on developing Heat Action Plans through risk-based mapping, preparedness planning, targeted interventions for vulnerable wards, monitoring and evaluation frameworks, gender-sensitive approaches, dynamic updates based on local realities and retrofitting existing infrastructure to improve heat resilience. Shri Sundaram Verma, Environmentalist, flagged the issue of

deforestation and called for augmentation of afforestation efforts. Shri Kshitij Singhal, Municipal Commissioner, Indore outlined the challenges faced by urban local bodies, including rapid urbanisation, financial and manpower constraints and competing civic priorities, while sharing Indore's efforts to improve heat resilience through low-cost measures such as solar-reflective roof coatings in vulnerable housing areas.

Dr. H. S. Ginwal, Deputy Director General, ICFRE, Dehradun said that there is a need to increase urban green cover and use of reflective rooftop measures to mitigate heat. He also urged strengthening early warning systems. Shri Niranjana Dev Bharadwaj, Distinguished Advisor, Global Foundation for Advancement of Environment and Human Wellness highlighted the need to shift from reactive to predictive heat governance

through ward-level heat-risk mapping, hyperlocal heat intelligence, digital alert systems, protection of outdoor workers, integration of heat resilience into urban planning and dedicated financial and institutional preparedness for heatwaves.

Shri Banchhanidhi Pani, Municipal Commissioner, Ahmedabad highlighted Ahmedabad's pioneering Heat Action Plan, emphasising its role in reducing heat-related deaths through early warning systems, urban greening, cool roofs, shaded public spaces, micro-level heat-risk mapping, worker protection measures, public awareness campaigns and climate-resilient urban planning. Dr. Promode Kant, Adjunct Professor, Advanced Institute of Wildlife Conservation, Chennai stressed the importance of affordable space-cooling measures such as reflective roofs and paints, transplantation of larger plants for immediate



► The online participants of the meeting

cooling benefits and expanding shade cover around schools and public spaces. Dr. Purna Joshi, Assistant Professor, NIDM called for legal enforcement of heat-protection measures for outdoor workers, promotion of passive and energy-efficient cooling solutions for low-income groups, wider accessibility of heat wave alerts and effective implementation of urban green cover norms through decentralised green spaces and micro-forests.

Smt. Patricia Mukhim, Editor, The Shillong Times emphasised that weak enforcement of environmental laws, degradation of rivers, wetlands and forests and encroachment on natural ecosystems are key drivers of climate vulnerability in the North-East, calling for stronger protection of water bodies, green spaces and forest cover. Shri Gautam Talukdar, Scientist, Wildlife Institute of India advocated incorporating land surface temperature into heat assessments, monitoring heat emissions from large establishments, using the City Biodiversity Index to track urban blue-green spaces and avoiding maladaptive measures.

Dr. Shalini Dhyani, Scientist-E, CSIR, NEERI highlighted the need to address inequitable distribution of urban green spaces, restore ecological corridors and wetland buffers, adopt ecosystem-based urban planning, expand accessible public green spaces and introduce heat-sensitive work schedules for vulnerable workers.

Shri Sunil Sharma, Joint Director (Wildlife) MoEFCC also echoed the suggestion for staggered work shifts, improved urban living conditions, greater investment in urban parks and stronger enforcement of environmental and planning measures to reduce heat stress.

Shri V. B. Kumar, NHRC Special Monitor for Environment and Climate Change called for audits of compliance with building and urban planning norms, promotion of green infrastructure through mandatory and incentive-based measures, integration of various heat-related plans onto a single monitoring platform and development of a heat wave index.

The key suggestions that emanated from the discussion were:

- Develop ward-level heat vulnerability and resilience maps using GIS, remote sensing, AI, land surface temperature and social vulnerability indicators, supported by localised forecasting, early warning systems and a composite Heat Vulnerability Index;
- Institutionalise Heat Action Plans and their implementation across all states, districts and cities through dedicated Heat Officers, integrated governance dash-

boards, regular monitoring and inter-departmental coordination;

- Improve heat wave mortality and morbidity surveillance through a unified, scientifically validated reporting and data management system;
- Protect vulnerable populations through occupational heat-safety standards, social protection measures, community cooling centres, accessible public green spaces and targeted interventions for migrants, gig workers, women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities;
- Strengthen heat-health preparedness through specialised heatstroke management units, trained healthcare personnel, emergency cooling equipment, ambulances and integration of heat-health education into medical and public health curricula;
- Mandate heat-resilient and climate-sensitive urban design, including passive cooling, cool roofs, reflective materials, retrofitting of existing buildings, ventilation corridors and climate-responsive building standards;
- Expand nature-based solutions by increasing urban green cover, native tree plantations, urban forests, green corridors, wetland buffers and restoring rivers, lakes, wetlands and other blue-green infrastructure;
- Promote sustainable water management through rainwater harvesting, groundwater recharge, wastewater reuse and protection of urban water bodies and catchment areas;
- Regulate waste heat emissions, introduce heat-resilience ratings for buildings and residential complexes and strengthen enforcement of environmental, building and urban planning regulations through periodic compliance audits;
- Strengthen public awareness and risk communication through multilingual, accessible and community-based outreach, including voice-based alerts for digitally excluded populations; and
- Mainstream heat resilience into city master plans, development plans, municipal budgets and climate action strategies, backed by dedicated funding and institutional support at all levels of government.

The Commission will further deliberate on these suggestions to finalise its recommendations to the centre and state governments.

Safeguarding human rights against digital arrest scams

As part of its mandate to safeguard human rights, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India regularly convenes core groups, open house discussions and national conferences to engage domain experts, academics and senior government functionaries in addressing systemic gaps and proposing practical policy reforms. In alignment with this proactive approach, the Commission organised a high-level Open House Discussion on 'Safeguarding human rights against digital arrest scams' on 9th June 2026 in New Delhi.

Digital arrest scams have emerged as one of the most alarming forms of cyber-enabled fraud in recent years, exploiting fear, trust in authority and gaps in digital awareness to deceive individuals into parting with their savings. Beyond causing financial losses, these scams often inflict severe psychological trauma, undermine dignity, violate privacy and disproportionately affect vulnerable groups such as senior citizens. As digital technologies increasingly shape governance, communication and financial transactions, addressing such crimes has become a critical human rights concern. Recognising the need for a coordinated response involving policymakers, law enforcement agencies, regulators, financial institutions, technology platforms and civil society, the NHRC, India convened the Open House Discussion to deliberate on preventive measures, victim protection mechanisms and legal reforms to effectively counter this growing threat.

Chairing the discussion, NHRC Chairperson, Justice V. Ramasubramanian highlighted the growing threat posed by cyber-enabled frauds, particularly digital arrest scams and underscored their serious impact on the rights, dignity and security of individuals. NHRC Members, Justice (Dr.) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani; Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal; Director General (Investigation), Dr. Anupama Nilekar Chandra; Joint Secretary, Shri Samir Kumar; Core Group members, Special Rapporteurs, Special Monitors, senior functionaries representing different key departments of Government of India including Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), Ministry of Telecommunications, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), Reserve Bank of India (RBI), CBI, National Payment Corporation of India,

eminent legal and domain experts, representatives of Telecom operators and Banking and Fintech Associations participated in the discussion.

Justice Ramasubramanian emphasised the need for a collective response to tackle the menace. He noted that Indians have lost about Rs 52,976 crore to cyber-enabled frauds during the past six years, with nearly 8 per cent of the losses attributed to digital arrest scams. The data has been reportedly compiled by the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) based on the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal. He observed that in many reported cases, the scamsters coerced their victims into transferring money by exploiting the fear of law enforcement agencies among people.

He also pointed out that the victims face significant challenges in recovering even a part of the amount, as the legal and procedural processes proved lengthy, costly and distressing. At times, the process of recovery becomes more painful than the process of losing money. The Chairperson further said that there are reports of lakhs of mule accounts in the country, which facilitate the movement of fraudulently obtained funds.



▶ NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice V. Ramasubramanian chairing the Open House Discussion in the presence of Members, Justice (Dr.) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani, Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal, senior officers and experts

Stressing the need to protect victims and uphold their rights, he called for practical suggestions on preventing such frauds. He said it will be necessary to improve recovery mechanisms, restore victims' financial security and help them regain their status in life and peace of mind by identifying and plugging loopholes in the legal framework, improving the response of law enforcement agencies and developing standard operating procedures to tackle digital arrest scams. He also suggested exploring mechanisms such as alerts on prolonged OTT calls to protect citizens from digital fraud.

NHRC Member, Justice (Dr.) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi said that there are gaps in



► A section of online participants

existing processes to address the challenges posed by digital fraud. He expressed the hope that such discussions are expected to help in developing practical solutions at the earliest. NHRC Member, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani emphasised that safeguarding citizens from cybercrime and financial fraud is an essential extension of Rajadharma. Preventive action is not only a matter of technology and regulation but also a responsibility of good governance. Therefore, our collective goal should be to ensure that no one becomes a victim of such frauds.

In his opening remarks, NHRC Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal spoke about the background of convening the Open House Discussion on 'Safeguarding human rights against digital arrest scams.' He said that cybercrimes mostly affect elderly

persons, including retired government officials, professionals, industrialists and bankers, causing not only financial losses but also compromising their dignity, self-respect and psychological well-being. Referring to information placed before the Supreme Court in a related matter, he said that more than 3,000 such frauds targeting elderly persons were reported last year.

He said that cybercriminals are increasingly exploiting personal data obtained through data leaks and other sources to target victims, raising serious concerns about data privacy and protection. Evolving digital governance and financial systems enable them to commit fraud and move money faster, uncaught. He urged strengthening safeguards to protect vulnerable groups, particularly senior citizens and ensuring effective support and remedies for

victims of cyber fraud.

Shri Lal said that the Commission has divided the subject into three technical sessions to enable focused discussions and find a way forward. These are: a.) Identify the drivers behind the surge in digital arrest scams and the constraints limiting effective response, b.) Formulating preventive measures to address digital arrest scams and c.) Enhancement of grievance redressal, compensation and victim assistance mechanisms. He requested the experts to share their insights on these aspects for the Commission to firm up its response.

