



**NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION, INDIA**  
**MANAV ADHIKAR BHAWAN, INA, NEW DELHI**

**2020-21 Year End Review**

The National Human Rights Commission, NHRC, India, was established on 12<sup>th</sup> October, 1993 under the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993 for the promotion and protection of human rights. The work of the Commission is being carried out as per its mandate under The Protection of Human Rights Act.

**COMMISSION DURING THE YEAR**

**COMPOSITION**

|           | <b>Members</b>                | <b>Designation</b> |
|-----------|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>A.</b> | Justice H.L. Dattu            | Chairperson        |
| <b>B.</b> | Justice P.C. Pant             | Member             |
| <b>C.</b> | Ms. Jyotika Kalra             | Member             |
| <b>D.</b> | Dr. Dnyaneshwar Manohar Mulay | Member             |

- However, Justice H.L. Dattu completed his tenure of nearly five years as the 7<sup>th</sup> Chairperson of NHRC, on 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 2020.
- Mr. Bimbadhar Pradhan, IAS, joined as Secretary General, NHRC on 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2020 in place of Mr. Jaideep Govind, who superannuated on 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2020.
- Justice Shri P.C. Pant has been appointed as Acting Chairperson of the Commission with effect from 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2021.

**DIVISIONS OF THE COMMISSION**

- Law- Division – Headed by Registrar (Law), Deals with Complaints alleging violation of Human Rights.
- Investigation Division- Headed by Director General (Investigation) – Conducts inquiries including spot inquiries and analysis of reports.
- Training Division- Headed by Joint Secretary (P&T) – Is responsible for spreading awareness of Human Rights through publication, media outreach, seminars, internship programmes.
- Administration Division- Headed by Joint Secretary (A&R)- Deals with Establishment & Administrative Matters
- Research Division – Headed by Joint Secretary (P&T) –Studies Treaties and other international instruments on Human Rights, making recommendations for their effective implementation, undertake and promote research in the field of Human Rights.

## HIGHLIGHTS

The year under review started with an unprecedented lockdown which came as a bolt from the blue. The Commission was able to seamlessly switch over to the digital mechanism with the help of the online grievance handling of complaints on the **HRCNet portal**. The Commission's **Focal Point on HRD** was pressed into service and it attended to SOS calls of complainants and tried to provide immediate succour in urgent cases by telephonically taking up their cases with State authorities.

People of the country faced various problems related to access to education, health, livelihood etc., so much so that the basic fundamental '**Right to Life**' was at stake. The NHRC itself suffered a grave loss of life of a Multi-Task Staff member who succumbed to the COVID pandemic. Total of 4 COVID-19 testing camps were organized within the premise of Manav Adhikar Bhawan for officers, staff & their family members in the Commission. In spite of all these challenges, which made the countries around the world come to a grinding halt, the Commission was able to power through the uncertainties.

### Annual Events of the Commission

#### NHRC Foundation Day

Foundation Day 2020 of the NHRC, India was symbolically observed on the 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2020 as no formal event could be organized due to COVID guidelines. However a message has been released by the Chairperson NHRC to mark the day.

#### Human Rights Day

To mark the adoption of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), Human Rights Day 2020 was organized online on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020. The Minister of State, MHA, Mr. Nityanand Rai addressed the well-attended function as the Chief Guest.



## **Statutory Full Commission Meeting**

Statutory Full Commission meeting was organized on 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2021 with 7 deemed Members of the Commission. The meeting was organized with the aim to identify mechanisms to reduce human right violation and share best practices to work on a joint strategy for the promotion and protection of human rights of various sections of society.

## **NHRC-SHRCs Meeting**

NHRC-SHRCs meeting were organized on 19 March 2021 to explore potential areas of co-operation and coordination between NHRC and SHRCs, identify ways and means to improve and strengthen the protection and promotion of human rights in India & share experiences and best practices.



