



HUMAN RIGHTS

Newsletter

A monthly publication of the National Human Rights Commission, India



Capacity Building

Online Short-Term Internship

Research study

Inclusive education among persons with disabilities in Punjab: Prospects and challenges

Article

Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Legal Framework, Initiatives and Challenges

HUMAN RIGHTS

Newsletter

Volume 33 | Number 9 | September 2026

National Human Rights Commission, India

Chairperson

Justice V. Ramasubramanian

Members

Justice (Dr.) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi

Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani

Shri Priyank Kanoongo

Secretary General & CEO

Shri Piyush Goyal

Editor

Shri Jaimini Kumar Srivastava

Dy. Director (M&C), NHRC

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► NHRC, India Member, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani, Secretary General, Shri Piyush Goyal and senior officers with the Members of the Hindi Journal Advisory Board of the Commission



► NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice V. Ramasubramanian inaugurating the Online Short-Term Internship in the presence of Member, Justice (Dr.) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi and Secretary General, Shri Piyush Goyal

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Monthly Recap

From the desk of the Secretary General and Chief Executive

During August 2026, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India undertook a range of activities and initiatives aimed at promoting and protecting human rights and strengthening awareness of rights. Through its interventions, programmes, research and knowledge-sharing initiatives, the Commission continued to focus on issues affecting dignity, equality, freedom and access to justice, while drawing attention to concerns requiring greater institutional and public attention.

As part of its efforts to promote the rights of persons with disabilities, this edition features an article by Dr. Purva Mittal, NHRC's Special Monitor on Women and Disability, highlighting key concerns relating to their rights. It also features a report on the research study, 'Inclusive Education among Persons with Disabilities in Punjab: Prospects and Challenges', which examines the opportunities and challenges in advancing inclusive education for persons with disabilities.

Timely examination of complaints, appropriate intervention, fixing accountability and ensuring relief for victims and their families are important aspects of the NHRC, India's work in protecting human rights. By carefully examining such cases and recommending appropriate corrective measures, the Commission seeks not only to address individual violations but also help prevent their recurrence and strengthen human rights protection. During August 2026, the Commission registered 4,023 fresh complaints, including 15 *suo motu* cases. It disposed of 4,246 cases, including some previously registered cases, and recommended Rs. 146 lakh as monetary relief to victims of human rights violations in 17 cases.

Spot visits by NHRC, India Members, Special Rapporteurs and Special Monitors and their interactions with affected people, authorities and other stakeholders, provide an opportunity to understand concerns and help the Commission make necessary recommenda-

tions for course correction. The Commission's Open Hearing and Camp Sitting, scheduled to be held in Gandhinagar in the coming month, will also provide an opportunity to engage directly with complainants and other stakeholders and examine human rights concerns at the ground level. Such initiatives bring the human rights protection mechanism closer to the people, facilitate dialogue, encourage corrective action and help assess the implementation of recommendations.

NHRC, India's internship programmes, collaborative capacity-building initiatives and exposure visits help create a broader understanding of human rights and encourage young professionals, students and other stakeholders to engage with these issues. The lead report of this edition highlights the Online Short-Term Internship programme organised by the Commission in August. A brief report on other similar initiatives has also been carried.

Besides the NHRC, India, the State Human Rights Commissions and other institutions also strengthen the human rights protection mechanism in the country. The important activities of some SHRCs have also been covered in this edition of the Newsletter. NHRC, India believes that coordination and sharing of good practices among these institutions can contribute to more consistent and effective responses to human rights concerns across the country.

Human rights protection is a continuous responsibility, requiring vigilance, accountability and sustained efforts to ensure that remedies reach those who need them. The effectiveness of this work is ultimately reflected in the extent to which every individual can live with dignity, equality and a genuine sense of security. We hope this edition of the Newsletter offers an engaging account of the Commission's activities and initiatives during August 2026 and is an interesting and informative read.

Piyush Goyal
Secretary General &
Chief Executive Officer

Capacity Building

Nurturing a culture of human rights among the young begins with awareness, exposure and engagement. With this vision, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India, has developed its internship programme as an important platform to sensitise university students to human rights and build their capacity to understand and promote human rights in their personal, academic and professional lives. Through its online internship programme, the Commission provides young learners an opportunity to gain deeper insights into human rights principles, laws, institutions and protection mechanisms, while connecting academic learning with the realities of human rights protection.

Online Short-Term Internship

On 3rd August 2026, NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice V. Ramasubramanian inaugurated the two-week-long Online Short-Term Internship (OSTI) programme. Member, Justice (Dr.) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi; Secretary General, Shri Piyush Goyal; Joint Secretaries, Shri Samir Kumar, Smt. Saidingpuii Chhakchhuak; Director, Smt. Satovisha Samajdar; Deputy Secretary, Smt. Vineetha Ottapurakkal Kallada and other senior officers were present. 100 students from diverse academic backgrounds were selected from 2,036 applicants.

Addressing the interns, Justice Ramasubramanian described the internship programme as an effective way to engage and sensitise young people about the importance of human rights. He said that the youth in the country are fortunate to live away from the conflicts happening in different parts of the world. They have access to basic human rights such as food, education and shelter, unlike several people facing armed conflicts and displacement.

Citing the Global Peace Index 2025, released by the Institute for Economics and Peace, he said that 98 countries are facing some form of external conflicts while over 122 million people have been forcibly displaced. The global economic damage has reached nearly USD 20 trillion, highlighting the serious humanitarian situation across the world.

The Chairperson emphasised that the purpose of the NHRC internship programme is to foster empathy and compassion towards fellow human beings. He said that the programme would be successful if it could strengthen these values among the



► NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice V. Ramasubramanian inaugurating the Online Short Term Internship in the presence of Member, Justice (Dr.) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi, Secretary General, Shri Piyush Goel and senior officers

participants, even by one per cent. He urged them to make the best use of the opportunity and evolve as brand ambassadors of the Commission.

NHRC, India Member, Justice (Dr.) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi said that the internship programme has been structured to provide valuable learning on various aspects of human rights through lectures by eminent subject experts. Referring to Article 21 of the Constitution of India, he said that the right to life with dignity is a fundamental right and encouraged the interns to use the knowledge gained through the programme for their benefit and for the benefit of society.

Earlier, NHRC, India Secretary General, Shri Piyush Goyal said that the online format makes the internship programme more inclusive and accessible by removing geographical and financial barriers, enabling students from across the country to participate. He said that interns' interactions with eminent speakers help in gaining a deeper understanding of the mandate and functioning of the NHRC and inspire them to carry forward the values of justice, equality and human dignity in their academic, professional and personal lives.