Giving an overview of the government's efforts in the matter of checking digital scams, Shri Ajit Kumar, Joint Secretary, MeitY said that an inter-departmental committee is examining measures to address digital arrest scams from prevention to compensation. He also informed that a portal is being developed under Section 47 of the IT Act to facilitate adjudication and compensation and expressed confidence that implementation of the DPDP framework would strengthen protection of citizens' data and help address data-related concerns.

Ms. Roopa M., Inspector General of Police, Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) highlighted the cybercrime.gov.in portal, helpline 1930 and the CFCFRMS platform for tracing, holding and restoring funds to victims. She also called for stronger action against the misuse of government logos, SIM boxes and mule accounts. Shri Muktesh Chander, Special Monitor, NHRC stressed the need to regulate SIM cards and bank accounts, address the psychological fear exploited by fraudsters, ensure FIR registration in cyber fraud cases and adopt a victim-centric approach instead of victim blaming. Shri Brijesh Singh, ADG, Maharashtra described cybercrime as an industrial-scale operation enabled by data breaches, mule networks and AI. He advocated



► The discussion in progress

automated golden-hour intervention, a national cybercrime force, stronger DPDP enforcement, victim compensation and psychological support.

Shri R. Vanaraja, Chief General Manager, Department of Information Technology, RBI highlighted the potential of artificial intelligence to identify patterns in digital arrest crimes and generate alerts and suggested exploring a single government communication channel. He also emphasised the need to raise public awareness about the misuse of bank accounts and the need to balance fraud prevention with convenience for genuine users. Shri Rajiv Ranjan Prasad, Senior Advisor, IBA highlighted measures taken by the banking industry to prevent digital frauds, including AI-based detection of mule accounts, the Beneficiary Account Name Lookup Facility and the proposed Indian Digital Payment Intelligence Platform. He also referred to the RBI's proposal for a 'trusted person' mechanism to provide additional authentication for high-value transactions by vulnerable customers.

Shri Ramesh Krishnamurthy, Chief Risk Management, NPCI highlighted NPCI's efforts in customer education, including awareness campaigns and

outreach in villages, as well as AI-based fraud monitoring and real-time support to law enforcement agencies. He emphasised the need for a concerted response by all stakeholders to tackle digital fraud.

Shri Sanjeev Kumar Sharma, Deputy Director General (AI & Digital Intelligence Unit), Department of Telecommunications outlined preventive measures such as the Sanchar Saathi initiative, AI-based tools, international call spoofing detection and the Digital Intelligence Platform. He emphasised stronger regulation of OTT platforms, real-time data sharing and improved complaint-to-FIR conversion to deter cyber frauds. Ms. Astha Modi, SP, CBI said that large-scale digital arrest scams originate from cyber scam compounds in Southeast Asia and are sustained by mule accounts, telecom infrastructure, social media intermediaries and human trafficking. She outlined CBI's action against mule account networks, telecom infrastructure, social media intermediaries and human trafficking networks and referred to an AI-based chatbot for verification of CBI notices and summons.

Shri Ashok Kumar, Joint Advisor, TRAI flagged the urgent need to bring OTT communication platforms used

for voice calls, messages and video calls under an appropriate regulatory mechanism, noting that most digital arrest frauds have shifted to OTT channels. He also suggested measures such as alerts or interruptions during unusually long calls to help prevent digital arrest scams. Major Vineet Kumar, Founder and Global President of Cyber Peace Foundation advocated a model of shared responsibility involving government, industry, academia, civil society and citizens and called for the creation of a 'human firewall' of trained first responders. He also emphasised psychological support for cybercrime survivors and rehabilitation measures for first-time cyber offenders and juveniles.

Ms. N. S. Nappinai, Senior Advocate, Supreme Court highlighted the human rights dimensions of digital arrest scams, including human trafficking, violations of privacy, life and liberty and psychological trauma. She emphasised restorative justice, victims' rights of recompense and shared liability frameworks. Dr. Pavan Duggal, Advocate, Supreme Court said that digital arrest is not a specific offence under existing laws and suggested its incorporation as a distinct crime under the Information Technology Act, 2000 or the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. He also called for a statutory 'circuit breaker' for high-value transactions, a Digital Arrest Victims Fund, recognition of digital arrest as a human rights issue and stronger measures to address violations of dignity, privacy and mental integrity caused by such scams.

Shri Rahul Vatts, Chief Regulatory Officer, Airtel said that 97–98 per cent of customer on-boarding is carried out through Aadhaar KYC, supported by live photographs and biometric authentication at points of sale (POS). He highlighted the use of AI to identify suspected spam calls and SMS in 14 different languages, detect and block fraudulent links and issue alerts when an OTP is shared during an ongoing call.



► A scene from the meeting

Dr. Anupama Nilekar Chandra, Director General (Investigation), NHRC said that cybercrime has emerged as a new dimension alongside drug trafficking and human trafficking, with over one billion mobile users potentially vulnerable to digital frauds. She suggested that NHRC could constitute theme-based sub-committees to examine legal loopholes, inter-agency coordination, capacity building, rehabilitation and compensation for victims.

Some of the other suggestions that emanated from the discussions are as follows:

- Digital arrest scams may be recognised as a distinct offence under the existing legal framework to facilitate more effective investigation, prosecution and victim redressal;
- The legal framework may be strengthened by explicitly criminalising the renting of mule accounts, trafficking for forced criminality and misuse of government logos for fraudulent purposes;
- Automated safeguards such as transaction 'circuit breakers', trusted-person authentication, temporary suspension of suspicious transactions and alerts during prolonged calls may be explored to prevent coercive transfers of funds;
- Recovery and restoration mechanisms for victims need to be simplified and expedited to reduce procedural delays and hardships;
- Greater accountability may be introduced across the digital ecosystem, including financial institutions, telecom operators, intermediaries and service providers to strengthen fraud prevention and response;
- The adjudication mechanism under the Information Technology Act may be strengthened to facilitate victim redressal and accountability of intermediaries;
- Dedicated compensation and support mechanisms may be considered for victims who suffer substantial financial and psychological harm;
- Systems for proactive identification and alerting of potential victims may be developed through analysis of transaction patterns and coordinated information-sharing among stakeholders;
- A single government communication channel or verification portal may be explored to enable citizens to verify the authenticity of law enforcement credentials, notices and communications;
- Need for special measures to address the misuse of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, deepfakes and synthetic identities, for cyber-enabled frauds;
- Stronger safeguards should be developed to protect senior citizens and other vulnerable groups who are mostly targeted by digital arrest scams;
- International cooperation should be strengthened to disrupt transnational cybercrime networks and cyber scam compounds operating across jurisdictions;
- Public awareness initiatives should focus on behavioural manipulation tactics used by fraudsters, including impersonation, intimidation and exploitation of trust in authority;
- Enhanced training and capacity building for law enforcement agencies, financial institutions and frontline responders should be undertaken to improve prevention, investigation and victim assistance;
- Developing a mechanism to ensure that law enforcement agencies have timely access to the contact details of grievance officers and compliance officers of intermediaries for data requests, summons and takedown actions.

The Commission will further deliberate on these suggestions to finalise its recommendations to the union and state governments.

Spotlight

Drug abuse: A human rights challenge requiring prevention, protection and partnership

Observed every year on 26th June, the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, under the auspices of the United Nations, highlights the global commitment to tackling one of the world's most serious challenges. The 2026 theme, 'World Drug Problem: Persisting Issues, New Challenges, Innovative Responses,' reflects the changing nature of the drug problem. Today, countries are facing rapid spread of synthetic drugs, new opioid supply chains and growing use of digital platforms by drug trafficking networks.

In India, the government has identified substance abuse and drug trafficking as major social and public health challenges. The issues extend far beyond law enforcement, affecting individuals, families, communities and public safety. Drug abuse is also a significant human rights concern, as it undermines the rights to health, life, dignity, education and livelihood while imposing a heavy social and economic burden on society. Young people are among the most vulnerable, with addiction disrupting education, damaging mental health, limiting employment opportunities and leading to social exclusion. At the same time, drug trafficking fuels organised crime, violence, corruption, money laundering and increasingly, narco-terrorism, posing a serious threat to national security and social stability.

India's first comprehensive Magnitude of Substance Use in India (2019) report, highlighted by the Press Information Bureau in its release on 2nd July 2026, revealed the alarming scale of substance abuse in the country. It is estimated that around 16 crore people consumed alcohol, of whom more than 5.7 crore were severely affected. The report also found that about 3.1 crore people used cannabis, around 1.18 crore used sedatives and 2.26 crore used opioids. Among the opioid users, nearly 77 lakh were problem users and 28 lakh were dependent users, highlighting the pressing need for prevention, treatment and rehabilitation services.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) supports countries by providing research, technical assistance, capacity building and international cooperation to address these challenges amidst the unabated global drug problem. Rising cocaine production, the spread of new psychoactive substances and synthetic drugs and technology-enabled trafficking have made enforcement more difficult.

The World Drug Report 2024, released by the UNODC, highlights the growing number of people suffering from drug use disorders. It stresses that effective drug policies should be based on science and evidence. The report also calls for greater investment in prevention, education, treatment and harm-reduction measures to reduce drug abuse and trafficking.

India is a party to the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961 (as amended by the 1972 Protocol), the Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971 and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 1988. These international commitments form the basis of India's legal and policy framework for controlling narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

The country's legislative framework is primarily governed by three central laws: the Drugs and Cosmetics Act 1940, the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act 1985 and the Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act 1988. Drug control is a shared responsibility involving several Ministries, Departments and enforcement agencies. The Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance, serves as the nodal authority for administering the NDPS Act and the Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, while coordinating policy implementation across agencies.

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), established on 17th March 1986 under the NDPS Act, functions under the Ministry of Home Affairs as the country's apex drug law enforcement agency. It is responsible for coordinating with Central and State agencies to curb drug trafficking and substance abuse while ensuring effective enforcement of the NDPS Act across the country. To encourage citizens to report drug-related activities and seek help safely, the government recognised the need for a confidential and easily accessible platform.

To meet this need, the National Narcotics Helpline MANAS (Madak Padarth Nishedh Asoochna Kendra) was launched on 18th July 2024 under the aegis of the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) in collaboration with the Digital India Corporation (DIC). MANAS is a secure, technology-driven platform that allows people to report drug-related activities, seek counselling and access rehabilitation services at any time.