## **COVID 19: Initiatives & Interventions**

### **Advisories on COVID-19**

Viewing the unprecedented challenges posed by COVID-19 and ensure protection of Human Rights of the vulnerable sections of the society the National Human Rights Commission, India, constituted a 'Committee of Experts on Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on Human Rights and Future Response.' In consultations with the Committee, NHRC issued 12 advisories on various Human Rights issues to union ministries, states and UTs for implementation and compliance which are being received now. The advisories are as under:

1. Advisory for Protection of the Rights of Women
2. Advisory for the Protection of the Rights of LGBTQI+
3. Advisory on Rights of Mental Health
4. Advisory on Business and Human Rights and Future Responses.
5. Advisory on Human Rights of the Prisoners and Police Personnel and Future Responses.
6. Advisory on Informal Workers and Future Responses.
7. Advisory on Rights of Elderly Persons
8. Advisory on Combating Human Trafficking

9. Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on human rights and future response
10. Advisory on Food
11. Advisory on Disability
12. Advisory on Children

### **Interventions in Supreme Court**

The National Human Rights Commission, NHRC, India filed an application for intervention and directions along with suo motu writ petition No.6 of 2020 in the Supreme Court of India on the challenges and miseries of migrant labourers, who had been stranded in different parts of the country after the nationwide lockdown. The Apex Court admitted the NHRC intervention.

### **Visit to LNJP Hospital**

A team of National Human Rights Commission, NHRC, India, led by its Member, Mrs. Jyotika Kalra, visited the LNJP hospital in Delhi on 10th June, 2020 for an on the spot assessment of the facilities for COVID care in view of the allegations that despite beds the patients were being denied admission and treatment.

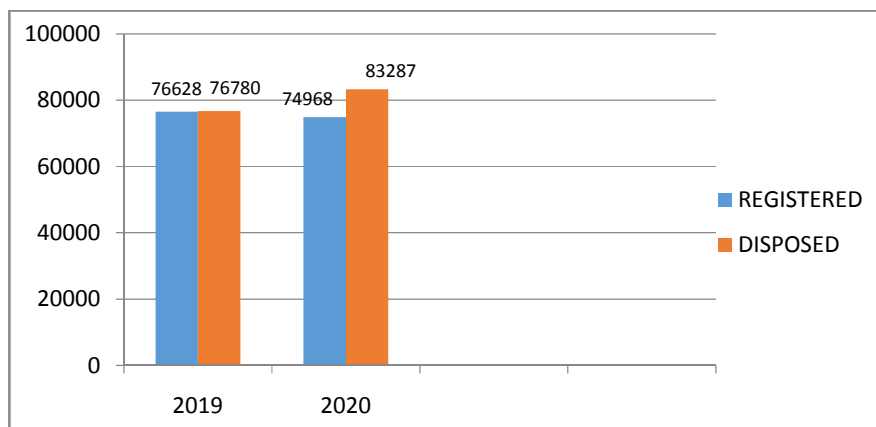
### **Separate webpage on COVID-19 initiatives**

A separate webpage was designed and uploaded on the website of the Commission to highlighting the COVID-19 initiatives by the NHRC, India.