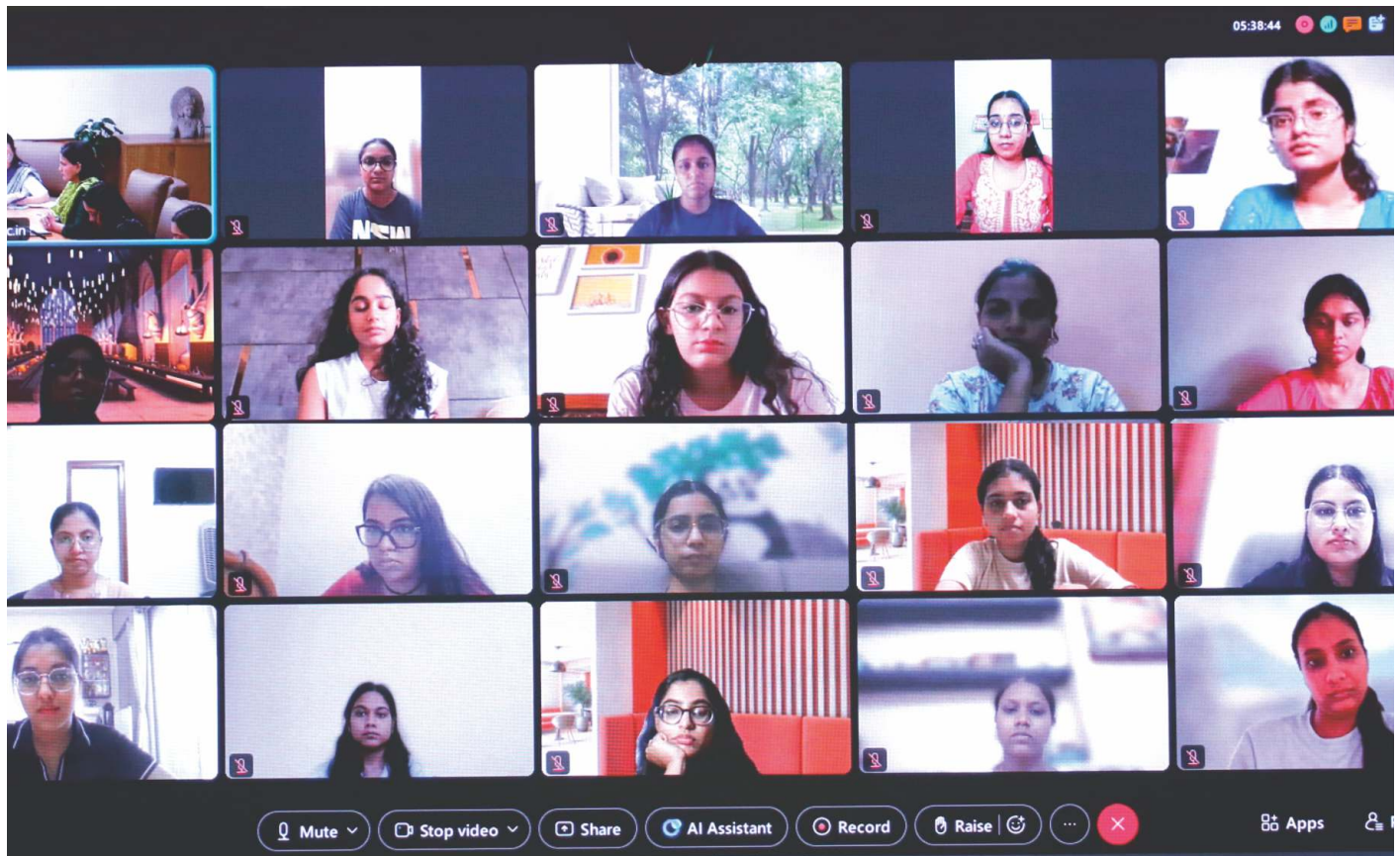
► NHRC, India Member, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani addressing the valedictory session of the Online Short Term Internship in the presence of senior officers

Addressing the valedictory session, NHRC, India Member, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani congratulated the interns on the successful completion of the programme. She emphasised the importance of “Seva” (service) as an integral part of India’s social and cultural ethos. Seva is not merely an act of charity but a commitment to serving the larger good. She urged the interns to remember that human rights are ultimately about people and that behind every file and every instance of human rights violation lies a human story that deserves to be heard and understood.

Urging the interns to become responsible citizens, she encouraged them to use their knowledge and skills for the larger good of society, irrespective of their profession. She emphasised that upholding the constitutional values of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity are the responsibilities of every generation. Drawing on the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita, Swami Vivekananda and Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, she urged the interns to use their knowledge to educate and create opportunities for others. She stressed that youth have an important role in building Viksit Bharat 2047, where development should mean not only economic growth and better infrastructure but also the preservation of human dignity, justice, equality and inclusion.

NHRC, India Joint Secretary, Smt. Saidingpuii Chhakchhuak presented an overview of the internship programme in which interns had the opportunity to interact with the Commission’s Members, senior officers, as well as eminent experts, academi-

cians, Core Group members and representatives of civil society organisations. She expressed hope that the programme had enriched the interns' understanding of human rights. She also announced the winners of the competitions, including book review, group research project presentation and declamation.



► A section of online interns

Article

Beyond Barriers: Advancing the rights of persons with disabilities

Dr. Purva Mittal,
Special Monitor, NHRC, India



In 1993, disability activists in South Africa began repeating a phrase borrowed from an Eastern European colleague: “Nothing about us, without us.” The phrase later found expression in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), which calls for the “full and effective participation” of persons with disabilities in decisions that affect them. Three decades on, it still points to what is missing in one of the most consequential decisions made about a person with a disability: what percentage of disability is assigned to them and how long that assessment remains valid.

What the paperwork never asks

Muscular dystrophy, Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA), Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), multiple sclerosis and retinitis pigmentosa are not necessarily conditions a person is born with. They can develop when someone is already well into a career, marriage or parenthood. A person who was independent, working, raising a family and managing everyday life without assistance may suddenly find their strength and abilities gradually declining. In some cases of ALS, the disease can also affect personality, thinking and communication.

This is where the system appears to overlook an important part of the person's experience. Nothing in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPWD), the National Policy for Persons with Disabilities (NPRD) or the Unique Disability ID (UDID) process requires a conversation with a counsellor when a person is told that their condition will only worsen. The paperwork asks what percentage of the body is affected; it does not ask what that loss is doing to the person living with it.

Progression

Progression runs through many of the disabilities recognised by law. Retinitis pigmentosa gradually narrows the field of vision and can eventually lead to blindness; glaucoma progressively damages the optic nerve. Usher syndrome can cause both hearing and vision to deteriorate over time. Muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, SMA and ALS can progressively affect movement over decades for some people but within months for others. In conditions such as ALS, the loss can move from mobility to speech and communication, meaning that one condition may affect several areas covered by disability law during a person's lifetime.

However, the law does not always keep pace with this progression. The Schedule to the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, clause (zc) of Section 2 on "Specified Disability", expressly recognises muscular dystrophy under locomotor disability and multiple sclerosis under chronic neurological conditions, but does not specifically name conditions such as SMA, ALS or retinitis pigmentosa. The latter may fall within the Schedule's broader categories of locomotor or visual impairment. The system may, in effect, recognise the disability only after a person has already lost much of what the disease has taken away.

What a fixed number costs a moving condition

A static certificate attached to a progressive condition can cost a person employment, educational opportunities and access to treatment that might slow the decline. At 35 per cent disability, just below the 40 per cent threshold for "benchmark disability," a person may find that a threshold intended for specific entitlements is treated as though it defines disability itself.

The consequences extend across everyday life: education, when a school will not adapt to changing needs; employment, when reasonable accommodation becomes a favour rather than a duty; healthcare, when actual need has outgrown the percentage on a certificate; and credibility, when "temporary" is treated as somehow less real.

What the State has promised

India's disability framework has expanded significantly. The RPWD Act, 2016 replaced seven categories with twenty-one, while the National Policy for Rare Diseases, launched by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in 2021, provides financial support of up to Rs. 50 lakh per patient for treatment at designated Centres of

Excellence. Funds were also allocated for rare disease treatment at these centres. In 2024-25, it stood at Rs. 82.87 crore as per the written reply of Shri Prataprao Jadhav, Minister of State, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, in response to a question in Rajya Sabha on 01st April 2025. The Centres of Excellence have also increased from 08 to 15 as per the written reply of Shri Prataprao Jadhav, Minister of State, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare in response to a question in Lok Sabha on 27th March 2026.

The country also ratified the UNCRPD in 2007, which approaches disability as a matter of equality and rights rather than welfare alone. Article 25 of UNCRPD provides for access to health without discrimination; Article 26 requires the provision of continuing habilitation and rehabilitation; Article 28 extends social protection to disability-related needs; and Article 19 recognises the right to live independently and be included in the community. These commitments become harder to realise when a person's capacity progressively changes.

When Rights Do Not Reach Everyone

But who is able to access these rights and entitlements in practice? the burden falls hardest on those who are already disadvantaged. According to 2011 Census, sixty-nine per cent of India's persons with disabilities live in rural areas. Specialised and tertiary centres needed to diagnose rare neuromuscular conditions are often unavailable there.