The platform combines the vision of Digital India with the mission of a *Nasha Mukta Bharat*. Citizens can access MANAS through the national helpline number 1933, the official portal, email and the UMANG app. By making these services widely available, MANAS encourages citizens to become active partners in the fight against drug abuse.

India follows a balanced approach that combines prevention, rehabilitation and strict enforcement. The *Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan* has expanded awareness programmes across all districts, reaching millions of people, especially youth and women. A nationwide network of Integrated Rehabilitation Centres, Outreach and Drop-in Centres, Community-based Peer-led Intervention Centres, Addiction Treatment Facilities and District De-addiction Centres provides counselling, treatment and support for social reintegration. Preventive efforts are further strengthened through the toll-free helpline 14446, school-based awareness programmes and community outreach initiatives. But unauthorised drug De-addiction Centres are also a matter of concern. The Commission highlighted this aspect in some of its *suo motu* interventions where the inmates of such unscrupulous centres were subjected to brutal assault with severe injuries and, in some instances, lost their lives.

On the enforcement side, initiatives such as the Narco-Coordination Centre (NCORD), State Anti-Narcotics Task

Forces, stronger provisions under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act and better coordination among border guarding forces, the Railway Protection Force and maritime security agencies have improved India's ability to tackle drug trafficking. India also works closely with partner countries and international organisations to strengthen intelligence sharing and coordinated action against transnational drug networks.

Going forward, greater investment in prevention, early intervention and evidence-based treatment will be essential. Rehabilitation must be provided without stigma. Technology should be used more effectively to detect online drug trafficking, while stronger financial investigations can help dismantle organised criminal networks. Better cross-border cooperation and greater community participation will also be important. Families, schools and local communities must play a larger role in building awareness, life skills and mental health support to protect young people from drug abuse.

A drug-free society cannot be achieved through enforcement alone. It requires a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach. Such an approach must protect human dignity, promote public health and provide opportunities for recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration, ensuring that no one is left behind in the fight against drugs.

Article

Environmental Degradation and Climate Change A Threat to Human Rights

Shri Bharat Lal

Secretary General and CEO of NHRC, India



Every year, 5th June is celebrated as World Environment Day, to bring awareness and inspire people to take action for the protection of our environment. It serves as the United Nations' principal vehicle for advocating preservation of our environment¹. The choice of the date is historical as it marks the opening

day of the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment, the first major United Nations summit focused on environmental issues and policy².

Awareness and action around environment protection have increased worldwide in recent decades corresponding to the alarming rise in deforestation and land degradation, resulting in biodiversity loss and climate change. The now recurrent heat wave in Europe, which wrecked the lives and livelihoods of people last month, are a clear sign of the burgeoning

¹ United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), *World Environment Day*

² United Nations, *Report of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm, 1972)*, U.N. Doc. A/CONF.48/14

crisis. Many parts of India too have been experiencing heat wave, droughts and high-intensity rainfalls that have led to floods and loss of lives.

As global temperatures rise, the predictable weather systems appear to break down, causing erratic precipitation patterns that result in droughts in some parts of the world and unprecedented flooding in others. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 24% of all global deaths, amounting to nearly 13.7 million deaths annually, are linked to environmental risks³. The ecological phenomena of climate change that often felt abstract and invisible earlier, appears to directly threaten human lives today. Rising temperatures, melting glaciers and shifting biomes, all demonstrate how environment crisis is undermining human rights to life, health, food, water, shelter and a clean environment.

Land degradation and climate crisis

Whilst the world is celebrating accelerated poverty reduction, enhanced prosperity and improvement in quality of life, humanity faces major environmental challenges, viz. environmental pollution, deforestation, loss of water bodies and biodiversity, land degradation and climate change. Fossil fuels- coal, oil and gas- account for nearly 68% of global greenhouse gas emissions⁴.

Forests across the globe face unprecedented threats due to unsustainable exploitation of natural resources. The world lost 10.6 million acres of tropical primary rainforest in 2025 alone⁵. Vital ecosystems that acted as natural carbon sinks are being lost.

The accumulation of greenhouse gases is leading to rising temperatures. Earth's global average temperature has risen by approximately 1.29°C–1.39°C above the pre-industrial average⁶. Concomitantly, rising temperatures have dried up rivers and shrunk water bodies; glaciers worldwide are melting, threatening several river systems and causing frequent droughts.

Climate instability has thrown up another challenge, that of eco-refugees, people forced to flee their homes due to unliveable conditions. An estimated 20.8 million people are displaced every year by weather-related disasters⁷.

The figure refers to annual displacement rather than projected displacement by 2030. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees notes that sea-level rise in low-lying coastal areas is a major driver of climate displacement⁸.

Thought leaders like Ms. Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland, former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and former UN Special Envoy on Climate Change, state in her book *Climate Justice* that the fight

against climate change is fundamentally about human rights and securing justice for those suffering from its impact.

Indian scenario: Challenges and opportunities

India has nearly 18% of the world's population, around 2.4% of the world's land area and about 4% of the world's renewable freshwater resources⁹. Despite substantial progress being made due to flagship programmes like the Jal Jeevan Mission and Swachh Bharat Mission, climate shocks like droughts and floods threaten water and food security. This unpredictability directly endangers around 64% of India's population dependent on agriculture for livelihood¹⁰.

Rising heat wave, urban flooding and smog place several Indian cities among the highest heat-risk cities globally. India's youth account for nearly 66% of the population below 35 years of age¹¹. Their education and economic productivity are increasingly disrupted by climate impacts.

Without prejudice, India has accorded high priority to environmental protection and climate mitigation. It played a historic role in the Paris Agreement (2015)¹². India has set an example for harmonising development and environmental conservation. Since 1972, it has created a robust

³ World Health Organization, *Environmental Health*

⁴ United Nations, *Climate Action – Causes and Effects of Climate Change*

⁵ World Resources Institute & Global Forest Watch, *Global Forest Review 2025*

⁶ World Meteorological Organization (WMO), *State of the Global Climate 2023*, WMO-No. 1347, Geneva, 2024

⁷ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability – Technical Summary*, in: *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability, Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the IPCC*

⁸ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), *Report of the Secretary-General on Oceans and the Law of the Sea: Sea-Level Rise and Its Impacts – UNHCR Contribution* (Jan. 2020)

⁹ NITI Aayog, *Composite Water Management Index* (2019)

¹⁰ Dharmendra Chandurkar, Swapnil Shekhar & Virinder Sharma, *Impact of DFID Rural Programmes in India: Furthering Climate Change Adaptation*, Sambodhi Discussion Paper No. 1, Sambodhi Research & Communications Pvt. Ltd

¹¹ Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India, *Utilisation of Youth Potential*, Press Information Bureau

legal and policy framework to protect the environment and drive climate mitigation.

Of late, the National Solar Mission, the National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency, the National Mission for a Green India and the National Mission on Strategic Knowledge for Climate Change have formed the key pillars of India's National Action Plan on Climate Change¹³. The Mission Amrit Sarovar (2022) aimed at constructing or rejuvenating 75 water bodies in every district¹⁴.

To proactively confront the looming crisis, under the leadership of the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, India has emerged as a key player in climate mitigation. India has committed to achieving 50% of its cumulative installed electric power capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources by 2030, reducing projected cumulative carbon emissions by one billion tonnes by 2030 and achieving net-zero emissions by 2070¹⁵. India has also inspired the global community through Mission LiFE.

The Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana has provided more than 10 crore LPG connections¹⁶. It is estimated to have reduced approximately 54.4 million tonnes of CO₂-equivalent emissions. Simultaneously, the Aravalli Green Wall Project seeks to restore degraded landscapes across four states¹⁷.

Climate resilience and human rights

The Chipko Andolan of the early 1970s probably hinted for the first time at the link between climate crisis, forest rights and people's right to live. Thousands of women from villages in Uttarakhand hugged trees to prevent them from being felled. They were protesting against deforestation that would result in floods, soil erosion and food insecurity.

The Supreme Court of India, in *M.K. Ranjitsinh & Others v. Union of India* (2024) recognised that the "right to be free from the adverse effects of climate change" is integral to the fundamental rights guaranteed under Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution. Article 21 guarantees the right to life and personal liberty, which judicial interpretation has consistently expanded to include the right to a clean and healthy environment.

Building on this legal framework, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India has recognised environmental degradation and climate issues as part of its broader mandate relating to the Right to Life. In the last couple of years, NHRC has issued advisories to States and Union Territories to protect lives and livelihoods from heat wave. On 4th June, it organised an Open House Discussion to promote mitigation

efforts. During the discussion, Justice V. Ramasubramanian, Chairperson, NHRC, emphasised that deforestation, wetland loss and encroachment on water bodies are key drivers of heat stress. I also stressed that climate change is a reality that we are experiencing every day and noted that heat wave disproportionately affect construction workers, gig workers, elderly persons, pregnant women and children, making resilience a matter of social justice. In fact, climate resilience and social justice are two sides of the same coin.

The link between environmental degradation and human rights appears obvious today. From a human rights perspective, we need to adopt key strategies for sustainable urban planning. Around one-third of India's population lives in urban areas (Census of India; World Bank). The idea of developing sponge infrastructure and expanding green zones to manage heat and floods therefore assumes great significance.

Rural India would gain greater livelihood security through climate-smart agriculture and decentralised renewable energy models. Making cities and villages more liveable is a crucial step towards protecting human rights from environmental degradation and climate change.

¹² Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, *India: Third Biennial Update Report to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* (2021); United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), *The Paris Agreement* (adopted 12 December 2015, entered into force 4 November 2016)

¹³ Government of India, National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC), Prime Minister's Council on Climate Change, released on 30 June 2008; Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, National Action Plan on Climate Change, 12 August 2008

¹⁴ Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India, Mission Amrit Sarovar

¹⁵ Government of India, India's Updated First Nationally Determined Contribution under the Paris Agreement (2021–2030) (August 2022), submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

¹⁶ Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Government of India, *Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana*

¹⁷ Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, *Aravalli Green Wall Project*

Article

Mental health and vulnerability to substance use among children and adolescents

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Substance abuse or drug addiction is a manifestation of a mental disorder. To make society and particularly youth, free of drug addiction, it is necessary to address their mental health issues. Why youth and among them, the adolescents, get attracted to drugs is a phenomenon that needs to be examined thoroughly for the success of a drug free society. Therefore, the United Nations General Assembly, in December 1987, decided to observe the 26th of June as the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking to reiterate its commitment to achieve the goal of a drug free international society.