### **Work done by various Divisions**

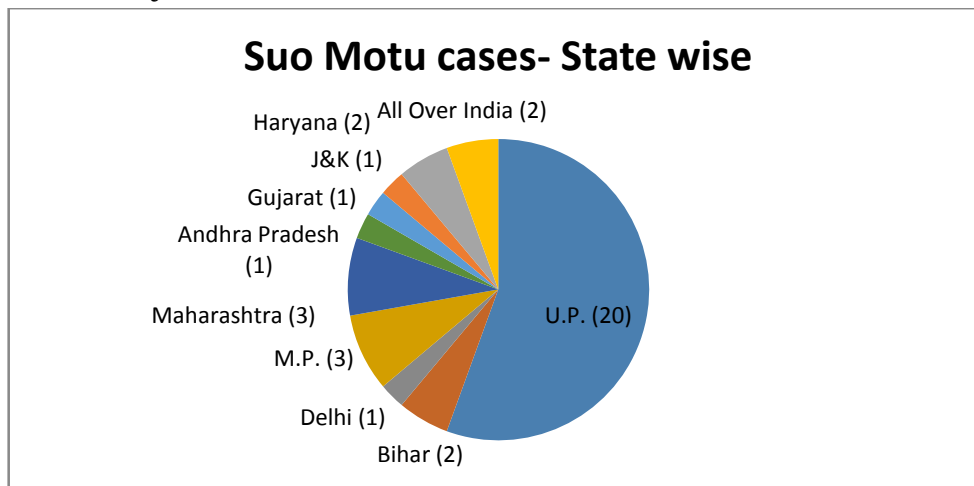
#### **A. Law Division**

The Law Division during the year 2020-21 was dominated by complaints dealing with Human Rights violations during the COVID pandemic. The comparison of data of cases registered and disposed off in the previous two years is mentioned below and clearly shows that despite the restrictions posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the work of the Commission was carried out efficiently.



- **Suo Motu Cognizance of cases- State wise:**

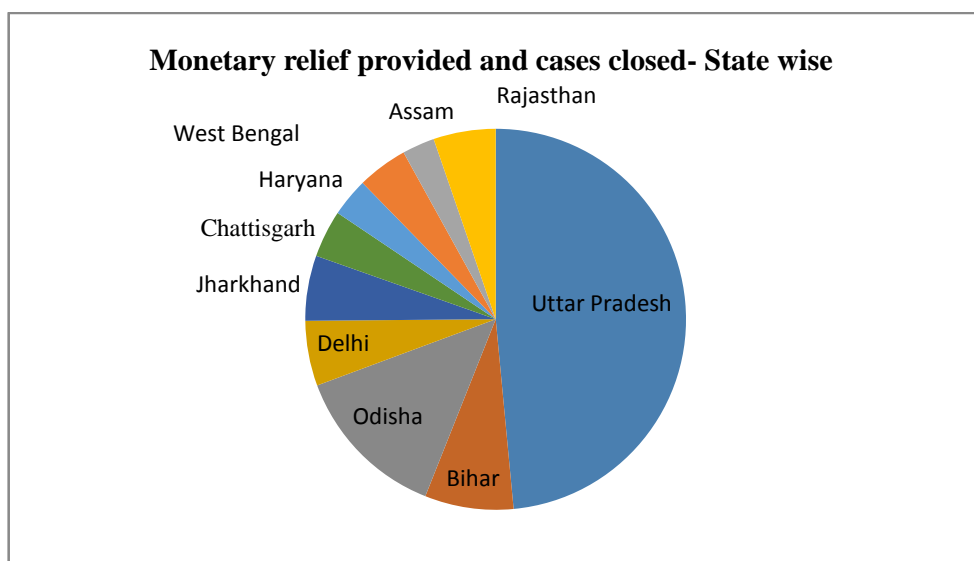
- A total of 36 cases were taken Suo Motu Cognizance of during the year under review:



- **Nature of Complaints Received:**

- Migrant issues
- Healthcare and denial of medical facilities during COVID
- Police excesses during implementation of COVID-19 Guidelines
- Non-payment of wages/ salary
- Civil disputes regarding payment of rent
- Women and Child issues
- Education related problems including access to digital and online education