According to the National Statistical Office (NSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, NSS 76th Round (July-December 2018), NSS Report No. 583 in the Survey of Persons with Disabilities, disability prevalence was higher in rural areas (2.3 per cent) than in urban areas (2 per cent). The survey also recorded a prevalence of 2.4 per cent among males and 1.9 per cent

among females, but 24.1 per cent of women with disabilities had a disability certificate, compared with 32.4 per cent of men. Among rural persons with disabilities, 5 per cent of women lived alone, compared with 2 per cent of men, more than twice the proportion.

Disability can thus limit more than income; it can also limit a person's ability to access and benefit from the rights and entitlements available to them. The impact extends to families as well. Behind many persons with progressive or severe disabilities is a family member, most often a woman, who provides care and bears much of the financial and emotional burden. A meaningful system of social protection must recognise and support both the person with the disability and those who care for them.

What the NHRC, India has already said

The NHRC, India, has already highlighted many of these concerns. At its Core Group meeting on 17th February 2025, the Commission noted that more than 70 per cent of disability certificates in India are issued as permanent certificates, while the remaining certificates generally relate to conditions expected to worsen. It called for a review of the 40 per cent benchmark and greater support to "alleviate the burden of caregivers." Chairing the meeting, the Commission's Chairperson, Justice V. Ramasubramanian, observed that "it took thirty years for the world to adopt a human rights approach to disability rights."

Recognising the problem, however, is not the same as changing the system. At a further meeting in January 2026, the Commission cautioned against blanket reassessment of employees' disability certificates. Amid com-

plaints that persons with hearing and speech disabilities had been denied life insurance altogether, it also took up the matter with the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI). The message is clear: a human rights approach must ensure that systems governing work, insurance, healthcare and everyday life do not turn disability into another barrier.

A policy, not a wish list

None of this requires a new law; the necessary mechanisms already exist. The RPWD Schedule can be amended through a notification, as demonstrated when acid-attack disfigurement was added in May 2026. The same route can include SMA and Usher syndrome and enable certification for retinitis pigmentosa before it results in blindness.

The 2024 rules already recognise permanent and temporary certificates. A third category, "progressive," with a defined review cycle could ensure that reassessment does not mean starting the process afresh.

The Act also distinguishes between "disability" and "benchmark disability." A clarification, similar to the clarification by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities on temporary certificates, can ensure that the 40 per cent threshold applies only to reservations. The decade old Rs. 75,000/ Rs.1,25,000 tax deduction could be linked to actual costs and restored under the new tax regime, while the Rs. 300 a month pension could be replaced with a national minimum floor.

The 2025 Goods and Services Tax (GST) reform reduced the duty on assistive devices from 12 to 5 per cent. The same approach should be extended to adapted vehicles, which

continue to attract 18 per cent GST. Accessibility must also extend beyond public transport. In its judgment in the Rajive Raturi case, the Supreme Court mandated the Union Government to establish non-negotiable accessibility standards under the RPWD Act, 2016. These standards should apply to private operators as well, so that accessibility is not limited to public services.

Finally, NHRC's 2026 notice to IRDAI should become a standing rule rather than a response to an individual complaint. Indian Council of Medical Research's efforts to promote indigenous manufacturing for rare diseases should be strengthened, while mandated Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) spending can support assistive technology and caregivers.

Conclusion

In *Prabhu Kumar v. State of Himachal Pradesh*, delivered in March 2026, the Supreme Court ruled that a disability percentage "cannot be treated as determinative of a candidate's capability." The principle should inform how disability certificates are issued, insurance claims are assessed and medical boards make decisions.

Many of the changes needed do not require a new law. They require clearer notifications, better implementation and, above all, a system that recognises that progressive disability cannot be understood through numbers alone.

The people living with these conditions must have a voice in decisions that affect their rights, opportunities and future. "Nothing about us, without us" turns thirty-three this year, but its message remains unfinished: a system cannot truly serve persons with disabilities if it decides their fate without listening to them.

Suo motu cognizance

Media reports have long served as an important source of information for the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India, in identifying incidents of alleged human rights violations. Over the years, the Commission has taken *suo motu* cognizance of numerous such cases, providing timely relief and support to victims. In August 2026, the Commission took *suo motu* cognizance of 15 cases reported in the media and issued notices to the concerned authorities, seeking detailed action taken reports. Brief summaries of some of these cases are as follows:

Corporal punishment

(Case No. 1628/12/44/2026)

On 1st August 2026, the media reported that a Class 4 student was assaulted and subjected to casteist slurs by a teacher at a Government Primary School in Ukawal village, Shivpuri district, Madhya Pradesh on 28th July 2026. Reportedly, the teacher was enraged seeing the boy from a Dalit community drinking water from his bottle. The Commission has issued notices to the Madhya Pradesh Chief Secretary and Shivpuri Superintendent of Police, calling for a detailed report on the matter. It is expected to include the status of the statutory relief to the victim. Reportedly, the boy narrated the incident to his parents, following which the police were informed.

Contaminated water spreading jaundice among children in a locality

(Case No. 1117/7/1/2026)

On 3rd August 2026, the media reported that a 12-year-old girl died due to jaundice caused by the consumption of contaminated drinking water in Shahzadpur, Ambala district, Haryana. Several other children have also been diagnosed with jaundice in the locality. The residents have alleged that the drinking water being supplied through a public tap in the area is contaminated. The Commission has issued a notice to the Haryana Chief Secretary, calling for a detailed report on the matter. It is expected to include the health status of the victim children undergoing treatment, as well as steps being taken by the administration to address the issue. Reportedly, the girl was initially treated for jaundice at a local hospital. As her health condition deteriorated, she was referred to the Postgraduate Institute of Medical

Education and Research, Chandigarh, where she succumbed to her illness during the course of the treatment.

Students risking lives hopping on check dam pillars to cross the Betwa River to reach school

(Case No. 1642/12/49/2026)

On 4th August 2026, the media reported that school students of Kakraua village are risking their lives by hopping on check dam pillars to cross the Betwa River to reach school in Madhya Pradesh's Vidisha district. They reportedly take this dangerous route because it cuts the distance from 13 km by road to just 1.5 km. Reportedly, nine students from the village cross the river in this manner every day, including five girls. It noted that Article 21A of the Constitution of India guarantees free and compulsory education to be provided by the state to children aged 6 to 14 years. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 also makes education a right of every child between the ages of 6 and 14 years. Further, the Apex Court, in *Avinash Mehrotra v. Union of India* (2009), has held that the Right to Education necessarily includes the Right to a safe school and safe infrastructure.

Therefore, the Commission has held that the absence of a safe mode of transport for children to reach school amounts to a negation of their fundamental right to education with dignity. Accordingly, it has issued a notice to the Madhya Pradesh Chief Secretary, calling for a detailed report on the matter. Reportedly, a video of the children hopping perilously across the wide gaps in the exposed check-dam pillars has gone viral on social media. The villagers reportedly express their inability to drop their children off at a faraway school as they have to work in the fields. The option they have is to either stop sending them or continue this way.

Reportedly, a student failed her final exams after missing school because she could not cross the pillars due to her short height. The District Education Officer has visited the spot and informed the District Collector about the issue. However, a timeline for the construction of a safe passage to cross the river has not been mentioned.

Deaths due to snakebite

(Case No. 1388/13/11/2026)

On 11th August 2026, the media reported that six girl students, belonging to the Scheduled Tribes, were bitten by a snake in a hostel of an Ashram school in Gadchiroli district, Maharashtra. Reportedly, they were sleeping on the floor inside their hostel room because of a shortage of cots. Three of the victim students succumbed to the snake bite, while the remaining three were undergoing treatment at a hospital. The Commission has issued a notice to the Maharashtra Chief Secretary, calling for a detailed report on the matter within two weeks. The report is expected to include the health status of the injured students. Reportedly, 79 girl students are accommodated in a single room of the hostel. The hostel, which has been functional for the last 25 years, lacks basic facilities. Every year, the district reports a significant number of snake bite cases.