India has firmly resolved to make the country “Drug Free” and has envisioned this mission with participation of the masses in the 'Nasha Mukta Bharat' Abhiyaan, launched in August 2020. Article 47 of the Constitution of India, a Directive Principle, mandates the government to work toward prohibiting intoxicating drinks and harmful drugs, except for medicinal purposes. Over a decade back, in the third episode of his 'Mann ki Baat,' in December 2014, the Prime Minister expressed his deep concern on the issue of drug addiction and its adverse effects on the youth. This article focuses upon children and adolescents and the prevalence of substance use with mental health as a causal factor.

India has the largest adolescent population in the world, with 253 million and every fifth person is between 10 and 19 years old.¹ The advantage that India stands to gain from this demographic dividend can be actualised when this group is empowered with appropriate life skills and resilience to manage adversities. It has also been reported that one out of seven adolescents globally is facing a

health challenge.²

Adolescence is characterised by rapid physical and cognitive development. Adolescents' inclination to try new things can spark innovation and achievement, but it can also leave them vulnerable.³ The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Manual for Medical Officers, developed by the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Community Psychiatry Unit (Department of Psychiatry), NIMHANS has highlighted that among children and adolescents, prevalence of emotional disorders (EDs) is the most common group of mental health disorders. Depression, anxiety disorder and stress-related disorders are the subgroups of EDs.⁴

Adolescents are often at a loss to explain this lack of mental well-being, thereby leading to EDs in adolescents being ignored and under-diagnosed. The fall-out of this suffocation or the inability to express about the EDs, has high probability in the child or adolescent taking recourse to escapist behaviours like indulging in substance use. Studies indicate that around 1.5

¹ Empowering adolescent girls and boys in India, available at [unicef.org](https://www.unicef.org/india)

² Adolescent Development and Participation, available at [unicef.org](https://www.unicef.org/india)

³ Ibid

⁴ The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Manual for Medical Officers, developed by the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Community Psychiatry Unit (Department of Psychiatry), NIMHANS

⁵ Impact of substance abuse among adolescents: a narrative review, M. Hemamalini et. Al. Hindu Mission College of Nursing, The Tamil Nadu Dr. MGR Medical University, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India, (Vol 12 No.10 (2025): October 2025 International Journal of Community Medicine and Public Health)

crore (15 million) minors aged between 10 - 17 years use substance in India.⁵

A nation-wide survey conducted by AIIMS in the year 2022, on 'Substance use among school-going adolescents in India' indicates that 'overall, 10% students reported use of a substance (any) in the past year (2021).⁶ Tobacco was most frequently used, followed by alcohol, opioids (pharmaceuticals), cannabis, inhalants and sedatives.⁷ It was found that children in substance use acquire this habit in the age of 11 - 14 years and hence, timely intervention was found to be necessary at the age of 12 to ensure rescue of the child at an early stage.

The situation has other complications as the earlier study conducted by AIIMS in 2019, titled 'Magnitude of Substance use in India,' found that inhalants are the only category of substances for which the prevalence of current use among children and adolescents is higher (1.17%) than adults (0.58%). At the national level, an estimated 4.6 lakh children and 18 lakh adults need help for their inhalant use (harmful use/dependence).

Apart from determining the magnitude, the study also highlighted the severe dearth of access to treatment facilities, with just about 01 in 38 alcohol dependants receiving any treatment and only about 01 in 180 receiving inpatient treatment or hospitalisation. As far as drug dependant persons were concerned, only 01 among 20 had reported to have ever received inpatient treatment/ hospitalisation for de-addiction. Data related specifically to the number of children dependent on alcohol and drugs

having received treatment is presently unavailable.

Children with psychological difficulties and Emotional Disorders remain vulnerable to getting into substance use. This is further precipitated by negative family environment, peer group pressure of conformity to acquire habits of substance use, inability to keep pace with competitive academic standards, low self-esteem, among other factors. Hence, the role of parents is as important as that of teachers to detect early signs of changes in the behaviour of the child at home and school, respectively. Monitoring out-of-school children and adolescents, especially those residing in rural areas, needs the involvement of civil society organisations and families, apart from the civic administration.

The Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan, which was launched in August 2020, has already factored in sensitisation of teachers, parents and the civil society organisations. Sensitisation programmes for various groups are being held regularly to enable them to assist children and adolescents in need. National Toll Free Helpline of Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan - 14446 and the MANAS Narcotics Helpline 1933 have been set up for round-the-clock advice, counselling for those seeking assistance for de-addiction and tele-consultation facilities have also been set up.

Another significant development is the enactment of the Mental Healthcare Act, 2017. The Act of 2017 is progressive, aspirational and human rights oriented. It has redefined India's approach towards making mental

health care patient centric. Whereas custody and institutional approach was the foundation of the Act of 1987, the 2017 Act focuses on a rights-based framework. With provisions for personal autonomy of the patient in decision making related to admission and treatment, as well as protection from discrimination under the Mental Healthcare Act, 2017, access to mental healthcare is now a right. As the definition of mental illness under Section 2(1)(s) of the Act covers 'mental conditions associated with the abuse of alcohol and drugs,' persons dependent on illicit drug use can now exercise their right to access treatment.

At the same time, the state governments need to ramp up their de-addiction treatment facilities to cater to these needs. The Act also mandates the states to set up Mental Health Authority and Mental Health Review Board. Unless these systems are in place, implementation of the provisions of the Act and the right to access treatment for mental health remain a distant dream.

The challenge of drug addiction has been taken up by the Government of India, in all earnest, with the 'whole of society' approach. This includes parents, teachers and all strata of society as active stakeholders. Hence, the response needs to be all encompassing, not only for prevention of drug use but also to reach out to the children and adolescents in need of de-addiction. Only such concerted and sustained efforts will enable us to secure the future of the nation by nurturing healthy and resilient adults of tomorrow.

⁶ Anju Dhawan et. al, NDDTC, AIIMS "Substance use among school-going adolescents in India" (2022)

⁷ Ibid

⁷ Ibid

⁷ Ibid

⁷ Ibid

Suo motu cognizance

The media reports have been a very useful instrument for the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India to know about incidents of human rights violations. Over the years, it has taken *suo motu* cognizance of many such issues and brought succour to the victims. During June 2026, the Commission took *suo motu* cognizance in 12 cases of alleged human rights violations reported by the media and issued notices to the concerned authorities to send action taken reports. Summaries of these cases are as follows:

53 maternal deaths within a year due to lack of facilities

(Case No. 1039/12/45/2026)

On 29th May 2026, the media reported about the deaths of 53 expecting mothers during pre and post-delivery in Sidhi district of Madhya Pradesh in one year between April 2025 and March 2026 primarily due to lack of awareness and medical facilities. Reportedly, Sidhi district has consistently ranked among the bottom three districts in the Community Maternal Health League grading conducted by the State Health Department. The Commission has issued a notice to the Chief Secretary, Government of Madhya Pradesh, seeking a detailed report.

According to the media report, out of the 53 maternal deaths, the average age of the deceased has been reported to be 26 years, with most of them first or second-time mothers. The news report has also revealed a lack of basic infrastructure, including doctors and technical experts at Community Health Centres, Primary Health Centres and the District Hospital, due to which patients are referred to higher medical facilities in the faraway Rewa district, risking life in transit. Reportedly, an ambulance driver disclosed that several villages do not have proper road connectivity in the district, further complicating the matters during the monsoon season. The pregnant women have to be carried on cots for two to three kilometres before reaching an ambulance.

Trafficking, selling and sexual assault of a tribal girl

(Case No. 5710/24/40/2026)

On 29th May 2026, the media reported that a 17-year-old

tribal girl from the Kankadahada area of Dhenkanal district, Odisha was trafficked, sold and subjected to repeated sexual assaults for about two years in Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh. Reportedly, the victim and three other girls were trafficked to Uttar Pradesh on the pretext of providing jobs. The girl managed to escape with the help of a local advocate and approached the Jhansi police. Although her statement was recorded, no further action was allegedly taken by the police except for providing a train ticket to Odisha. Upon her return, the Odisha Police recorded her statement and an investigation is underway. The Commission has issued notices to the Director General of Police, Odisha, Director General of Police, Uttar Pradesh and the District Magistrate, Dhenkanal, calling for a detailed report on the matter. It is expected to include the status of investigation and steps taken to provide relief and rehabilitation to the victim.

Reportedly, the victim was allegedly confined at a house for nearly three months and was repeatedly subjected to sexual assault there. It is further alleged that when the victim became pregnant, she was forced to undergo an abortion without her consent. Thereafter, she was allegedly sold to another person for Rs 50,000 and repeatedly sexually assaulted by several others for nearly two years before managing to escape.

Beating and parading of a girl

(Case No. 5904/24/21/2026)

On 2nd June 2026, the media reported that a 14-year-old girl, belonging to the Scheduled Caste, was tied to a tree and beaten up by a shopkeeper on suspicion of theft in Deoria district, Uttar Pradesh. Reportedly, the shopkeeper also held the victim by her hair and paraded her through the village. The Commission has issued notices to the District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police, Deoria, calling for a detailed report on the matter. Reportedly, after being paraded, the victim was dragged to the shopkeeper's house, tied to a tree and brutally assaulted.

Death while cleaning a sewage line

(Case No. 495/19/10/2026)

On 2nd June 2026, the media reported that three persons died and two others were injured after inhaling toxic

fumes while cleaning a sewage line inside a factory in Ludhiana district, Punjab. Reportedly, the factory management hired the workers to clean a sewage system used for disposing of chemical waste. They entered the sewer line without any safety equipment. The Commission has issued notices to the Punjab Chief Secretary and Ludhiana Police Commissioner, calling for a detailed report on the matter. It is expected to include the status of the investigation, health of the injured, as well as compensation, if any, announced by the government. Reportedly, three workers died on the spot, while two assisting workers lost consciousness and were rushed to the hospital.