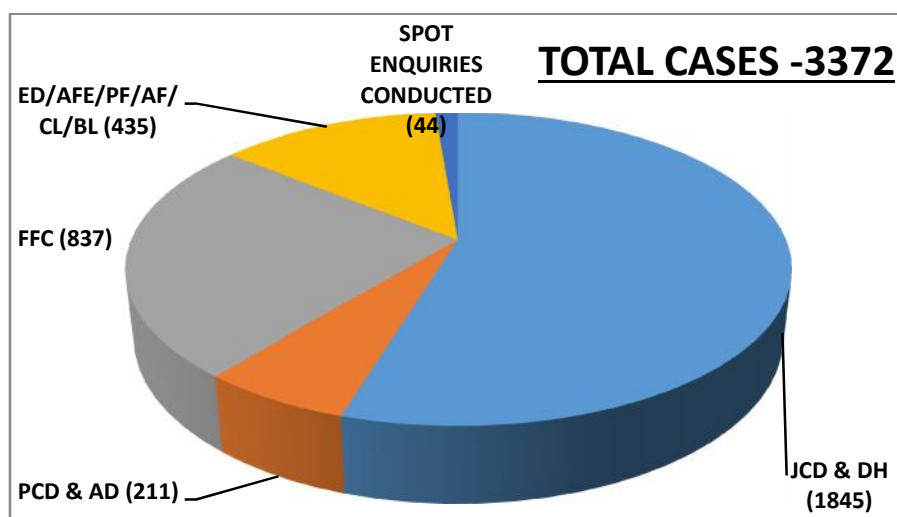
- **Monetary Compensation recommended-** The Commission recommended monetary relief/ compensation in 436 cases during **1<sup>st</sup> April, 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2021**, amounting to **Rs. 78,725,000/-**. During this period 537 cases were closed on the receipt of the compliance reports of the payment of relief amounting to **Rs. 31,47,13,810/-**.



| S.No | State/UT Name | No. of cases Registered | Total Amount (in Rs.) |
|------|---------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1.   | Uttar Pradesh | 193                     | 39235000              |
| 2.   | Bihar         | 30                      | 7930000               |
| 3.   | Odisha        | 53                      | 22785000              |
| 4.   | Delhi         | 22                      | 7643098               |
| 5.   | Jharkhand     | 22                      | 6100000               |
| 6.   | Chhattisgarh  | 16                      | 4500000               |
| 7.   | Haryana       | 13                      | 92777972              |
| 8.   | West Bengal   | 17                      | 4400000               |
| 9.   | Assam         | 11                      | 4800000               |
| 10.  | Rajasthan     | 21                      | 5725000               |
|      | <b>Total</b>  | <b>398</b>              | <b>195896070</b>      |

- Online Debate competition for students of the National Law Universities was organized on 27<sup>th</sup> November, 2020

### 1. Investigation Division



The Investigation Division processed a total number of 3372 cases during the year, the category – wise break-up is placed above.

### Some Important Spot Enquiries conducted during the year

#### 1. Violation of Students' Human Rights in Jamia Milia Islamia, University, Delhi

During the anti - CAA protests in Dec 2019, in JMI University, a team of Investigation Division carried out a spot visit on the complaint of alleged human rights violations. After a thorough enquiry the Investigating team found the incident to be of law and order issue that involved violence, unlawful gathering of mobs, anarchy etc & submitted a report in August 2020. In order to contain the situation, the police carried out the action as per the law, however in few incidents,



police high-handedness was also observed. Accordingly, the Commission recommended suitable compensation to the injured students on humanitarian grounds, action against the members of police and paramilitary forces who handled the situation unprofessionally and also emphasized upon the training modules for the police forces while dealing such situations.

## **2. Clash between Police and Students of Aligarh Muslim University, UP**

During the anti-CAA protest violations reported in the campus of AMU, Aligarh, U.P. in Dec. 2019, the Hon'ble High Court of Allahabad, in a writ petition, entrusted the enquiry to NHRC regarding the allegations of human rights violations during the incident. Accordingly an Investigating Team of NHRC carried out a thorough enquiry and found that the incident was prima facie a law and order situation that involved violence and subsequent coercive action by the Aligarh Police and armed forces. The team submitted its report in April 2020. The Investigating Team found that no student was under illegal detention and that the action of the police in controlling the situation was justified. However, compensation was recommended to the students who received grievous injuries during the incident and action was recommended against the policemen for handling the situation in an insensitive and unprofessional manner. The enquiry report was submitted to the Hon'ble High Court of Allahabad which was accepted, in toto.