Death while cleaning sewer

(Case No. 1177/7/3/2026)

On 11th August 2026, the media reported that one person died and another was injured after inhaling toxic gases while cleaning a manhole at a factory in Sector-25 of Faridabad district, Haryana. Reportedly, the workers descended into the manhole without any safety equipment. The Commission has issued notices to the Haryana Chief Secretary and Faridabad Police Commissioner, calling for a detailed report on the matter. The report is expected to include the status of the investigation, health of the injured and compensation, if any, provided to him and the next of kin (NoK) of the deceased. The workers were called by the factory owner to clean the manhole.

Suicides by CRPF personnel

(Case No. 890/90/0/2026-PF)

On 11th August 2026, the media reported that 19 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel died by suicide in less than five months between January and 22nd May 2026. According to the reported CRPF data, the force lost 59 personnel due to suicide in 2025. Reportedly, this was the highest number of suicides recorded in the last five years. The Commission has issued notices to the Home Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs and the CRPF Director General, calling for a detailed report on the matter. Reportedly, a total of 281 CRPF personnel committed suicide in the last five years. Of these, approximately 216 were on duty. The CRPF recorded 57 suicides in 2021, 43 in 2022, 57 in 2023, 46 in 2024 and 59 in 2025.

Physical assault

(Case No. 2381/30/7/2026)

On 14th August 2026, the media reported that two men from Manipur were assaulted by two persons in Munirka area of Delhi. Reportedly, one of the victims sustained serious head injuries and has been put on a ventilator at a hospital. The Commission has issued a notice to the Delhi Police Commissioner, calling for a detailed report on the matter. The report is expected to include the investigation and the health status of the injured. Reportedly, a dispute over a minor issue led to the attack on the victims.

Death after consuming spurious liquor

(Case No. 727/6/6/2026)

On 19th and 21st August 2026, the media reported that at least 9 people died and 39 others were hospitalised in a critical condition after consuming spurious Indian-Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL) in Bhavnagar district, Gujarat. Reportedly, the illicit liquor was spiked with a high concentration of methanol and was being sold in counterfeit bottles bearing the label of a popular brand. The illicit liquor racket came to light during an investigation into an accidental death case registered for the death of a police recruit. The Commission has issued notices to the Gujarat Chief Secretary and Director General of Police, calling for a detailed report on the matter.

The report is expected to include the updated status of the death toll, hospitalised victims and investigation, including the steps taken to trace the entire supply chain of methanol and other raw materials. It would also include the details of the departmental action initiated against the suspended police personnel and any other erring officials, relief, compensation and medical assistance provided to the families of the deceased and to the survivors. Besides, the Commission has also sought a report on the long-term measures being implemented to strengthen the enforcement of the prohibition law and prevent such tragedies. Reportedly, a large manufacturing setup was uncovered and chemicals, colouring agents, ready-filled counterfeit liquor bottles, fake branded stickers and sticker rolls, bottle caps and cardboard packaging material were seized by the police.

Death of a woman raped during a diagnostic test

(Case No. 1243/7/15/2026-WC)

On 19th August 2026, the media reported about the death of a 57-year-old woman, who was subjected to rape

during a diagnostic test at Civil Hospital of Panipat in Haryana on 16th August 2026. She died during treatment at the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Science in Rohtak on 18th August 2026. Therefore, the Commission has issued notices to the Haryana Chief Secretary and Panipat Superintendent of Police, calling for a detailed report on the matter.

According to the media report, carried on 19th August 2026, the terminally ill patient was taken to the Civil Hospital for medical treatment, where the doctors had prescribed X-ray and CT scan tests. Reportedly, the machine operator had raped the victim inside the CT scan room and threatened not to disclose the incident to anyone.

A woman attacked branding her a witch

(Case No. 694/34/7/2026-WC)

On 24th August 2026, the media reported that a woman suffered 40% burn injuries after being attacked by a group of people, branding her a witch in Bhojpur village, Garhwa district, Jharkhand. Reportedly, the perpetrators, who are residing in the same village, poured boiling water on the victim during the attack. The Commission has issued notices to the Garhwa District Magistrate and Superintendent of Police, calling for a detailed report on the matter. It is expected to include the status of the victim's health and compensation, if any, paid to her. Reportedly, the victim was admitted to the hospital for medical treatment and an investigation is underway.

Death of newborns in hospital fire

(Case No. 1484/13/3/2026)

On 25th August 2026, the media reported that three newborns died and four others were injured in a fire incident at the Sick Newborn Care Unit (SNCU) of the District Women's Hospital at Amravati, Maharashtra on 24th August 2026. Reportedly, the incident occurred due to a blast in the ventilator machine. The Commission has issued a notice to the Maharashtra Chief Secretary, calling for a detailed report on the matter. The report is expected to include the status of health of the injured babies and disbursement of compensation announced by the government. Reportedly, there were nine babies in the SNCU when the incident happened. The condition of one of the four injured babies has been reported to be critical.

Deaths of at least 60 newborns in three weeks at a hospital

(Case No. 2217/25/11/2026)

On 27th August 2026, the media reported that at least 60 newborns died during the first three weeks of August 2026 at Malda Medical College and Hospital in West Bengal. Reportedly, ten newborns died at the hospital on a single day. The Commission has issued a notice to the West Bengal Chief Secretary, calling for a detailed report on the matter. Reportedly, 44 out of the 60 newborns were referred from other medical facilities after their health condition deteriorated.

Non-serving of mid-day meal

(Case No. 9486/24/10/2026)

On 27th August 2026, the media reported that students of Classes VI to VIII at a government school in Ballia district, Uttar Pradesh have not been served mid-day meals for the last two years. Reportedly, the students wrote to the District Magistrate about their grievances, following which the inquiry revealed false records being maintained to show that meals were regularly served to 200 students.

The scheme of providing mid-day meals to students studying up to Class VIII in government schools has been introduced to prevent malnutrition among children and encourage them to attend school. Therefore, the Commission has issued a notice to the Uttar Pradesh Chief Secretary, calling for a detailed report on the matter. According to the media report, carried on 27th August 2026, the inquiry found irregularities and alleged misappropriation involving nearly Rs. 14 lakh, including underpayment of cooks and misuse of Pradhan Mantri Poshan Abhiyan funds by the Principal and other officials.

Sexual assault of a minor

(Case No. 2482/30/0/2026)

On 31st August 2026, the media reported that a 16-year-old girl was subjected to gang rape by a driver and a conductor of a bus that she boarded from Greater NOIDA, Uttar Pradesh on 4th August 2026. Reportedly, the perpetrators extended life threats and left her at the Kashmere Gate Bus Terminal in Delhi. Therefore, the Commission has issued notices to the Police Commissioners of Delhi and Gautam Budh Nagar and Mainpuri Superintendent of Police, calling for a detailed report on the matter. According to the media report, the girl left home in Mainpuri, Uttar Pradesh to visit her cousin in Sector 63, but she missed her stop and alighted at Pari Chowk. From there, she reportedly boarded another bus after confirming that it was going to Sector 63 of NOIDA.

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 August 2026, an amount of Rs. 146 lakh was recommended for the victims or their next of kin (NoK) in 17 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	11/3/8/2023-JCD	Death in judicial custody	5.00	Govt. of Assam
2	1600/7/7/2022-JCD	Death in judicial custody	7.50	Govt. of Haryana
3	165/7/11/2024-JCD	Death in judicial custody	10.00	Govt. of Haryana
4	152/9/5/2019-JCD	Death in judicial custody	7.50	Govt. of Jammu & Kashmir
5	2621/25/9/2022-JCD	Death in judicial custody	10.00	Govt. of West Bengal
6	141/4/26/2024-PCD	Death in police custody	7.50	Govt. of Bihar
7	320/6/26/2024-PCD	Death in police custody	7.00	Govt. of Gujarat
8	2469/4/23/2020-AD	Deaths in police custody	10.00	Govt. of Bihar
9	1250/13/18/2024-PCD	Death in police custody	7.50	Govt. of Maharashtra
10	4247/4/2/2023-DH	Death in juvenile home custody	10.00	Govt. of Bihar
11	2566/4/11/2023-DH	Death in other Government- run Children Home	5.00	Govt. of Bihar
12	1168/34/17/2024	Irregularities in Government hospitals/ primary health centres	5.00	Govt. of Jharkhand
13	963/18/1/2024	Police not taking lawful action in a case of murders involving witchcraft	9.00	Govt. of Odisha
14	938/22/39/2024	Death due to electrocution	5.00	Govt. of Tamil Nadu
15	958/36/23/2024	Police not taking lawful action in a case of brutal attack by college guards on protesting students	5.00	Govt. of Telangana
16	20560/24/32/2024	Death due electrocution	25.00	Govt. of Uttar Pradesh
17	776/35/7/2025	Medical negligence	10.00	Govt. of Uttarakhand

