

**KANUPUR
DAM
PROJECT**

2-month extension sought from NCST to complete rehab process



POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, March 10: The Kanupur Dam Project authorities in Keonjhar have requested the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) to grant an additional two months to complete the rehabilitation process of displaced people and submit a detailed report in that connection.

The request was made in a letter (numbered 88), dispatched Feb 24, 2025.

The move comes in response to a petition filed with the NCST by advocate and human rights activist Radhakanta Tripathy regarding the displacement and subsequent rehabilitation of those affected by the project on the Baitarani River. The earlier report submitted in response to this petition was found to be

lacking in clarity and completeness, sources said.

Following a thorough inquiry and verification of official records - as well as an assessment of submerged villages - a detailed action-taken report related to a petition filed in the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has already been submitted to the Keonjhar Collector.

The dam authorities noted that housing assistance under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) scheme could not be provided, as there is no provision for allocating rural housing to displaced families who have received full rehabilitation and resettlement (R&R) package.

Additionally, 300 displaced families have petitioned for agricultural land as per pol-

icy provisions. However, due to a shortage of government land, the state is unable to provide the stipulated land—five acres of non-irrigated land for Scheduled Tribe displaced families, and four acres for non-Scheduled Tribe displaced families.

Sources said, the requests of these 300 families have not been fully addressed. Authorities have issued notices in R&R colonies and nearby villages inviting applications for those who may have been left out. Once the enumeration of such cases is finalised, the necessary R&R assistance will be provided.

On November 25, 2021, Tripathy filed 2,621 petitions with the NHRC seeking relief for displaced and homeless people in Keonjhar and Koraput dis-

tricts. Of these, more than 400 cases pertained to Keonjhar. In response, the NHRC Jan 31, 2022 issued notices, directing the Chief Secretary of Odisha to investigate and submit an action-taken report within six weeks.

Sources said that the state authorities responded saying rehabilitation efforts were proceeding in accordance with the law, and the left-out cases were being addressed. They maintained that displaced individuals were being properly resettled.

The compliance with NHRC directives has been ongoing since March 28, 2022. Seven IAS officers, including then-Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mohapatra and then-Keonjhar Collector Ashish Thakre, appeared before the NHRC via video conference.

Earlier, in response to a 2015 petition filed by Tripathy, the NHRC conducted an investigation through its Special Rapporteur July 15, 2018. The case was closed following assurances from the state that NHRC recommendations would be implemented.

However, as compliance was not fulfilled, the NHRC issued another notice to the Chief Secretary Sept. 25, 2021, citing forceful displacement of poor Scheduled Tribe villagers without proper rehabilitation.

राष्ट्रीय मानवाधिकार आयोग में जाएंगे राज्य के पदाधिकारी

राज्य ब्यूरो, जागरण • पटना : राष्ट्रीय मानवाधिकार आयोग में अब राज्य सरकार के पदाधिकारी भी काम कर सकेंगे। इसके लिए आयोग ने राज्य सरकार के विभिन्न विभागों में कार्यरत सक्षम पदाधिकारियों से आवेदन आमंत्रित किए हैं। इस संबंध में राष्ट्रीय मानवाधिकार आयोग की ओर से पत्र प्राप्त होने के बाद विभिन्न विभागों से इच्छुक अधिकारियों के आवेदन मांगे हैं। राष्ट्रीय मानवाधिकार आयोग के उप सचिव संजय कुमार की ओर से सभी मंत्रालयों, विभागों को आयोग के रिक्त पदों को भरने के संबंध में पत्र भेजा था। जिसके बाद मुख्य सचिव के निर्देश पर सभी अपर मुख्य सचिव, प्रधान सचिव और सचिवों के साथ पुलिस महानिदेशक, सभी आयुक्तों को एक पत्र जारी किया गया है।

राष्ट्रीय मानवाधिकार में काम कर सकेंगे

पटना। राष्ट्रीय मानवाधिकार आयोग में अब राज्य सरकार के पदाधिकारी भी काम कर सकेंगे। आयोग ने राज्य सरकार के विभिन्न विभागों में कार्यरत सक्षम पदाधिकारियों से आवेदन आमंत्रित किए हैं। राष्ट्रीय मानवाधिकार आयोग की ओर से पत्र प्राप्त होने के बाद राज्य सरकार ने विभिन्न विभागों से इच्छुक अधिकारियों के आवेदन मांगे हैं।

उपसचिव संजय कुमार की ओर से सभी मंत्रालयों, विभागों को आयोग के रिक्त पदों को भरने के संबंध में पत्र भेजा था। बिहार को भी इस आशय का पत्र मिला है। इसके बाद मुख्य सचिव अमृत लाल मीणा के निर्देश पर सभी को एक पत्र जारी किया गया है।

Eurasia Review

The Erosion Of Judicial Independence: Is India's Judiciary An Extension Of Hindutva? – OpEd

<https://www.eurasiareview.com/11032025-the-erosion-of-judicial-independence-is-indias-judiciary-an-extension-of-hindutva-oped/>

March 11, 2025 | By Debashis Chakrabarti

Once the last bastion against executive overreach, India's judiciary today stands accused of capitulating to the ideological project of Hindutva—an ethno-nationalist vision that seeks to establish India as a Hindu-first nation.