## **3. Enquiry into case of Delhi riots in Feb, 2020**

A suo-motu cognizance was taken by the Commission on the incident of wide spread riots in North-East district of Delhi and a spot enquiry was ordered immediately to ascertain whether the role of police was fair and impartial and judicious in dealing with the situation irrespective of the religion of the people of that area. After conducting the spot enquiry by the Investigation Division & submitted its report in April 2020. The Commission recommended compensation and rehabilitation of victims of the riots (both dead and injured), directions to Commissioner of Delhi Police to carry out the investigation of the criminal cases expeditiously & on merits, advised Police to carry out the special drive to trace and seize illegal weapons proliferating in the north east part of Delhi. The other recommendations included strengthening of the intelligence gathering and professional handling of the law and order situation by Delhi Police & Para Military Forces.

## **Few major events of the year for sensitizing the police & related departments.**

### **1. All India Police Forces Debate Competition 2020**

An 'All India Police Forces Debate Competition' was organized through Webinar in which a large number of police personnel from different States/UTs participated and in the final round total 46 candidates took part. The final competition was held at New Delhi in November, 2020. Hon'ble Member (NHRC) Dr. D M Mulay graced the event as Chief Guest & Chief of Jury. Trophies, Certificates and Cash Prizes were given to the final seven winners.

### **2. Central Armed Police Forces Debate Competition - 2020**

This year, the Railway Protection Force (RPF) was nominated by NHRC to organize the Central Armed Police Force Debate Competition through Webinar. The

semi-final round was organized at Kolkata and final round in RPF HQs at New Delhi. A large number of personnel from different CAPFs participated and out of these 16 participants were selected for the final round. Hon'ble Member Dr. D M Mulay graced the final round of the event as Chief Guest and Hon'ble Member and Smt. Jyotika Kalra was the Chief of Jury. The Trophies, Certificates and Cash Prizes were given to the winners and the CISF earned the Rolling Trophy of the CAPF Debate Competition, 2020.

### **3. Webinar on Forensic Science**

A webinar on Forensic Science was organized and conducted by the Investigation Division in August, 2020 by including all major stakeholders i.e. MHA, Central FSLs, State FSLs, National Universities of Forensic Sciences, State Police Academies and State Police. The objective of this webinar was to review the Forensic Science scenario in India and discuss the issues and challenges and strategise on future agenda. The programme was inaugurated by Hon'ble Member Justice P.C. Pant and the topics of discussion were Forensic Ballistics, DNA profiling and medico-legal investigations on custodial deaths in India.

## **Research Division Activities**

### **Major Engagements**

In the year 2020-21 the Commission has organised various virtual conferences/seminars/webinars and **Core group meetings** on various issues pertaining to human rights. Some of such events includes:-

1. Virtual conference on "Online Child Sexual Abuse Material"
2. Virtual meeting for discussing the issue of missing children.
3. Meeting of human rights of Indian Seafarers.
4. Virtual Conference on Rights of Persons' with Disabilities in context of Covid-19 Pandemic
5. The Core group of women discussed the falling participation of women in labour force.
6. The Core Group of LGBTQI discussed the policy interventions to curb violence, forced conversion and discrimination against LGBTQI+ Community.
7. The Core Group on Disability and Elderly Persons discussed policies promoting inclusive public spaces, repealing of National Trust Act, 1999, and Elderly Abuse during the time COVID-19 Pandemic.
8. The newly constituted Core Group on Health and Mental Health discussed the issues of substance abuse in India and awareness generation regarding HIV/AIDS
9. The Core group of bonded labour discussed the issue of migrant workers during covid-19 pandemic.
10. Regional Workshop on Issues and Challenges of Manual Scavenging and Human Rights
11. Open House Discussion on Patient's Rights and Social Accountability of Private Hospitals
12. Workshop on Transnational Organized Crime



## **Research Activities**

A total of 360 proposals were received in financial year 2020-21 by the Commission out of which 7 research projects have been sanctioned as of yet. Over the and above the projects that were sanctioned last year, there are total of 22 ongoing research projects.

1. Pedophilia, child pornography and cyber safety of children.
2. Issues faced by LGBTI at workplace.
3. Eradication of illegal practices in mental health.
4. People outside food security program – Issues and challenges.
5. Stressors and stress of caregivers of elderly and persons with disability.
6. Causes of reduction of women participation in the labour force.
7. Rights of education of children of migrant workers.