Death while cleaning a septic tank

(Case No. 474/6/23/2026)

On 8th June 2026, the media reported that four workers died while cleaning a septic tank at a jewellery manufacturing unit in Surat district of Gujarat on 7th June 2026. The waste generated during the jewellery cleaning process is collected in the septic tank. Reportedly, the workers entered the tank to clean it without following any safety protocol and became victims of toxic fumes. They were taken to the hospital by the rescue team, where doctors declared them dead. The Commission has issued notices to the Gujarat Chief Secretary and Surat Commissioner of Police, calling for a detailed report on the matter. The report is expected to include the status of the investigation and compensation, if any, paid to the next of kin of the deceased workers.

Blast at a steel plant

(Case No. 753/1/21/2026)

On 9th June 2026, the media reported that eight workers died and at least six others suffered severe burn injuries in an explosion at the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant of the Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited in Andhra Pradesh on 8th June 2026. Reportedly, the workers' union alleged that the management ignored safety protocols. The Commission has issued a notice to the Andhra Pradesh Chief Secretary, calling for a detailed report on the matter. The report is expected to include the status of the injured workers' health and payment of ex-gratia amounts to them and the next of kin of the deceased. Reportedly, the incident occurred in the 'Steel Melting Shop' of the plant when a ladle carrying around 150 tonnes of liquid steel at a temperature of about 1600°C suddenly exploded and the molten steel poured across the shop floor, causing severe burn injuries to the workers.

Social ostracisation

(Case No. 563/18/14/2026-WC)

On 11th June 2026, the media reported that an elderly woman passed away suffering 12 years of social boycott and even then, the villagers did not extend support to her daughter in conducting her mother's last rites in Mahuldiha village, Sundargarh district, Odisha. Eventually, her last rites were performed when the administration stepped in and some local NGOs were associated. The Commission has issued a notice to the Odisha Chief Secretary, calling for a detailed report on the matter. Reportedly, the woman's family was subjected to social ostracisation for being unable to pay a penalty imposed by the villagers after her daughter had briefly left home with a man from another caste.

Stray dog attack

(Case No. 557/19/17/2026)

On 11th June 2026, the media reported that on 10th June 2026, an eight-year-old girl was mauled to death by a pack of stray dogs in Rupnagar district, Punjab. Reportedly, the victim was playing outside her house when the stray dogs attacked her. The Commission has issued a notice to the Punjab Chief Secretary, calling for a detailed report on the matter within two weeks. It is expected to include action taken by the authorities. Reportedly, the local residents rescued the victim and rushed her to the PGIMER in Chandigarh, but she succumbed to the injuries on the way. The victim belonged to an economically vulnerable family. Her father passed away about four years ago and her mother works as a domestic help.

Illegal confinement of a minor

(Case No. 6784/24/30/2026)

On 16th June 2026, the media reported that a 16-year-old boy from the Shahjahanpur district of Uttar Pradesh was arrested and kept illegally at the Kasna jail as an adult in the Gautam Budh Nagar district for two months. It took six more days to shift him to a juvenile home in the district after the ossification test confirmed him as a minor. But he continued to remain in the juvenile home despite being granted bail by the court, as his poor family could not manage the surety bond. Reportedly, he was arrested following protests by labourers in the district demanding a pay hike and improved working conditions. The Commission has issued notices to the Uttar Pradesh Director General of Prisons Administration and Reform Services and the

Director General of Police, calling for a detailed report on the matter. It has also directed its Director General (Investigation) to depute a team of officers to conduct a spot enquiry and submit a report within a week.

Reportedly, the boy received a phone call regarding a parcel in his name on 14th April 2026. However, upon his arrival, the police present at the location arrested him. An FIR was registered against him under several serious sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. The police reportedly assaulted him and forced him to sign certain documents.

Ammonia leak causing deaths at a factory

(Case No. 791/22/12/2026)

On 22nd June 2026, the media reported that at least two women died and several others fell sick after inhaling ammonia which got leaked at a private shrimp-processing factory in Tiruvallur district of Tamil Nadu on 21st June 2026. Reportedly, at the time of the incident, the employees were taking a rest in a nearby room. The Commission has issued notices to the Tamil Nadu Chief Secretary and Director General of Police, calling for a detailed report on the matter within two weeks.

The report is also expected to include the status of health of the workers as well as the disbursement of the relief amount announced by the state government to be paid to the NoK of the deceased workers. Reportedly, 59 workers were admitted to various hospitals in Chennai and Tiruvallur soon after the incident. Reportedly, the state government has ordered the formation of a three-member committee to investigate the incident.

Bonded labour

(Case No. 7037/24/57/2026-BL)

On 25th June 2026, the media reported about 12 bonded labourers being assaulted in captivity and forced to work till midnight without sufficient food and wages for nearly one and a half years at a paper plate manufacturing factory in Mandi village in the Muzaffarnagar district, Uttar Pradesh.

Reportedly, one of the labourers managed to escape from the factory and a complaint was filed with the Titawi Police Station, leading to the rescue of the other labourers. Their medical examination disclosed multiple injuries, including bruises, cuts, fractures and signs of prolonged physical abuse.

Reportedly, the police found that one person had also died. The investigations were on to ascertain if there were more deaths. The Commission has issued notices to the Uttar Pradesh Chief Secretary and Director General of Police, calling for a detailed report on the matter. It has also directed the Muzaffarnagar District Magistrate to inquire into the matter as per the Standard Operating Procedure of the Ministry of Labour and Employment and in light of the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976.

It has also directed immediate action for the registration of the labourers on the e-Shram Portal and as prescribed under the NHRC Advisory 2.0 dated 8th December 2021.

Reportedly, the victims belonged to different states, including Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Haryana, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and a few from Nepal.

They were lured from railway stations, bus stands and other public places on the pretext of providing employment, regular wages, food and accommodation. After reaching the factory, their mobile phones and identity documents were allegedly confiscated, preventing them from contacting their families. Allegedly, pit bull dogs were used to intimidate the labourers and prevent them from escaping.

Death due to building collapse

(Case No. 1878/25/5/2026)

On 25th June 2026, the media reported that at least five labourers died and twenty others were injured when an under-construction warehouse building collapsed in the Taratala area of Kolkata district in West Bengal on 24th June 2026. Reportedly, 12 to 15 people were feared trapped under the debris. Allegedly, the sanctioned building plan was faulty, resulting in the tragedy. The Commission has issued notices to the West Bengal Chief Secretary, Kolkata Police Commissioner and Municipal Commissioner, calling for a detailed report on the matter.

The report is expected to include the status of the investigation as well as compensation, if any, paid to the next of kin of the deceased and injured. Reportedly, about forty labourers were working at the construction site when the concrete casting of the iron structure of the under-construction warehouse suddenly collapsed, trapping several workers beneath the debris.

Recommendations for relief

One of the primary responsibilities of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India is to address cases of violation of human rights, listen to the grievances of victims and recommend appropriate relief in such instances. It regularly takes up various cases and gives directions and recommendations to the concerned authorities for relief to the victims. In June 2026, an amount of Rs 79.5 lakh was recommended for the victims or their next of kin (NoK) in 9 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 NHRC, India website by logging the case number given in the table below:

S. No.	Case Number	Nature of complaint	Amount (Rs in lakh)	Authority
1	1850/4/1/2024-PCD	Death in police custody	15.00	Govt. of Bihar
2	4315/30/6/2023-PCD	Death in police custody	5.00	Govt. of NCT of Delhi
3	406/18/7/2024-PCD	Death in police custody	7.00	Govt. of Odisha
4	228/20/1/2024-JCD	Death in judicial custody	10.00	Govt. of Andhra Pradesh
5	717/13/23/2022-JCD	Death in judicial custody	3.00	Govt. of Maharashtra
6	1615/13/9/2021-PF	Death in judicial custody	10.00	Govt. of Maharashtra
7	519/18/27/2024	Death due to uncovered drain	7.00	Govt. of Odisha
8	11068/24/52/2024	Sewer death	15.00	Govt. of Uttar Pradesh
9	29155/24/17/2019	A criminal shot himself to avoid police arrest	7.50	Govt. of Uttar Pradesh

Payment of relief to the victims

During June 2026, the Commission closed 11 cases, either on receipt of compliance reports and proof of payment from public authorities or by giving other observations/ directions. An amount of more than Rs 89 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 NHRC, India website by logging the case number given in the table below:

S. No.	Case No.	Nature of complaint	Amount (Rs in lakh)	Authority
1	3194/7/3/2022-PCD	Death in police custody	5.00	Govt. of Haryana
2	104/10/4/2021-PCD	Death in police custody	5.00	Govt. of Karnataka
3	4/17/1/2022-PCD	Death in police custody	5.00	Govt. of Andhra Pradesh
4	35186/24/25/2017-PCD	Death in police custody	10.00	Govt. of Uttar Pradesh
5	1253/34/2/2019-AD	Death in police custody	5.00	Govt. of Jharkhand
6	9/17/3/2016-AD	Death in police custody	5.00	Govt. of Nagaland
7	1521/36/7/2021-JCD	Death in judicial custody	3.00	Govt. of Telangana
8	289/3/22/2023	Suicide due to police torture	3.00	Govt. of Assam
9	102/30/10/2023	Torture in police custody	1.00	Govt. of NCT of Delhi
10	203/19/18/2024	Death after consuming spurious liquor	45.00	Govt. of Punjab
11	8944/24/64/2020	Death of a migrant worker due to hunger	2.00	Govt. of Uttar Pradesh

Case studies

In many cases, the Commission found that contrary to the claims of the state authorities, human rights of the victims were violated due to their unlawful action, inaction or omission. Therefore, on a case-to-case basis, the Commission issued notices to them to show cause why monetary relief should not be recommended to be paid to these victims or their next of kin (NoK) and why action should not be taken against the erring/ negligent officials. The merits of the states' approach to responding to show cause notices prompted the Commission to recommend monetary relief to the victims of human rights violations or their NoK. The Commission also received reports of compliance with recommendations by the respective state authorities. Summaries of such cases are as under:

Suicide after assault by police

(Case No. 289/3/22/2023)

The matter pertained to the suicide of a man after a traffic police official assaulted him for more than 2 hours in Golaghat district, Assam in 2023. Based on the reports received in response to its notices, the Commission found that the allegations about the police atrocity were correct. The victim felt humiliated and committed suicide by hanging. Therefore, it recommended that the Government of Assam pay Rs 3 lakh as relief to the next of kin (NoK) of the victim, which was complied with.