The creeping erosion of judicial independence is not merely a matter of conjecture; it is evident in the actions, statements, and post-retirement sinecures of those who once wielded the gavel. With an increasing number of verdicts and judicial appointments aligning seamlessly with the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) ideological imperatives, one must ask: Has the judiciary become an extension of Hindutva?

Judicial Praise as Political Currency

The subservience of sections of the Indian judiciary to the executive has been exposed in recent years through a series of statements and verdicts that show an unmistakable pattern. Justice M.R. Shah, then Chief Justice of the Patna High Court, called Prime Minister Narendra Modi a “model and a hero” in 2018, only to be elevated to the Supreme Court months later. In 2021, during the Gujarat High Court's Golden Jubilee celebrations, Justice Shah doubled down, effusively praising Modi as “our most popular, loved, vibrant and visionary leader.” The pattern of judicial adulation extends beyond Shah. Former Supreme Court Justice Arun Kumar Mishra went as far as to call Modi a “versatile genius who thinks globally and acts locally.” This thinly veiled obsequiousness raises a fundamental question: When judges turn into cheerleaders for the executive, how can they be trusted as impartial arbiters of the law?

Post-retirement rewards have only deepened suspicions of judicial compromise. Justice Arun Mishra was appointed Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) soon after retirement, despite protests from rights groups who cited his questionable judicial record. His tenure at the NHRC has been marked by a reluctance to hold the government accountable for human rights violations, reinforcing fears that his appointment was not a coincidence but a reward for loyalty.

The Judiciary's Complicity in Institutionalizing Hindutva

It is not just statements but legal rulings that reveal a judiciary bending to Hindutva's ideological demands. Consider the controversial appointment of former Chief Justice of India P. Sathasivam as the Governor of Kerala—an appointment widely perceived as political compensation for quashing an FIR against BJP leader Amit Shah in the Sohrabuddin Sheikh murder case. Sathasivam had also commuted the death sentence

of Dara Singh, a Bajrang Dal militant who burned Australian missionary Graham Staines and his two sons alive, to life imprisonment, citing that his intent was merely to “teach a lesson.” Such judicial decisions are not mere anomalies; they fit into a broader pattern of rulings that have helped sanitize the violent pasts of Hindutva foot soldiers while reinforcing the BJP’s narrative of victimhood.

The judiciary’s handling of Modi’s alleged complicity in the 2002 Gujarat pogrom is another case in point. In 2012, the Supreme Court-appointed Special Investigation Team (SIT) granted Modi a clean chit, ignoring the fact that amicus curiae Raju Ramachandran had found sufficient grounds to prosecute him under multiple sections of the Indian Penal Code. This judicial absolution proved crucial in Modi’s reinvention from a Hindutva hardliner to a globally palatable leader, smoothing his path to the Prime Minister’s office.

Exonerations, Delays, and Double Standards

Judicial double standards have become glaringly obvious in politically charged cases. When BJP leaders or their affiliates are accused of wrongdoing, verdicts miraculously swing in their favor. Consider the case of Maya Kodnani, a former Gujarat minister convicted of orchestrating the murder of 97 Muslims during the 2002 riots. Her conviction was overturned in 2018, while fellow accused Babu Bajrangi also saw a reduction in sentence. When it comes to crimes against Muslims, the judiciary’s sluggishness in delivering justice is telling. The 1987 Hashimpura massacre, where police murdered 42 Muslims, took 31 years for convictions to be handed down. The 1987 Maliyana massacre, where 72 Muslims were killed, remains unresolved, with over 900 adjournments spanning three decades.

In stark contrast, cases that threaten the BJP’s interests are dismissed with alarming speed. In 2019, the Supreme Court upheld the Modi government’s controversial Rafale fighter jet deal, despite glaring irregularities and evidence of kickbacks uncovered in France. In 2022, the Pegasus spyware case, which implicated the Indian government in snooping on journalists and opposition leaders, was buried under the pretext of “national security.” The judiciary’s reluctance to scrutinize the executive’s overreach raises a disturbing possibility: has it willingly surrendered its independence?