Payment of relief to the victims

During August 2026, the Commission closed 9 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 37.75 lakh was paid to the victims or their next of kin (NoK) on the recommendations of the Commission. The specific details of these cases can be downloaded from NHRC, India website by logging in with the case number given in the table below:

S. No.	Case Number	Nature of complaint	Amount (Rs. in lakh)	Authority
1	798/1/10/2023-JCD	Death in judicial custody	5.00	Govt. of Andhra Pradesh
2	7758/30/9/2021-JCD	Death in judicial custody	5.00	Govt. of NCT of Delhi
3	713/25/5/2020-JCD	Death in judicial custody	5.00	Govt. of West Bengal
4	4473/7/3/2016-PCD	Death in police custody	5.00	Govt. of Haryana
5	1390/10/15/2021-PCD	Death in police custody	10.00	Govt. of Karnataka
6	3817/18/5/2022-AD	Deaths in police custody	5.00	Govt. of Odisha
7	1876/1/39/2025	Abuse of power by police authorities	0.75	Govt. of Andhra Pradesh
8	2032/7/19/2023	Non registration of FIR in a case of murder	1.00	Govt. of Haryana
9	467/18/5/2025	Unlawful detention	1.00	Govt. of Odisha

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 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 next of kin (NoK). The Commission also received reports of compliance with recommendations by the respective state authorities. Summaries of such cases are as under:

Unlawful detention of a minor

(Case No. 467/18/5/2025)

The matter pertained to the arrest of a minor by the police without ascertaining his age in Ganjam district, Odisha in 2026. Based on the reports received in response to its notices, the Commission found that the boy had been treated as a major and remanded to custody for 40 days. After his date of birth was verified, he was released. The Commission, therefore, held that the state was liable to provide relief to the minor for his unlawful arrest and detention as an adult. Accordingly, the Commission recommended that the Government of Odisha pay Rs 1 lakh to the family of the victim, which was subsequently paid.

Police inaction in a case of caste-based abuse

(Case No. 1876/1/39/2025)

The matter pertained to caste-based abuse and police inaction on a woman's complaint in Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh. The complainant alleged that during a Vinayaka immersion procession, police personnel of

Ajit Singh Nagar Police Station misbehaved and subjected her to derogatory remarks and caste-based slurs amounting to violation of her right to life and dignity. She further alleged that no action was taken on her complaint against the police personnel. Based on the reports received in response to its notices, the Commission found the allegations true. Therefore, it recommended that bearing the vicarious responsibility for the conduct of its employees, the Government of Andhra Pradesh pay Rs 75,000 as relief to the victim, which was paid.

Police inaction in a case of murder

(Case No. 2032/7/19/2023)

The matter pertained to the police inaction in registering an FIR and taking timely action in the case of a death of a man in Sonapat, Haryana. Reportedly, the man was taken for labour work at a brick kiln. He informed his family that he was being kept in confinement and threatened with death. The next day, the family was informed that his body was lying at a brick kiln in Sonapat and it was recovered by the police. However, despite the family of the victim taking rounds of

different police stations, an FIR was not registered on the matter. Based on the reports received in response to its notices, the Commission found the allegations true. Hence, it recommended that bearing the vicarious responsibility for the conduct of its employees, the Government of Haryana pay Rs. 1 lakh as interim 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. 455/11/8/2024

From 3rd to 7th August 2026, a spot enquiry was conducted into the allegation that some student activists from the Fraternity Movement, who had staged a protest at Rajaji Junction, Kozhikode, Keralam were subjected to physical assault by police.

Case No. 2140/22/5/2021-AD

From 3rd to 7th August 2026, a spot enquiry was conducted into the allegation that a man was picked up by police from his workplace on 29th August 2021 without valid reasons or a warrant. He was brutally beaten in custody, resulting in his death in Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu.

Case No. 921/12/13/2022

From 3rd to 7th August 2026, a spot enquiry was conducted into the allegation regarding the custodial death of a person in Datia, Madhya Pradesh.

Case No. 456/19/10/2022-AD

From 10th to 14th August 2026, a spot enquiry was conducted into the allegation that a woman died in police custody on 10th December 2021 allegedly due to torture in custody in Ludhiana, Punjab.

Case No. 31414/24/77/2023

From 10th to 14th August 2026, a spot enquiry was conducted into the allegation regarding a fake encounter by police in Hapur, Uttar Pradesh.

Case No. 424/10/21/2024-JCD

From 17th to 21st August 2026, a spot enquiry was conducted into the allegation regarding a death in judicial custody in Udupi, Karnataka.

Case No. 859/36/2/2025

From 17th to 21st August 2026, a spot enquiry was conducted into the allegation about an improper investigation into a murder in Telangana, Hyderabad.

Case No. 1303/30/10/2026-WC

From 17th to 21st August 2026, a spot enquiry was conducted into the allegation that a woman was lured to Batla House, Delhi in March 2022, drugged, sexually assaulted, filmed for blackmail and thereafter repeatedly confined, beaten, threatened and forced to convert and marry against her will in Faridabad, Haryana.

Case No. 204/4/4/2024-DH

From 17th to 20th August 2026, a spot enquiry was conducted into the allegation regarding death of an inmate, aged around 16 years, at the Children's Home, Begusarai in Faridabad, Haryana.

Case No. 311/33/13/2021-JCD

From 18th to 21st August 2026, a spot enquiry was conducted into the allegation regarding the death of an under-trial prisoner during medical treatment in District Jail Raigarh, Chhattisgarh.

Case No. 5653/24/8/2024-PCD

From 19th to 21st August 2026, a spot enquiry was conducted into the allegation regarding the death of a person in police custody in Baghpat, Uttar Pradesh.

Case No. 21/15/5/2025

From 24th to 26th August 2026, a spot enquiry was conducted into the allegation that a man from Raebareli, Uttar Pradesh was taken for work at a brick kiln in Meghalaya promising higher wages. There, he was harassed, denied wages and was pushed into a burning furnace resulting in his death in 2024 but no proper action was taken by police on the matter.

Case No. 24/29/1/2022-DH

From 24th to 28th August 2026, a spot enquiry was conducted into the allegation regarding the death of a 13-year old girl at a One Stop Centre in Daman & Diu.

Case No. 1395/13/19/2020-AD

On 31st August 2026, a spot enquiry was conducted into

the allegation regarding custodial death of a convicted prisoner at Nashik Central Jail, Maharashtra. The enquiry is expected to continue till 4th September 2026.

Case No.664/35/6/2025-BL

On 31st August 2026, a spot enquiry was conducted into

the allegation about the confinement of a child of a bonded labour to take work in lieu of his ailing father belonging to a Scheduled Caste in Saharanpur, Uttar Pradesh. The enquiry is expected to continue till 3rd September 2026.