Deaths due to consumption of spurious liquor

(Case No. 203/19/18/2024)

The matter pertained to the death of five persons and illness to five others after consuming spurious liquor in Gujran village of Sangrur district, Punjab in 2024. Based on the reports received in response to its notices, the Commission found that there was failure on the part of the local administration in not being able to check spurious liquor sales, which resulted in the tragedy. Therefore, it recommended that the Government of Punjab pay Rs 5 lakh each as relief to the NoK of the victims, which was paid.

Death due to suicide in police custody

(Case No. 3194/7/3/2022-PCD)

The matter pertained to the suicide of a man after he jumped from the 6th floor of a court premises in Faridabad, Haryana in 2022. He was taken there by police personnel for an appearance in a case. Based on the reports received in response to its notices, the Commission found that the escorting police officials were negligent in their duty, due to which the man escaped from their custody and committed suicide. Therefore, it recommended that the Government of Haryana pay Rs 5 lakh as relief to the NoK of the victim, which was paid.

Death after consuming poison in jail

(Case No. 1521/36/7/2021-JCD)

The matter pertained to the death of a man by consuming poison in the judicial custody of the Sub Jail, Devarakonda in Nalgonda district, Telangana in 2021. Based on the reports received in response to its notices, the Commission found that the prisoner managed to escape from the jail premises and committed suicide. Therefore, the Commission observed that the responsibility for care and protection of an inmate, including preventing them from self-inflicted harm in judicial custody, lies with the state. Accordingly, it recommended that the Government of Telangana pay Rs 3 lakh as relief to the NoK of the victim, which was complied with.

Failure in taking lawful action in a case of sexual assault

(Case No. 3269/4/4/2017)

The matter pertained to non-registration of an FIR by police in a case of sexual assault and attempt to rape in Navkothi, Begusarai district, Bihar. Based on the reports received in response to its notices, the Commission found that the police did not register her complaint and released the accused after detention. Not only this, but she was also called to the Mahila Thana and scolded for her insistence on registering the case. Therefore, the Commission recommended that the Government of Bihar pay Rs 1 lakh as relief to the victim for her human rights violation due to the delay in registration of an FIR in a cognizable offence, which was paid.

Death of an under-trial prisoner

(Case No. 1016/20/14/2019-JCD)

The matter pertained to the death of an under-trial prisoner while in the judicial custody of the Central-Jail, Jaipur, Rajasthan in 2019. Based on the reports received in response to its notices, the Commission found that the deceased was mentally challenged and had remained under antipsychotic treatment. However, instead of being sent to a mental healthcare facility, the victim was sent to the Open Jail Sanganer from Central Jail, Jaipur. In the absence of any escort or attendant, he happened to go out and stand in front of an approaching train, resulting in his death. Therefore, the Commission held that there was negligence on the part

of jail authorities as the safety and security of the inmate were their responsibility. Therefore, it recommended that the Government of Rajasthan pay Rs 5 lakh as relief to the NoK of the deceased, which was complied with.

Death in police custody

(Case No. 639/6/14/2022-AD)

The matter pertained to the death of a man in police custody at the Gandhidham A-Division Police Station in Kutch

district, Gujarat in 2021. Based on the reports received in response to its notices, the Commission found that he fell down while trying to run away from the police personnel when taken for interrogation on the first floor of the police station. The victim sustained serious injuries to his spine and head, resulting in his death. Therefore, the Commission held that there was negligence of the police in securing the victim's safety in its custody. Accordingly, it recommended that the Government of Gujarat pay Rs 5 lakh as relief to the NoK of the victim, which was paid.

Spot enquiries

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India deposes its own team of Investigation Officers from time to time to conduct spot enquiries into cases of human rights violations.

Case No. 29813/24/62/2023

From 1st to 5th June 2026, a spot enquiry was conducted into the allegation regarding the death of a person in a police encounter in Rampur district, Uttar Pradesh in 2023.

Case No. 403/18/4/2026

From 1st to 5th June 2026, a spot enquiry was conducted into the alleged mob lynching of a Railway Police Constable in Dhenkanal district, Odisha.

Case No. 18649/24/30/2024

From 8th to 12th June 2026, a spot enquiry was conducted into the allegation regarding the wrongful imprisonment of senior citizens in Pristine Avenue, Gaur City-2 by the Police of PS Bistrakh in Gautam Budh Nagar, Uttar Pradesh.

Case No. 334/22/45/2024-PCD

From 15th to 19th June 2026, a spot enquiry was conducted into the allegation regarding death in police custody of a person

in Tamil Nadu.

Case No. 5571/24/54/2026

From 15th to 17th June 2026, a spot enquiry was conducted into the allegation regarding the abduction of the complainant's granddaughter under the false pretext of a family emergency in Meerut district, Uttar Pradesh.

Case No. 16142/24/57/2025

From 16th to 20th June 2026, a spot enquiry was conducted into the allegation that after a verbal dispute with neighbours in Muzaffarnagar district, Uttar Pradesh. The complainant's father received life-threatening calls. The police did not respond to them.

Case No. 36998/24/51/2022-AD

From 29th to 30th June 2026, a spot enquiry was conducted into the allegation regarding the death of a person in the custody of District Jail Mainpuri, Uttar Pradesh.

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 status of implementation of the Commission's advisories, guidelines and recommendations by state governments and their concerned authorities. They also visit shelters, prisons and observation homes to raise

awareness among government officials and to encourage them to take necessary actions to improve human rights conditions. During these visits, the importance of state authorities submitting timely reports is also highlighted to the officials, as it aids the Commission in promptly resolving human rights violation cases.

Visits by NHRC, India Member

On 7th June 2026, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani, Member, NHRC visited the Hindu graveyard at Bollaram, Medchal-Malkajgiri, Telangana to take stock of the situation after intervention by the Commission on the allegations of the graveyard being used as a dumping site, resulting in severe environmental pollution and public inconvenience. During the visit, the Member interacted with local residents in the presence of the Zonal Commissioner and other officials to assess the progress on the matter so far.

On 23rd June 2026, she visited NIMS, Hyderabad, Telangana and interacted with many patients and assured remedial action in accordance with the law on the matters of the problems.

On 25th June 2026, the Member conducted a spot enquiry at the Government Tribal Girls Ashram School, Golagamudi, Nellore district, Andhra Pradesh. She inspected the school and hostel facilities, interacted with nearly 420 tribal girl students and held discussions with the Warden, Headmistress, teachers and support staff. During the inspection, serious deficiencies were observed in sanitation, hostel management and nutrition.

Hostel rooms, bathrooms, the kitchen and surrounding premises were found to be unhygienic. The menu displayed did not match the food being served and students did not receive the prescribed nutritious and balanced diet. Students complained of mosquito and rat infestation, forcing many to sleep in the kitchen and dining hall.

They were also found carrying out cleaning and housekeeping work that should be performed by support staff. She asked the concerned authorities to take immediate action to ensure the safety, health and welfare of the students.



Capacity Building

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India is mandated to promote, protect and build awareness about human rights. For this purpose, it has been organising internship programmes, collaborative training and various other activities, including moot court competitions, to expand its outreach and human rights sensitisation, particularly among university-level students. Internships are conducted in-person as well as online. The month-long in-person internships in summer and winter and six Online Short Term Internship (OSTI) Programmes are organised at its premises in New Delhi. The OSTIs help students from remote areas to participate without incurring any expenses for their travel and stay in Delhi.

Summer Internship Programme

The NHRC Internship Programmes have emerged as a significant platform for engaging young minds with the principles of human rights, democratic values and social responsibility. By bringing together students from diverse academic disciplines, regions and institutions across the country, the programme seeks to nurture informed, empathetic and socially conscious future leaders. Through expert interactions, learning activities and field exposure, the internship provides participants with a deeper understanding of contemporary human rights issues and the role they can play in promoting justice, equality, dignity and compassion in society.

From 1st to 25th June 2026, the Commission organised its four-week in-person Summer Internship Programme (SIP) for postgraduate-level students. 96 students out of 1,768 applicants from diverse academic disciplines completed the

internship. The students represented 40 institutions across 21 States/ Union Territories from diverse academic backgrounds, including Law, Social Sciences, Social Work, Psychology, Journalism, Gender Studies, Humanities and International Relations.

Inaugurating the programme, NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice V. Ramasubramanian said that while agricultural, industrial and digital revolutions have transformed human life, the enduring nature of liberty, equality and fraternity remains unchanged all over the world, signifying the importance attached to human rights and values. He said that while many students initially seek internships to strengthen their academic profiles, the true value lies in acquiring knowledge, broadening perspectives and developing a deeper understanding of society.

Justice Ramasubramanian said that the selection of interns represents a 'Mini India' in an effort to bring together



► NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice V. Ramasubramanian delivering the inaugural address of the Summer Internship Programme

students from diverse backgrounds and sow in them the seeds of human rights consciousness to contribute to a more evolved society in the future through their character and conduct. He encouraged the interns to make the best use of the internship, which has been curated specifically to provide them with learning beyond classrooms and digital sources. He said that if even a few students emerge from the internship with greater empathy, awareness and commitment towards human rights, the programme would achieve its purpose.

NHRC, India Member, Justice (Dr.) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi said that the internship brings together students from diverse regions, providing them an opportunity for an exchange of cultures, feelings and understanding to rediscover themselves. He said that knowledge complements youth power in strengthening the unity of the country. He expressed hope that the interns would gain valuable knowledge and insights through interactions with experts during the programme and encouraged them to become voices for the voiceless.

NHRC, India Member, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani said that human rights and human values are not separate concepts in India. Quoting the ancient concepts of '*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*' and '*Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah*', she traced the embodiment of human rights in the Indian culture and ethos long before the modern legal framework evolved. She urged that the internship should be viewed not merely as an academic exercise but as an opportunity for value-based learning and personal growth. She stressed that human rights are not limited to legal frameworks but are reflected in everyday conduct and empathy towards others. In today's rapidly changing world, technological advancement and economic progress are essential and development without values can never create a truly just society. She also encouraged the interns to use the programme as an opportunity to

enrich themselves as responsible citizens.