The Ayodhya Verdict: A Watershed Moment

Perhaps the most consequential instance of the judiciary aligning with Hindutva was the Supreme Court’s 2019 verdict on the Babri Masjid-Ram Janmabhoomi dispute. While acknowledging that the mosque’s demolition by Hindutva mobs in 1992 was illegal, the court nonetheless awarded the disputed land to Hindu petitioners, effectively legitimizing the destruction. This decision sent an unmistakable message: majoritarian impulses could dictate judicial outcomes. It was a resounding victory for the BJP, which had built its political career on the promise of constructing a temple on the disputed site.

Manufacturing Legitimacy for Authoritarianism

A judiciary that should act as the final check against authoritarian overreach now appears to be manufacturing legitimacy for it. The Supreme Court's validation of Modi's 2016 demonetization, despite its catastrophic economic consequences, is a prime example. Rather than questioning the legality of an executive order that wiped out 87% of India's currency overnight, the court waited six years to deliver a verdict that essentially rubber-stamped the move. The judiciary's deference to the government has reached a point where even blatant policy failures are shielded from legal scrutiny.

Judicial Bias and the Persecution of Dissenters

While BJP-affiliated individuals find themselves exonerated, critics of the regime face relentless judicial harassment. Activists, journalists, and intellectuals have been imprisoned under draconian laws like the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and sedition charges, with little to no judicial relief. The arrests of intellectuals like Anand Teltumbde, Sudha Bharadwaj, and Umar Khalid reflect how the judiciary has become a willing accomplice in the state's crackdown on dissent.

The recent move by 55 Rajya Sabha MPs, led by senior advocate and politician Kapil Sibal, to impeach Justice Shekhar Kumar Yadav for his inflammatory anti-Muslim remarks exemplifies the growing discontent with judicial bias. But such initiatives remain largely symbolic in a system where judicial accountability has become an afterthought.

Can the Judiciary Redeem Itself?

For a democracy to function, an independent judiciary is non-negotiable. However, India's judiciary is increasingly being viewed as a mere appendage of the Hindutva state—an institution that serves not as a check on executive excesses but as an enabler of them. The rot runs deep, but reform is not impossible. Ensuring judicial independence requires structural overhauls, starting with a transparent appointment process insulated from executive influence. Stronger post-retirement restrictions must also be put in place to curb the quid pro quo culture that incentivizes judicial sycophancy.

India's judiciary today stands at a crossroads. It can either reclaim its role as the guardian of constitutional democracy or continue its descent into ideological subservience. If the latter path is chosen, history will not judge it kindly.

Construction World

NHRC Concludes 2nd ITEC Program on Human Rights for Global South NHRIs

<https://www.constructionworld.in/policy-updates-and-economic-news/nhrc-concludes-2nd-itec-program-on-human-rights-for-global-south-nhris/70214>

10 Mar 2025 4 Min Read CW Team

The 2nd six-day ITEC Executive Capacity Building Programme on Human Rights for senior functionaries of the National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) of Global South organised by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India in partnership with the Ministry of External Affairs, successfully concluded. The valedictory session was addressed by the NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice V Ramasubramanian in the presence of Members Justice (Dr) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi, Vijaya Bharathi Sayani & Secretary General, Bharat Lal.

The programme, which began on Monday 3rd March, 2025, witnessed participation of 35 senior functionaries from 11 NHRIs of Madagascar, Uganda, Timor Leste, DR Congo, Togo, Mali, Nigeria, Egypt, Tanzania, Burundi and Turkmenistan. The programme included interactive sessions with eminent persons and domain experts, and participants got exposure to various aspects of civic and political rights as well as socio-economic and cultural rights enjoyed by the people of India. During the 6-day programme, speakers included NHRC Chairperson, Members, Secretary General V K Paul, Member, NITI Aayog & Shri Rajeev Kumar, Former Chief Election Commissioner of India, Yugal Kishore Joshi, Mission Director at NITI Aayog & Ambassador Asoke Kumar Mukerji, former PR of India to UN, Chris Garroway, Economist & Development Coordinator, United Nations, Manoj Yadava, former DG(I), Surajit Dey, former Registrar (Law) and Anita Sinha and D K Nim , former Joint Secretaries of the NHRC. The programme was also enriched by the sharing of the experiences by the participating senior functionaries of various NHRIs.

In his closing remarks, the NHRC Chairperson, Justice V Ramasubramanian, expressed his heartfelt gratitude to all attendees. He emphasised that free exchange of knowledge are the foundation of a better world, stating that humanity has the power to create a just and harmonious society on Earth. Citing the Rig Veda, he underscored the importance of welcoming noble thoughts from all directions and reiterated that the ultimate aim of all human endeavors is to enhance the quality of life for all.