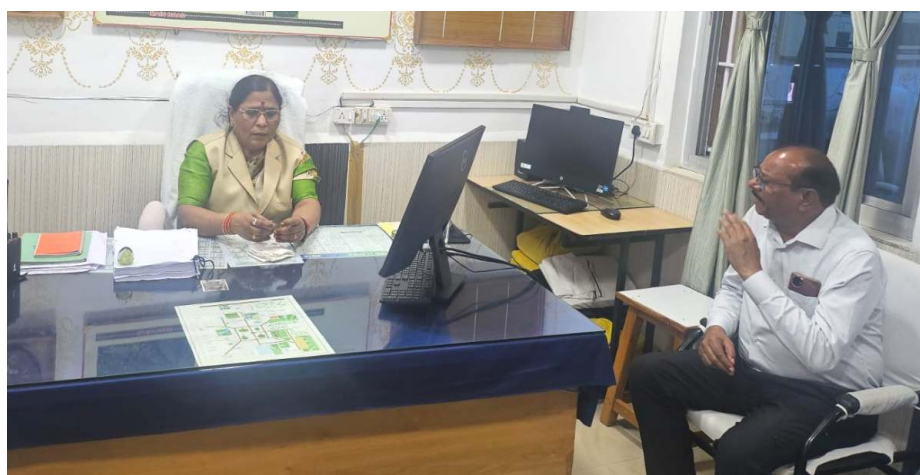
Field visits

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 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 officials, as this helps the Commission promptly resolve cases of human rights violations.

Visits by NHRC, India Member

On 3rd August 2026, NHRC, India Member, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani visited Veerangana Rani Durgavati Government Senior Girls' Hostel in Dhar, Madhya Pradesh and found serious lapses in student welfare. A nearly 8-hour gap between meals was affecting the health of 90 girl students. The students were also cleaning the hostel themselves due to irregular sanitation services. The delayed release of the government grant has impacted basic amenities despite the warden's efforts. The Member asked the authorities for timely release of funds, adequate nutrition, regular sanitation services and essential facilities to protect the health, dignity and overall well-being of the students.

The same day, she also visited District Jail, Dhar, Madhya Pradesh. The sanitation and food arrangements were found satisfactory. The e-Court system was functional. She urged the authorities to arrange separate accommodation for undertrial prisoners, provide timely legal aid and speedy justice, appoint a full-time doctor and implement prison reforms to safeguard inmates' human rights.



On 4th August 2026, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani visited Kasturba Gandhi Balika Avasiya Vidyalay, Jnanpura, Terla in the District and found serious issues affecting around 270 girl students. She also observed a shortage of staff, drinking water, unhygienic bathrooms with broken doors, inadequate healthcare, poor implementation of the prescribed food menu and no meals between 9.30 am and 5.00 pm. Ragging, mosquito infestation, lack of sports facilities and poor record maintenance were also noted. The Member stressed the need for immediate government intervention to address these issues to ensure a safe, child-friendly environment.



On 22nd August 2026, on her way to Nellore, the NHRC, India Member noticed girl students of Adarsha Hostel on a protest demanding improvement in the facilities and management in Thipparthi, Nalgonda, Andhra Pradesh. She visited the hostel and found poor-quality food and provisions, inadequate sanitation, irregular cleaning and improper conduct by the watchman and Auxiliary Nurse Midwife. The Member spoke to the District Collector and Mandal Education Officer, highlighting the deficiencies and recommending immediate corrective measures to safeguard the health, safety, dignity, nutrition and well-being of the students.



On 25th August 2026, the Member visited Water Sports Academy, Secunderabad, Telangana, along with the Social Welfare Department officials. It is the only school of its kind in Telangana State, providing training in water sports. She observed that although the students have won several awards and brought recognition to the State, they are not being provided with adequate nutritious food to support their physical fitness and sporting performance. The overall environment of the school is also far from satisfactory. She noticed that there is a persistent foul smell from drainage water throughout the



premises as well as a lack of safe drinking water.

The students are facing several hardships and are living and training in an environment that does not meet the basic standards required for their health, well-being and sporting development. The NHRC, India Member discussed the problems in detail with the senior officials of the concerned departments and emphasised the need for immediate remedial measures to improve the food, sanitation, drinking water and overall living conditions of the academy.

NHRC, India Special-Special Rapporteurs and Special Monitors

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India has designated 15 Special Rapporteurs to monitor human rights conditions across various regions of the country. They conduct visits to shelter homes, prisons, observation homes and similar institutions and write reports for the Commission that detail their observations, besides suggestions for future action. Additionally, the Commission has appointed 18 Special Monitors to oversee specific thematic human rights issues and report their findings to the Commission.

Special Rapporteur

- From 2nd to 7th August 2026, Special Rapporteur, Shri Subhash Chandra, visited Raipur and Durg districts, Chhattisgarh and took stock of various facilities and human rights situation in custodial institutions, child care institutions, anganwadi centres, educational institutions and other public facilities.
- From 18th to 22nd August 2026, Special Rapporteur, Shri Sayeed Ahmed Baba visited Imphal, Manipur and took stock of various facilities and human rights situation in custodial institutions, hospitals, child care institutions and relief camps.



- From 23rd to 30th August 2026, Special Rapporteur, Shri Upendra Singh Baghel visited NOIDA- GB Nagar, Meerut and Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh and took stock of various facilities and human rights situation in prisons, child protection institutions and police establishments.
- From 24th to 31st August 2026, Special Rapporteur, Smt. Suchitra Sinha visited Ramgarh District, Jharkhand and conducted field visits to villages, mining areas and displacement-affected regions to understand problems related to human rights issues.

- From 27th to 31st August 2026, Special Rapporteur, Shri S.K. Satapathy visited West Midnapore District, West Bengal and took stock of various facilities and human rights situation in custodial institutions, child care homes, schools, primary health centres and other public institutions.



Special Monitor

- From 3rd to 9th August 2026, Special Monitor, Gopi Shankar Madurai, visited Puducherry, Tamil Nadu for



capacity building, stakeholder consultations and field visits relating to transgender and LGBT rights.

- From 10th to 14th August 2026, Special Monitor, Dr. Animesh Bhattacharya visited Ajmer district, Rajasthan to assess issues relating to excess fluoride in groundwater and safe drinking water.
- From 16th to 23rd August 2026, Special Monitor, Shri Umakant, visited Assam and undertook field visits to Gram Sabhas, Panchayats and other local self-government institutions to assess human rights situation.
- From 17th to 20th August 2026, Special Monitor, Dr. Poonam Malakondaiah visited Dewas district, Madhya Pradesh and took stock of various facilities and human rights situation in Elementary Schools and Anganwadi Centres.
- From 17th to 22nd August 2026, Special Monitor, Shri Vidya Bhushan Kumar visited Mumbai, Maharashtra and assessed environmental and waste-management issues on the ground and interacted with stakeholders.
- From 19th to 21st August 2026, Special Monitor, Shri Devendra Singh Dhapola visited Mahendragarh District, Haryana to assess the implementation of NHRC advisories relating to sewer mechanisation, beggary and silicosis.
- From 19th to 26th August 2026, Special Monitor, Prof. Kanhaiya Tripathi visited Patna, Gaya, Bodhgaya, Motihari, Rajgir, Saran and Bhojpur districts, Bihar and reviewed the status of human rights education and gender equality in educational institutions.



- From 23rd to 30th August 2026, Special Monitor, Shri R. Hemanth Kumar visited Leh and Kargil districts, UT of Ladakh to study socio-economic and governance issues affecting tribal communities.
- From 24th to 29th August 2026, Special Monitor, Dr. Pradeepta Kumar Nayak visited SAS Nagar, Rupnagar and Patiala districts, Punjab and reviewed health, leprosy and mental health programmes.



Research study

Inclusive Education among Persons with Disabilities in Punjab: Prospects and Challenges

Commissioned by : National Human Rights Commission, India

Principal Investigator : Dr. Kiran Kumari, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology, Punjabi University, Patiala

The right to education constitutes a fundamental right guaranteed under the Constitution of India. However, in the case of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), the enjoyment of this right in the form of access to

quality schooling remains substantially compromised by systemic and structural barriers. Notwithstanding the constitutional mandate enshrined under Article 21 and the statutory safeguards provided under the Rights of Persons

with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016, the practical implementation of inclusive education across India continues to fall demonstrably short of the standards these provisions envisage.

Underscoring the challenges, the National Human Rights Commission, India sponsored a project titled “Inclusive Education among Persons with Disabilities in Punjab: Prospects and Challenges”, undertaken by Dr. Kiran Kumari, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology, Punjabi University, Patiala, as Principal Investigator, to examine the realities of inclusive education across three districts in Punjab: Jalandhar, Ludhiana and Amritsar.