## **Other Major activities by the Research Division**

Apart from the above the Research Division also contributed towards following activities:-

1. Submission of mid-term report on status of the implementation by Government of India on the recommendations of 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle of the Universal Periodic review of Human Rights situation in the country.
2. Review meeting of Task force on National Action Plan on Human Rights
3. Pilot project for providing legal aid to Prisoners.

Publication of NHRC English Journal 2020 released on the occasion of Human Rights Day, i.e., 10 December

## **International Initiatives and Engagements**

Despite COVID-19 and its restrictions, being an active member of Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) & founding member of Asia Pacific Forum (APF), the Commission continue to fulfill its international obligations and contribute in all its capacities.

## **Major Engagements**

- In the year 2020-21 NHRC India has participated over **28 international webinars, consultations, training programs & interviews** on various issues pertaining to Human Rights. Some of them includes:
  1. Virtual Meeting of GANHRI Working Group on Business & Human Rights
  2. Online short course Understanding NHRIs and the Paris Principles by Asia Pacific Forum
  3. Participation in a APF needs assessment regarding environmental rights
  4. Delta 8.7 Country Policy Research Workshop for India
  5. Meeting on person with disability and COVID-19 by CRPD
  6. 11<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing

7. UNDP Business and Human Rights Programme-Project Partner Meeting
8. Samarkand Human Rights Forum
9. GANHRI Working Group on BHR on NHRI's role in implementing the UNGO+10
10. NHRI outreach – HRC 3<sup>rd</sup>Intersessional meeting on Human Rights and the2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

- **25<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of Asia Pacific Forum**

The Commission has participated in the 25<sup>th</sup>Annual General Meeting of Asia Pacific Forum held in September 2020 virtually. In the meeting various agenda items such as promoting gender equality amongst NHRIs, Gender Activities of NHRIs, Capacity Building, APF performance Report, Audited Budget etc were discussed. The Commission has also secured the position of Member in the election of Governance Committee of APF.

- **Annual Meeting of GANHRI 2020**

This year due to COVID-19 the Annual Meeting of GANHRI took place virtually from 30 November-5<sup>th</sup> December. The Commission has participated & made its presence felt through its interjections & inputs in the session of Knowledge exchange of good practices: Implementation of NHRI mandate and functions in the COVID-19 context and the GANHRI Annual Conference on Climate Change: The role of National Human Rights Institutions. Meeting was virtually attended by Shri P. C. Pant, Hon'ble Member of NHRC and other senior officers of the Commission.

- **Statement to 46<sup>th</sup> Session of Human Rights Council**

NHRC, India has delivered a pre-recorded video statement to the 46th session of Human Rights Council that took place from February 22 to March 23. The statement was delivered by Hon'ble Member Justice P.C. Pant under the agenda item of “Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights” including right to development.

- **CFNHRI Annual Meeting**

The commonwealth Forum on National Human Rights institution (CFNHRI) Annual Meeting was virtually attended by Shri P. C. Pant, Hon'ble Member of NHRC and other senior officers of the Commission. In the meeting general discussion on permanent secretariat of CFNHRI, update on Biennial Meeting of Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting etc. took place. CFNHRI also presented a Disability Rights Report in the Meeting.

- **Other Engagements**

Apart from this, the Commission has contributed with its inputs on variety of issues such as Disability, Rights of Women & Children, Sustainable Development Goals & Business and Human Right. In the year 2020-2021 has contributed over 20 responses on various surveys questionnaires & reports of different UN bodies.

## **Training Division Initiatives**

NHRC has the mandate to protect and promote human rights. Section 12 (h) also envisages that NHRC shall spread human rights literacy among various sections of society and promote awareness of the safeguards available for the protection of these rights through Training Programmes.