The NHRC, India Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal emphasised that the NHRC is investing significantly in nurturing young minds both through its in-person and online internship programmes, which have been expanded to reach students across the country, including those in remote areas. He highlighted the objective of the internship is to create a new generation of leadership committed to human rights, human values and social responsibility. He said that youth now carry a profound responsibility to protect and advance human rights, democratic freedoms of equality, justice, liberty and fraternity for which our predecessors sacrificed their lives. He noted how life is more about thinking about 'others' especially the poor and most vulnerable and not just the individual self. He encouraged the interns to achieve this purpose of life by imparting knowledge and understanding and by promoting and practising human rights, values, empathy and compassion.

Later, addressing the valedictory session of the SIP, Shri Lal encouraged the interns to pause and reflect not only what they have learnt during the four weeks of the internship, but also on how this experience would shape the direction of their lives. He asserted that the true value of an internship



► A section of NHRC officers and interns

lies not in its certificate, but in the clarity, purpose and character it helps cultivate. Highlighting the increasing impact of Artificial Intelligence and automation in day-to-day life, the Secretary General said that mediocrity would increasingly be replaced by technology. Therefore, the interns should pursue excellence in their chosen fields. He emphasised that, unlike previous generations, today's youth have better access to resources and, therefore, have a greater responsibility to excel and contribute to society.

The Secretary General also highlighted the emerging global challenges and said that workers' rights, living

conditions, environment, climate and sustainability would increasingly influence future economic activities and global competitiveness. Referring to the constitutional principle of fraternity, he said that one should devote some time, energy and resources to others to discover the true essence of life. He said that protecting human rights is not the responsibility of the government alone; it requires collective action from all sections of society. He urged the interns to remain curious, continue asking questions and listen to others to make constructive contributions to society.

Giving an overview of the internship programme, NHRC, India Joint Secretary, Smt. Sainingpuui Chhakchhuak said that the programme provided a dynamic platform for interns to explore the multifaceted dimensions of human rights during their interactions with NHRC Chairperson, Members, Secretary General, Special Monitors and Special Rapporteurs, senior functionaries from various Ministries, experts and civil society representatives. The field visits and activities such as book reviews, research project presentations and declamation contests further augmented their knowledge and appreciation of human rights and values. She said that the programme encouraged critical thinking, collaboration and a more profound understanding of human rights advocacy, inspiring the interns to become advocates for justice, dignity and equality.



► NHRC, India Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal delivering the valedictory address



► NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice V. Ramasubramanian, Members, Justice (Dr.) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani, Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal and senior officers with the interns

Training programmes



- The Nehru Arts & Science College, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu organised a day-long training programme on 'Human Rights - Gender Justice and Digital Frontiers: An Academic Training on Women's Statutory Rights and Redressal Mechanisms.'



- The K.P.B. Hinduja College of Commerce, Mumbai, Maharashtra organised a one-day training programme 'Women Rights - Empowering young women: Awareness and advocacy for Women Rights.'



- The Bishop Heber College (Autonomous), Tiruchirapalli, Tamil Nadu organised a one-day training programme on 'Women Rights.'



- The G.T.N Arts College, Dindigul, Tamil Nadu organised a one-day training programme on 'Women Rights'.

- The Ura Zuveh Foundation, Nagaland organised a one-day training programme on 'Children and Elderly Rights Human Rights Living in Rural Communities.'
- The Shree Guru Gobind Singh Tricentenary University organised a training programme on 'Child Rights - Child-centric justice and the transformative role of law enforcement.'





- The Kumaraguru College of Technology, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu organised a training programme on 'Women Rights.'



- The V. K. Krishna Menon College of Commerce and Economics Mumbai, Maharashtra organised one-day training programme on human rights.



- The RAF Academy for Public Order (RAPO), CRPF, Meerut, Uttar Pradesh organised a three day 'Training of Trainers' programme on 'Human Rights - Human rights centric policing: Balancing force, fairness and public trust.'

Exposure visits

To promote human rights awareness among college-level students and their faculties, the NHRC, India invites them to visit the Commission to have an exposure to the human rights protection mechanism and its functioning in accordance with the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993. They are briefed by senior officers.

On 23rd June 2026, the members of the Chhatra Sansad visited the NHRC, India and had an interactive session with the Chairperson, Justice V. Ramasubramanian. A youth-led non-profit initiative organised this Chhatra Sansad as part of the InterNation Leadership 2026. The focus was on the values enshrined in the Constitution of India and on the collective responsibility to safeguard human rights in a democratic society. The Chairperson said that human rights go beyond constitutional guarantees and highlighted life, liberty, equality and dignity as the core pillars of human rights, emphasising that freedom of expression is essential for ensuring a dignified standard of living.



► NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice V. Ramasubramanian interacting with the members of the Chhatra Sansad

Justice Ramasubramanian also underscored the significance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), adopted by the UN General Assembly on 10th December 1948 and underlined the important role played by the NHRC, India in protecting and promoting human rights. He also spoke about the growing role of technology, observing that AI primarily compiles and processes pre-fed data, but human issues require human judgment, empathy and accountability for decision-making.

The visiting students were from IITs, IIMs, NLUs and other prestigious colleges and universities from across 28 states of the country.



► NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice V. Ramasubramanian with the visiting delegates

NHRC, India in the International arena

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India continues to actively engage with a range of international programmes and initiatives to promote the exchange of ideas and best practices on diverse aspects of human rights. As part of these efforts, institutional delegations from different countries regularly visit the Commission and interact with its Chairperson, Members and senior officers to gain insights into its mandate, functioning and initiatives for the promotion and protection of human rights.

The Commission's Chairperson, Members and senior officers also participate in various international forums and engagements to share the Commission's experiences and achievements, strengthen cooperation with other National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) and deliberate on emerging human rights challenges in an increasingly fast-evolving global landscape.

First Consultative Meeting of NHRIs, State Bodies and other organisations of SCO Member States

On 23rd June 2026, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India led by the Chairperson, Justice V. Ramasubramanian participated virtually in the First Consultative Meeting of National Human Rights Institutions, State Bodies and other Organisations of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Member States responsible for the protection of human rights and freedoms, held in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic. NHRC, India Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal and Joint Secretary, Shri Samir Kumar were present. The meeting was attended by the Ombudsperson of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Deputy Secretary-General of the SCO, Chairpersons and Heads of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) and other relevant bodies from Russia, China, Iran, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Belarus, along with distinguished delegates and experts.

Addressing the meeting, Justice Ramasubramanian commended the Kyrgyz Republic for its leadership in convening the first consultative meeting under its SCO Chairmanship. He said that the proposal for regular consultative interaction among NHRIs and related bodies is both timely and forward-looking. It would promote meaningful dialogue, mutual understanding and practical cooperation in addressing contemporary socio-

economic and geo-political challenges. He emphasised that NHRIs play an important role in strengthening trust between the state and society and fostering social stability.

He underscored that regional cooperation should be guided by the principles of respect for state sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs, equality and mutual consideration of national interests. He welcomed the objectives contained in the draft protocol relating to the exchange of information, dissemination of best practices, expert cooperation and development of coordinated approaches to human

rights issues. He noted that regular exchanges among institutions would facilitate mutual learning and enhance institutional effectiveness.

Justice Ramasubramanian highlighted NHRC's Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Capacity Building Programme for NHRIs and the value of structured learning, dialogue and cross-border engagement in strengthening institutional capacities.

He reaffirmed NHRC India's support for deeper cooperation within the SCO framework and expressed confidence that the consultative mechanism



► NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice V. Ramasubramanian, Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal and senior officers attending online the first Consultative Meeting of NHRIs, State Bodies and other organisations of SCO Member States



► The meeting in progress



would evolve into an important platform for dialogue, cooperation and exchange of experiences among institutions dedicated to the promotion and protection of human rights and freedoms.

Addressing a session on prospects for consultative cooperation within the SCO on the lines of existing judicial cooperation mechanisms, Justice Ramasubramanian suggested that NHRIs could hold regular seminars, training programmes and interactions in online, offline and hybrid modes to facilitate the sharing of best practices. He highlighted that NHRC, India, established in 1993, has dealt with nearly 2.37 million cases of human rights violations over the past 32 years, providing valuable institutional experience that could be shared with other member states. He added that institu-

tions across SCO member states possess rich experiences from which all could benefit through sustained engagement.

He expressed hope that the first consultative meeting would lay the foundation for a durable and practical framework for regional human rights cooperation based on mutual respect, exchange of experiences and a shared commitment to human dignity.

Prior to this first consultative meeting, two rounds of discussions of the representatives of the NHRIs of the SCO member states were held online to finalise the modalities and the draft Joint Statement. Shri Samir Kumar, Joint Secretary, NHRC attended them.

Online engagements

- On 10th June 2026, Shri Samir Kumar, Joint Secretary, NHRC attended the monthly GANHRI Business and Human Rights Working Group Meeting.
- On 11th June 2026, Shri Samir Kumar, Joint Secretary, NHRC attended the launch of the Global Alliance for Human Rights at Palais Wilson, Geneva. It is a new initiative convened by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Volker Türk to strengthen collective action for human rights worldwide.

News from the State Human Rights Commissions

Given the ever-expanding dimensions of human life and the evolving challenges associated with them, the promotion and protection of human rights remain a continuous and dynamic process. In India, democratically elected governments remain committed to ensuring the welfare of the people and safeguarding their

rights through an extensive executive framework. This commitment is further reinforced by robust democratic institutions, including the legislature and the judiciary, along with a vibrant and vigilant media. The National Human Rights Commission and the State Human Rights Commissions (SHRCs) play a vital role in the protection and

promotion of human rights across the country. In addition, several national commissions, supported by corresponding state-level bodies, work at the regional level to safeguard the rights and welfare of different sections of society. Together, these institutions function as important watchdogs, ensuring accountability, justice and inclusive welfare measures. This column seeks to spotlight the significant and noteworthy initiatives undertaken by various SHRCs in advancing the cause of human rights and strengthening the culture of dignity, justice and equality in society.

Arunachal Pradesh State Human Rights Commission

During June 2026, the Arunachal Pradesh State Human Rights Commission (APSHRC) undertook several field visits, institutional inspections, community outreach and educational initiatives to advance the protection and promotion of human rights in the state.

On 12th June 2026, the Commission conducted rigorous compliance checks, inspecting the Namsai and Diyun Police

quently inspected the Tezu Police Station and District Jail to evaluate inmate healthcare access and rights.

On 18th June 2026, the Commission inspected the District Jail to monitor ongoing prison reforms and visited the Mental Hospital in Midpu to ensure patients' healthcare rights and legal standard operating procedures are strictly maintained.