The study aimed to assess the status of implementation of provisions under the RPwD Act, 2016 relating to inclusive education; explore the academic challenges faced by the students with disabilities; identify the infrastructural and attitudinal barriers faced by the students with disabilities; study the challenges faced by the parents, teachers and management; examine the functional and dysfunctional aspects of inclusive education programme as perceived by the students, parents, teachers and management of the schools; and suggest remedial measures so as to enhance the efficacy of inclusive education policies and strategies. It sought to bridge the gap between policy intent and ground-level reality by capturing the lived experiences of all stakeholders involved in the educational ecosystem.

The research employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative surveys with qualitative insights to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. The field survey was conducted across six blocks and thirty-six schools in the three selected districts, encompassing interviews with students with disabilities, their parents, teachers and school administrators. The research study drew upon both primary and secondary data, supplemented

by an extensive review of literature, in order to arrive at findings that are both empirically grounded and analytically robust.

The findings reveal significant disparities in the implementation of inclusive education across the surveyed districts. While many parents and teachers expressed positive attitudes toward the principle of inclusion, the practical challenges attendant upon its implementation were considerable. Students reported persistent difficulties in classroom interaction, the formation of peer relationships and access to requisite examination accommodation. Teachers identified the absence of specialised training, disproportionately large class sizes and inadequate support staff as major impediments to effective inclusion.

Administrators, for their part, noted infrastructural deficits, including inaccessible school buildings and an acute shortage of resource rooms and qualified special educators. Financial constraints further compounded these challenges, with a considerable number of families reporting difficulty in affording assistive devices and supplementary therapeutic support. Furthermore, the study found that while individualised education plans (IEPs) were widely recognised as valuable pedagogical tools, their consistent development and monitoring remained uneven across the schools surveyed.

It is pertinent to note that concerted efforts are indeed being undertaken, at both the policy and institutional levels, to address these deficiencies. However, the findings of this study underscore that such efforts, while commendable, remain fragmented and insufficient in scope. A more comprehensive, coordinated and adequately resourced approach is imperative if the objectives of inclusive education, as envisaged under the RPwD Act, 2016, are to be meaningfully realised. The detailed research study is available on the Commission's website.

Awareness initiatives

Collaborative capacity building programmes

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India is mandated to promote, protect and build awareness about human rights. For this purpose, besides the internship programmes, it has been organising various capacity building programmes and activities in collaboration with different institutions, including exposure visits, moot court competitions to expand its outreach and human rights sensitisation, particularly among university-level students.

In the month of August 2026, the following collaborative training programmes were organised:

- On 1st August 2026, NHRC, India Joint Secretary, Shri Samir Kumar addressed a session at a one-day training programme on 'Judicial Officers and Human Rights: Issues and Challenges' organised by the Indian Law Institute, New Delhi.



- On 4th August 2026, S.K. Shikshan Evam Samazik Vikas Sansthan, Bharatpur, Rajasthan organised a one-day seminar on 'Human rights awareness with special focus on rights of women.' About 200 participants attended.
- On 5th August 2026, St. Thomas College (Autonomous), Thrissur, Kerala organised three-day National Conference on 'Digital Governance and Sustainable Development: Balancing Security and Rights in the Age of Data Protection'. NHRC, India Joint Secretary, Shri Samir Kumar inaugurated it as the Chief Guest.



- On 7th August 2026, Smt. Kapila Khandvala College of Education, Mumbai, Maharashtra organised a training



programme on 'Human rights.' NHRC, India SSP, Shri Yuvraj addressed the event as the Chief Guest.

- On 10th August 2026, Don Bosco Institute of Technology, New Delhi organised two-day seminar on 'Right to Privacy, Digital Space and Human Rights.' NHRC, India Presenting Officer, Smt. Neeru Kamboj addressed the event as the Chief Guest.

On 21st August 2026, Vellore Institute of Technology, Tamil Nadu, organised a training programme on 'Women's Rights-Empowering Women: Awareness, Equality and Justice in today's rapidly evolving society.' NHRC, India Presenting Officer, Smt. Vijay Lakshmi Vihan addressed the event as the Chief Guest.



- On 28th August 2026, Arya Yuva Kendra organised a one-day seminar on 'Rights of Children and Juvenile Justice



with special focus on Prevention of Child Marriage' in Sipahijala District, Tripura. NHRC, India Director, Shri Irsad Alam addressed the event as the Chief Guest.

- On 28th August 2026, Sankardeva Mahavidyalaya, Lakhimpur, Assam organised a one day training programme on basic human rights awareness.



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. The following institutions visited the NHRC in the month of August.



- A batch of 9 students with 2 faculty members from Shivajirao S. Jondhale Institute of Law and Research, Thane, Maharashtra.



- A batch of 29 students and a faculty member from the Parul Institute of Law, Parul University, Vadodara, Gujarat.

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.

International Conference on 'Human Rights in the Context of Digital Transformation: Contemporary Approaches' in Tashkent

On 20th August 2026, NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice V. Ramasubramanian accompanied by Joint Secretary, Shri Samir Kumar attended the International Conference on 'Human Rights in the Context of Digital Transformation: Contemporary Approaches' in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. The Conference was held at the initiative of the Commissioner of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan for Human Rights (Ombudsman) supported by Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).



During the Conference, addressing a session on 'Protection of Youth Rights in the Context of Digital Transformation', Justice Ramasubramanian said that digital technology has created a new "genre of rights." These included the rights to digital access, be forgotten, data portability and correction, disconnect, explanation of automated decisions and digital anonymity and identity protection. The Chairperson called for global consensus to address cyber threats, particularly those affecting children and youth, amid lawsuits against social media plat-



forms over alleged harm to users, especially children.

Participants from 15 countries in the Conference adopted the 'Tashkent Declaration on Human Rights in the Context of Digital Transformation' recognising the need to ensure effective implementation of international human rights obligations in the context of digital transformation. It also recognised its profound impact on human rights and emphasised that digital technologies should be developed and used for the benefit of people and should contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Online engagements

- On 3rd August 2026, Shri Samir Kumar, Joint Secretary and Ms. Perna Hasija, Research Consultant attended

GANHRI Working Group on Business and Human Rights learning call on NHRI experiences with Mandatory Human Rights Due Diligence (MHRDD) Laws.

- On 6th August 2026, Shri Samir Kumar, Joint Secretary and Ms. Varsha Apte, Senior Research Consultant and Ms. Perna Tara, Research Consultant attended the Asia Pacific Forum SEO/ CEO Network Quarterly Meeting.
- On 18th August 2026, Ms. Varsha Apte, Senior Research Consultant and Ms. Perna Tara, Research Consultant attended an online event organised by OHCHR on the newly issued book- Creating the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the 1993 World Conference.

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 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, India and the State Human Rights Commissions (SHRCs) play a vital role in protecting and promoting 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.

Madhya Pradesh State Human Rights Commission

During August 2026, the Madhya Pradesh Human Rights Commission (MPSHRC) undertook several activities promoting and protecting human rights.

On 17th August 2026, a public hearing was held at the Ratlam Collectorate, where 25 matters, including 11 related to the police were heard. The other cases included gas pipeline leakage, treatment of a tribal woman, withholding of salary, recruitment of persons with disabilities, medical negligence, livelihood, vaccination, school facilities, missing child, murder, rape, land rights and deaths caused by a high-tension line.

On 18th August 2026, a public hearing was held at Agar-Malwa. Following complaints regarding water discharged from an ethanol industry, the Commission inspected the unit and reviewed water use, treatment, disposal and quality, with a focus on public health protection.



The Chairperson, Dr. Avadesh Pratap Singh also participated in a nationwide drug de-addiction campaign, emphasising the protection of human rights through a drug-free society.

Punjab State and Chandigarh (U.T.) Human Rights Commission

During August 2026, the Punjab State and Chandigarh (U.T.) Human Rights Commission (PSHRC) took several important steps to address issues related to human rights, public welfare, healthcare and safety.