- **Flagship Online Short Term Internship Programme**

In the year 2020-21 the Short Term Internship program was designed with complete online application mode to obviate the Covid-19 Pandemic Situation from July 2020 onwards. Distinguished speakers invited for these internships were - Secretaries to GOI, Prison Officials, DG/ADG of CAPF, Officers of UNDP, APF, GANHRI, Director LBSNAA, Professors of premier National Institutes, CIC, CEC etc., Special Rapporteurs, Special Monitors, Human Rights Defenders, Subject experts, Core group members of NHRC Core groups., Social activists, Academicians etc. The financial assistance was provided in terms of stipend and best rewards to the student interns for various categories viz. Group Research Project and Book Review, declamation contest respectively.

- **Gender Sensitization Programme**

The Training division of NHRC also conducted successfully the programmes on Gender Sensitization through Virtual platform in-house officials. The subsequent Training sessions also held in later months followed by the Special Gender Sensitization Programme for Cleaning Staff and Other employees TO enhance the sensitivity across sections of the Commission for the Quarter ending March 2021.

- **Financial Assistance to Institutions and Organizations**

1. In total 16 proposals, viz. 13 offline and 3 online Intimation letters issued to obtain details for crediting the advance instalment amount, obtaining the sanction of release of 50% advance instalment and getting the said collaborative Training Programmes conducted during this financial year.
2. The Training Programme also extended for RPF Probationers of Jagjivan Ram Railway Protection Force Academy, Lucknow conducted successfully.

- **Other Activities**

### **The Massive online Open Course (MOOC) developed by National Law School of India University, Bangalore for NHRC**

As a 4 credit course for under-graduate Law students was uploaded on SWAYAM Portal and course is now running for the willing candidates.

### **The Moot Court Competition**

During the year 2020-21 the Moot Court Competition was successfully organised in collaboration with Dr. Ambedkar Govt. Law College, Puducherry providing financial assistance.

## **IT Division Initiatives**

- **Paperless Initiatives**

HRCNet team of NHRC has made changes in the software by making all the process online and creating e-files of the complaints and cases. Every process such as scrutiny, case registration, draft proceeding, approval/updation/rejection of the proceedings, sending of the communication to the authorities through email with relevant attachment are done online now.

- **Video-Conferencing and Webinars:**

Computer Cell extended technical support **250+ online sessions/ programs/meetings/VCS**

- **e-HRMS**

1. Implementation of e-HRMS software has been started in the Commission.
2. Data Entry from Service Books and Personal Files in progress.

- **Other Initiatives**

1. Most of the State Human Rights Commissions on-boarded the NHRC's HRCNet portal to cut short on the duplication of complaints and online tracking thereof;
2. The Commission also made functional a state of art conference hall in its premises.

## **Media, Communication and Publication Division Interface**

In the year 2020-21, 84 Press releases, 12 monthly newsletters, 627 tweets were done by the media team covering various activities & engagements of the Commission including getting official status to the NHRC Twitter handle.

### **Collaboration with institutions**

- **Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan, NYKS**

Total of 07 webinars held for the senior functionaries at HQ in New Delhi and regional level in August, November, 2020 and January-2021 respectively.

- **National Service Scheme, NSS**

Total of 11 webinars for the senior functionaries at HQ in New Delhi and regional level in August-2020, January, February and March-2021 respectively. The module of human rights awareness training was further replicated by different regional centers.

- **Indian Red Cross Society, IRCS**

Collaboration was done with Red Cross functionaries to orient and request them organize human rights awareness workshops for and through their wide networks of youth volunteers in August-2020.

- **Sixth NHRC Short Films on human rights Competition-2020**

Record 93 entries received; Five awarded cash prizes and 3 Certificates of Special Mention; award winning films uploaded on NHRC website on YouTube link support.

### **Publication**

- In the year 2020-21, the NHRC Journal carrying the articles by eminent person on human rights issues added to about 100 existing prized and non-prized publications on various human rights issues.
- 21 new booklet publication on various Human Rights issues were added.
- Updation of old publications of the Commission & new publications on newer areas Human Rights such as seafarers, Business & Human Rights etc.
- Publication of NHRC Journal 2020
- Release of NHRC Publication “The UNCRC and Indian Legislations, Judgments and Schemes.

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