► APSHRC inspecting Tezu District Jail



► APSHRC human rights awareness programme held in collaboration with the Chakma Hajong Elders Forum

Stations to monitor custodial standards. The team also visited two rehabilitation centres in Diyun to evaluate inmate welfare, recovery facilities and living conditions. Further, on 13th June 2026, the Commission held an awareness campaign in collaboration with the Chakma Hajong Elders Forum (CHEF). The programme aimed at sensitising local youth and leaders against child labour, trafficking networks and substance abuse. The APSHRC team subse-

On 19th June 2026, the APSHRC launched a comprehensive three-week Internship Programme tailored for undergraduate students from the Dera Natung Government College (DNGC) and the Don Bosco College, Jullang. Centred on the theme 'Empowering Youth for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights,' this initiative equips young advocates with practical insights into human rights frameworks and advocacy.

Telangana State Human Rights Commission

In June 2026, the Telangana Human Rights Commission (TGHRC) took *suo motu* cognizance of four cases of human rights violations. These included a case of medical negligence in Khammam, a maternal and neonatal death case in Bhadradri Kothagudem, a stray dog attack incident in Warangal and a case involving a destitute elderly woman in Nizamabad. In each matter, the Commission sought reports from the concerned authorities to ascertain the facts and ensure appropriate action.

News in brief

- On 6th June 2026, NHRC, India Member, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani attended a programme on women empowerment, organised by the Institute of Inclusive Governance Hyderabad in Bhagyanagar, Telangana. She delivered a speech on 'How women can contribute to a new chapter in the history of Telangana state.' She

said that through leadership, education, entrepreneurship, social service and active participation the women can play an important role in empowering the society.

- On 12th June 2026, Dr. Anupama Nilekar Chandra, Director General (Investigation), NHRC delivered a

lecture to the newly inducted prison trainee officers online on 'Managing the Challenges of Overcrowding in Prisons' at the Academy of Prisons and Correctional Administration, Vellore, Tamil Nadu. She highlighted the impact of prison overcrowding on administration, inmate welfare, security and rehabilitation efforts, while emphasising the need for effective implementation of the 'Support for Poor Prisoners' scheme of the Ministry of Home Affairs. She underscored the need for a humane, rights-based approach by the prison management upholding the dignity and rights of inmates, besides helping in their correctional programmes. Officers from Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh attended.



- On 13th and 14th June 2026, NHRC, India Member, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani participated in a two-day programme on the Akhil Bharatiya Abhyas Varg - Mahila Ayam, a national-level study camp, organised for women empowerment. It was jointly organised by Pragya Pravah and the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), Hyderabad, Telangana.

The Member delivered a lecture on 'Women and the role of the National Human Rights Commission, highlighting the NHRC's contribution towards the protection and promotion of women's rights and issues as well as human dignity. The programme featured a series of lectures and



discussions on important themes including 'Indian Women from an Indian Perspective,' 'Global Discourses on Women' and a special session titled 'Kinnar: Past, Present and Future', focused on the lives, challenges and dignity of transgender persons. A book was also released as part of the event. It was attended by 116 distinguished women delegates from 18 states across India.

- On 15th June 2026, NHRC, India Member, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani delivered a talk on 'The role of young advocates in building an empowered India and a strong nation.' It was organised by the Legal Smruti Educational Society in Bhagyanaga, Hyderabad. She explained how legal professionals can contribute to nation-building through their commitment to justice, constitutional values and social responsibility. The Member also spoke about the NHRC's work and interventions in addressing various social issues and protecting the rights of vulnerable sections of society.



- On 17th June 2026, NHRC, India Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal along with Shri Samir Kumar, Joint Secretary and Shri Indrajeet Kumar, Joint Registrar represented the Commission to attend a discussion on 'The Constitution (One Hundred and Thirtieth Amendment) Bill, 2025,' 'The Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2025' and 'The Government of Union Territories Bill, 2025' during the local study visit of the Joint Parliamentary Committee in Delhi. The delegation shared the NHRC's views and inputs on the matters under its consideration.
- On 19th June 2026, Smt. Vineetha Ottapurakkal Kallada, Deputy Secretary, NHRC attended the programme on the observance of World Refugee Day 2026 under the theme 'Until Everyone is Safe,' organised by the UNHCR India at the UNESCO Auditorium, New Delhi.
- On 24th June 2026, NHRC, India Member, Justice (Dr.) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi addressed as the Chief Guest the one-day State-Level Workshop on 'Relevance of



Protecting Human Rights for Viksit Bharat' at the Brahmagiri Bar Association, Puri, Odisha. He emphasised that the protection and promotion of human rights are indispensable for achieving the vision of a Viksit Bharat, as human dignity, equality, justice and the rule of law form the foundation of inclusive and sustainable development.

He highlighted that safeguarding the rights of vulnerable and marginalised sections of society strengthens democratic institutions, promotes social harmony and ensures that the benefits of development reach every citizen. The workshop provided a platform for deliberations on the role of legal institutions, civil society and citizens in fostering a human rights-based approach to nation-building.

- On 24th June 2026, NHRC, India Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal delivered the inaugural address at the International Workshop on 'Ecological Fiscal Transfers (EFTs) as a Tool to Finance Biodiversity, Climate and Nature Action', organised by Iora Ecological Solutions in New Delhi. The workshop was attended by leading experts, economists, researchers and senior government officers.

Shri Lal underscored the vital role of forests in sustaining life by ensuring clean air, water security and ecological balance. He noted that, apart from a few glacier-fed rivers, most major river systems originate in forested landscapes. Their 'green water' helps maintain perennial rivers while protecting against floods and landslides. He stressed that India's economic growth is closely linked to water security and that preserving natural ecosystems is essential for present and future generations.

Highlighting India's leadership in Ecological Fiscal Transfers, Shri Lal said that integrating forest cover into the Finance Commission's tax devolution formula has created strong incentives for conservation. He advocated expanding the framework to reward biodiversity conservation, climate resilience, ecosystem restoration and measurable ecological outcomes. Emphasising that environmental protection is closely linked to the rights to life, health, livelihood and dignity, he called for stronger institutions, improved ecological data systems, green budget tagging and greater accountability. He said that rewarding states and communities that protect natural resources would foster sustainable development while demonstrating that ecological conservation and economic progress can advance together.

- On 24th June 2026, NHRC Director General (Investigation), Dr. Anupama Nilekar Chandra delivered a lecture on 'Whole-of-Nation Approach to Nasha Mukht Bharat' at Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi. The participants included interns, students, academicians, lawyers, psychologists, among others. Highlighting the growing challenge of substance abuse among youth, she called for a humane, rehabilitative and multi-pronged approach encompassing prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, harm reduction and supply control to achieve the national goal of a drug-free India by 2047.

The session covered the legal and institutional framework, the scale of the drug challenge, treatment proto-



cols, achievements, gaps and way forward. The discussion also focused on unauthorised de-addiction centres and steps to curb substance abuse at the grassroots level, including Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan, NCORD, helplines, law enforcement efforts, emerging drug trends and NHRC initiatives.

- On 25th June 2026, NHRC, India Joint Secretary, Shri Samir Kumar accompanied by the Senior System Analyst, Shri Sanjeev Sharma attended the 29th National Conference on e-Governance in Jaipur, Rajasthan.
- On 29th June 2026, NHRC, India Member, Justice (Dr.) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi addressed the Jharkhand State-Level Human Rights Conference as the Chief Guest in Ranchi, Jharkhand. The discussions focused on safeguarding human dignity, ensuring access to justice, strengthening institutional mechanisms and fostering collaboration to address emerging challenges. The



conference brought together members of the judiciary, the legal fraternity, academicians, civil society representatives and other stakeholders to deliberate on contemporary human rights issues and the measures required for their effective protection and promotion.

- From 29th to 30th June 2026, Dr. Manish Kumath, Director, Department of Forensic Medicine, Safdarjung Hospital, Delhi addressed an in-house training programme for the officers of NHRC, India's Investigation Division at its premises. The sessions included: Understanding post-



mortem examination reports and post-mortem CDs and the nature of injuries and its evidential value during the examination of suicidal and homicidal deaths in police and judicial custody. They also had a session on crime scene investigation and police custody deaths in Gujarat by Shri Manish Singh, SSP, NHRC.

- On 30th June 2026, NHRC India Member, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani delivered a talk on 'Fundamental Rights and the Role of the NHRC' at Ramakrishna Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Hyderabad, Telangana.



- On 30th June 2026, NHRC, India bid farewell to the Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal, after completing three years in the Commission. He assumed office in July 2023. As Chief Executive Officer of the Commission, Shri Lal steered the administrative wing of the Commission under the overall guidance of the Chairperson, streamlining and strengthening its functioning, thereby facilitating the fulfilment of the Commission's mandate through institutional coordination, capacity building and administrative support for its programmes and initiatives.

During this period, the Commission addressed a wide range of human rights issues. It strengthened coordination with State Human Rights Commissions, ministries of the government, academic institutions, civil society

organisations, NGOs and its Special Rapporteurs and Special Monitors through consultations, core group meetings, open house discussions, conferences and other outreach initiatives. These platforms facilitated deliberations on key human rights concerns.

The Commission also expanded its outreach through training programmes, internships, workshops, Newsletters and human rights sensitisation initiatives for public functionaries, young civil servants, students, law enforcement agencies, prison officials and other stakeholders.

In partnership with the Ministry of External Affairs, it launched the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Executive Capacity Building Programmes for senior functionaries of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) of the Global South, strengthening South-South cooperation and the exchange of best practices in human rights. Shri Lal also represented the NHRC, India, in several international forums, contributing to international dialogue and cooperation on human rights.

On the occasion, Shri Lal addressed the officers and staff, motivating them to continue making meaningful contributions towards the promotion and protection of human rights.

The officers and staff acknowledged and appreciated Shri Lal's contributions as Secretary General of the Commission and wished him continued success in his future endeavours.



Forthcoming events

3rd to 14th August
2026

From 3rd to 14th August 2026, the NHRC, India will organise its two-week Online Short Term Internship programme for university-level students.

Complaints in June 2026

Number of fresh complaints received	5,020
Number of cases disposed of including old cases	4,768
Number of cases under consideration of the Commission	41,392

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)

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