While considering a complaint regarding corporate assistance to victims of devastating floods in Punjab, the PSHRC recommended setting up a State CSR Authority to facilitate the use of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds for local welfare and disaster relief. It also recommended creating awareness among companies about CSR activities covered under Schedule VII of the Companies Act, 2013 and encouraging them to support relief during natural calamities.

The Commission also addressed the issue of non-availability of essential medicines for haemophilia patients at the Government Medical College & Hospital and the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education & Research, Chandigarh. It recommended that the concerned authorities should ensure adequate and uninterrupted availability of Anti-Hemophilic Factor VIII and other essential replacement therapies. The buffer stocks should be maintained besides speeding up pending procurement processes.

Taking *suo motu* cognizance of safety violations found during an inspection of luxury buses at Sector 43 Bus Terminal, Chandigarh, the PSHRC noted that emergency exits were locked or blocked and fire extinguishers had expired in 2022. Reports have been sought from the concerned transport authorities.

The PSHRC also continued its human rights outreach through interactive meetings with various stakeholders and open hearings in Punjab and Chandigarh.

These programmes provided people with an opportunity to raise issues relating to civic amenities, healthcare, education, social justice and public services, strengthening direct engagement between citizens and the human rights protection mechanism.

Haryana State Human Rights Commission

The Haryana State Human Rights Commission (HSHRC) also undertook several significant human rights interven-



tions and activities during August 2026. Chairperson, Justice Lalit Batra, accompanied by Members, Shri Kuldeep Jain and Shri Deep Bhatia visited Central Jail-1, Hisar and reviewed prison facilities. They interacted with inmates to understand their grievances and living conditions. The Chairperson emphasised timely medical care, hygienic conditions, nutritious food, legal assistance and rehabilitation of inmates. The authorities were directed to ensure that doctors posted in the jail have a tenure of at least one year for continuity of care.

The HSHRC took *suo motu* cognizance of the death of an 11-year-old student following the collapse of a school gate in Sonipat and sought reports on the condition, inspection and maintenance of the school building and preventive safety measures. In Nuh, it directed authorities to provide safe transport to students shifted to schools in neighbouring villages and ordered strict compliance with CCTV and other safety norms in school buses.

Besides this, among other important interventions, the HSHRC took up the issue of prolonged disruption of potable water supply in Faridabad, highlighting its implications for the right to life, health and dignity. It also participated in a plantation drive promoting the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

Himachal Pradesh State Human Rights Commission

The Himachal Pradesh State Human Rights Commission (HPSHRC) registered 32 new complaints and disposed of 22 complaints till 21st August 2026. The Commission also recommended a total of Rs. 56 lakh monetary relief to the victims of human rights violations.

News in brief

- On 7th August 2026, NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice V. Ramasubramanian interacted with student delegates under the Inter Nation Leadership Tour'26. He encouraged them to take forward their human rights awareness for betterment of society. Joint Secretary, Shri Samir Kumar also interacted with them.



- On 9th August 2026, NHRC, India Member, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani addressed the Kisan Mahila Sammelan as Chief Guest at Saraswati Vidya Mandir, Pulivendula, Kadapa District, Andhra Pradesh. She highlighted women's vital role in agriculture and the denial of their rightful share in family land, stressing their recognition as farmers, decision-makers and equal partners with dignity, rights and economic independence. She urged greater awareness among women farmers.



- On 15th August 2026, NHRC, India joined the nation in celebration of the 80th Independence Day of Bharat. A flag hoisting ceremony was organised at Manav Adhikar Bhawan which was attended by the CISF personnel and employees of the Commission.



- On 21st August 2026, NHRC, India Member, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani chaired a meeting of the Advisory Board to decide the contents of the 23rd vol. of the NHRC, India's annual Hindi journal - "Manav Adhikar: Nai Dishayen." Secretary General, Shri Piyush Goyal; Joint Secretary, Smt. Saidingpuii Chhakchuak, six external subject experts and other senior officers of the Commission participated in the discussions.



- On 22nd August 2026, NHRC, India Member, Justice (Dr.) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi addressed the inaugural ceremony of Bachelor of Science Programmes in Management and Public Policy and Data Science and Artificial Intelligence at the Indian Institute of Management Sambalpur, Odisha. He observed that India is rapidly progressing in the fields of technology, entrepreneurship, infrastructure, digital governance, research and innovation and that young Indians are increasingly making their presence felt across the world.

He also spoke about the transformative potential of Artificial Intelligence and its ability to bring significant change across diverse sectors such as healthcare, education, agriculture, finance and governance. He emphasised that data-driven decision-making can enable institutions to understand problems more accurately, formulate effective policies and allocate resources more efficiently. He encouraged the students to acquire contemporary knowledge and skills while remaining conscious of their social responsibilities to contribute meaningfully to the nation's development.



- On 22nd August 2026, NHRC, India Member, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani addressed an awareness programme on 'Viksit Bharat- Constitutional responsibilities of students,' organised by the G.V.R.R. Junior College, Vedayapalem, Nellore District, Andhra Pradesh. About 100 students attended.
- On 22nd August 2026, Dr. Anupama Nilekar Chandra, NHRC, India Director General (Investigation) addressed virtually as Guest of Honour the two-day National Consultation 'From Policy to Practice: Commemorating 10 Years of Juvenile (Care & Protection of Children) Act, 2015 (National Consultation with Special Focus on Uttar Pradesh)' at Dr. Ram Manohar Lohiya National Law University, Uttar Pradesh. She emphasised the need to look beyond data to understand why children come into conflict with law, including factors contributing to offending and recidivism. She emphasised setting

the priorities for the next decade including better data compilation, research and capacity building of stakeholders. Dr. Chandra stressed the need to shift from control to care, protection, rehabilitation and reintegration, with a child-centric, sensitive and coordinated approach throughout the Juvenile Justice system, ensuring continuity of care, sustained support and meaningful reintegration.

- On 23rd August 2026, NHRC, India Member, Justice (Dr.) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi addressed the Achievers Meet-2026 felicitation ceremony as the Chief Guest at SOA University (Campus-2), Bhubaneswar, Odisha. He urged the students to strive for excellence and encouraged them to pursue their goals with dedication, perseverance and a strong sense of responsibility. He also highlighted various human rights issues and emphasised the importance of upholding human dignity, equality and justice in society.
- On 23rd August 2026, NHRC, India Member, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani addressed a programme on 'The impact of human rights on the holistic development of India.' It was organised by the Bharati Seva Samiti at Nellore, Andhra Pradesh. The programme provided an opportunity for meaningful discussions on the role of women and the importance of protecting and promoting human rights in achieving the overall and inclusive development of India.
- On 25th August 2026, NHRC, India Member, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani interacted with various district-level officers of Secunderabad at the Tourist Plaza Circuit House, Begumpet, Secunderabad, Telangana. The officers who attended the meeting included Protection Officers, Deputy Director, Revenue Divisional Officer (RDO), Deputy Director of BC Welfare, Assistant District Tribal Development Officer (DTDO) and other concerned officials. During the meeting, she discussed their role in implementation of welfare measures at the district level concerning vulnerable sections of society and the challenges in protecting the rights and welfare of people.



Forthcoming events

On 12th October
2026

The NHRC, India will organise a function to celebrate its 33rd Foundation Day.

Complaints in August 2026

Number of fresh complaints received	4,023
Number of cases disposed of including old cases	4,246
Number of cases under consideration of the Commission	39,121

Human rights and NHRC in news



सर्वे
भवन्तु सुखिनः

National Human Rights Commission

Important telephone numbers of the NHRC for filing complaints

Toll Free No.: 14433 (Facilitation Centers) • Fax No.: 011-2465 1332

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

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

Focal point for Human Rights Defenders

Indrajeet Kumar, Joint Registrar (Law)

Mobile No. +91 99993 93570 • Fax No. 011-2465 1334 • E-mail: hrd-nhrc@nic.in

Publisher & Printer: Smt. Sainingpuii Chhakchhuak, Joint Secretary, NHRC

VIBA Press Private Limited, C-66/3, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase-II, New Delhi-110 020 and

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