He eloquently reflected on the universal essence of humanity, drawing parallels between the unity of mankind and the singularity of gold despite the multitude of jewels it forms. Concluding his address, he reminded all participants that the highest virtue is to be a good human being. Reiterating his remarks in the inaugural session, the NHRC, India Chairperson said that platforms like ITEC provide an opportunity to share and exchange each other's rich cultural diversity and human rights values, to think and find ways on how best to address the ever-emerging human rights challenges.

NHRC, India Member, Justice (Dr) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi, acknowledged the participants' dedication to human rights advocacy and applauded their enthusiasm and commitment to meaningful change. He reaffirmed the NHRC India's commitment to strengthen future collaborations with NHRIs worldwide. Quoting the philosophy of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" (The World is One Family), he emphasised NHRC's vision of fostering global solidarity in protecting and promoting human rights.

NHRC, India Member, Vijaya Bharathi Sayani, expressed gratitude to all participants for their valuable contributions, recognising their engagement and willingness to share insights. She emphasised the Commission's commitment to continuous learning and collaboration and extended warm wishes for International Women's Day, underlining the importance of gender equality and human rights for all.

Before this, NHRC, India Secretary General, Bharat Lal commended all attendees for their active participation. He highlighted the significance of cooperation among the countries of Global South, emphasising their shared values and mutual learning opportunities. He also discussed the signing of potential Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with interested countries to deepen this collaboration. Notably, he offered the NHRC's knowledge and experience in strengthening human rights in their countries including advanced complaint redressal system software, for robust grievance redressal mechanisms and further strengthening human rights enforcement.

News source: PIB

Observer Voice

Global Human Rights Leaders Converge in India

<https://observervoice.com/global-human-rights-leaders-converge-in-india-101783/>

Shalini Singh | March 10, 2025 | Last Updated: March 10, 2025

0 2 minutes read

The second six-day ITEC Executive Capacity Building Programme on Human Rights, organized by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) of India in collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs, concluded successfully today. The event brought together 35 senior officials from 11 National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) across the Global South, focusing on enhancing their understanding of human rights issues. The valedictory session featured NHRC Chairperson Justice V. Ramasubramanian, who emphasized the importance of knowledge exchange in fostering a just society.

Engaging Sessions and Diverse Participation

Beginning on March 3, 2025, the programme attracted senior officials from NHRIs in Madagascar, Uganda, Timor Leste, DR Congo, Togo, Mali, Nigeria, Egypt, Tanzania, Burundi, and Turkmenistan. Participants engaged in interactive sessions led by prominent speakers, including NHRC Chairperson Justice V. Ramasubramanian, NITI Aayog member Shri V. K. Paul, and former Chief Election Commissioner of India Shri Rajeev Kumar. The sessions covered a wide range of topics, including civic and political rights, as well as socio-economic and cultural rights in India. The diverse backgrounds of the participants enriched discussions, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of human rights challenges faced globally.

Closing Remarks Highlighting Unity and Progress

In his closing address, Justice V. Ramasubramanian expressed gratitude to all attendees, stressing that the free exchange of knowledge is vital for creating a harmonious society. He referenced the Rig Veda, underscoring the importance of welcoming diverse thoughts. He concluded by reminding participants that the ultimate goal of human endeavors is to improve the quality of life for everyone. His reflections on humanity's unity resonated with the audience, reinforcing the idea that despite differences, the essence of humanity remains singular.

Commitment to Future Collaborations

NHRC Member Justice (Dr.) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi praised the participants for their dedication to human rights advocacy and their commitment to effecting meaningful change. He reiterated NHRC India's commitment to strengthening collaborations with NHRIs worldwide, emphasizing the philosophy of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" (The World is One Family) as a guiding principle for global solidarity in human rights protection.

Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani, another NHRC Member, acknowledged the valuable contributions of participants and highlighted the importance of gender equality and human rights for all.

NHRC Secretary General Shri Bharat Lal commended the active participation of attendees and discussed the potential for signing Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with interested countries to enhance cooperation. He also offered NHRC's expertise in developing robust grievance redressal mechanisms to strengthen human rights enforcement in their respective nations.

Cultural Exposure and Knowledge Exchange

Participants had the opportunity to explore India's rich cultural heritage through visits to iconic sites such as the Pradhan Mantri Museum, Humayun's Tomb, and the Taj Mahal. This exposure complemented the programme's focus on human rights, allowing attendees to appreciate the cultural context of the rights they advocate for. NHRC Director Lt. Col. Virender Singh and co-course coordinator Shri Vikram Harimohan Meena emphasized the importance of active engagement and the invaluable exchange of knowledge throughout the programme, highlighting the critical role of law enforcement in protecting human rights.