

Police accused of detaining Kuravar minors, torturing parents in custody

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THE Perambalur district police have been accused of illegally detaining two minor children, belonging to Kuravar community, and subjecting their parents to custodial torture for more than 48 hours in a suspected theft case involving the male members of the family.

The relatives of the family claimed that an eight-year-old boy, eight-month-old baby, their mother V Chellammal (25), father P Vijayakanth (33), and his brother Dhanush (20) were picked up near Keelavasal in Thanjavur on Monday evening by the Padalur police of Perambalur district "without any warrant or intimation". Rejecting the complaint of illegal detention, the Perambalur police, however, said that Vijayakanth, Dhanush, and another person identified as V Suresh (33) were arrested by them on Wednesday in connection with five burglary cases in and around Perambalur.

Speaking to *TNIE*, Perambalur SP Adarsh Pachera said, "They are habitual offenders. Whenever they are arrested, they make such allegations. The children were not held in custody. The existing case records support police's action." The three accused are now lodged in Perambalur sub-jail, sources said.

The relatives of the victims said that after the arrest on Monday (June 23), they called



Chellammal is currently staying with her children at a relative's house | EXPRESS

emergency helplines and had also sent a formal complaint to the CM's Cell on Tuesday. They also attempted to file a missing person complaint with the Valam police in Thanjavur, but were turned away. According to an affidavit filed by the victim's family in Thanjavur magistrate court on Wednesday, Chellammal and the children were released from custody by the police on Wednesday. Speaking to *TNIE* on Wednesday, Chellammal said, "They locked me and my children inside a room. It wasn't a police station. It looked like an isolated building. I could hear my husband being beaten. They kept threatening us to confess. My children were terrified."

She also alleged that she was subjected to verbal abuse and pressured to admit to the crimes. She is currently staying with her children at a relative's house in Thanjavur. According to the affidavit filed by Chellammal's relative M Rasathi in the

Thanjavur court, the men were blindfolded, tied, and assaulted in custody, while the woman and children were hidden unlawfully. The court, however, rejected the plea for protection and action against police citing jurisdictional issues.

According to a release issued by the Perambalur police late on Wednesday, Vijayakanth, Dhanush, and Suresh were arrested in connection with five burglary cases in and around Perambalur. "A special police team traced the suspects to Thanjavur and recovered the stolen jewellery," the police release said. The release, however, did not have any information about the exact quantum of recovery, detention date, or about 'suspect' Chellammal.

K Jayasudha, executive director of Witness for Justice, said the organisation filed complaints with Thanjavur and Pudukkottai police, child protection officials, SC/ST commissions, and the NHRC on Tuesday. "Detaining children without following proper legal protocols is a grave violation," she said.

Advocate S Vinoth Kumar, also associated with Witness for Justice, added, "Even if the children weren't accused, they must be presented before a Child Welfare Committee. Holding them in an undisclosed location without informing guardians or child welfare authorities is not just a lapse; it's a fundamental breach of the child's right to safety and dignity."



NHRC issues notices to UP govt over death of 3 prisoners in Varanasi



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

LUCKNOW, 26 JUNE

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has issued a notice to the Uttar Pradesh government over the reported death of three prisoners in two days in the jails of Varanasi.

The Commission has taken suo motu cognisance of the incident and has issued notices to the State Director General, Prisons, and the Varanasi Police Commissioner calling for a detailed report on the matter within two weeks time, an official press release of the

Commission said on Thursday.

The report is expected to include the inquest and post-mortem examination reports, along with initial health screening reports of all three prisoners, as well as the magisterial inquiry reports.

According to a media report, three prisoners died in custody in Varanasi, one after the other on 15 and 16 June. Reportedly, a male doctor and a female prisoner lodged in the District Jail died due to illness, whereas another lodged in the Central Jail of Varanasi died due to heart attack.



NHRC seeks report from Odisha on public humiliation of migrants from Bengal

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

BHUBANESWAR, 26 JUNE

The National Human Rights Commission has sought an action taken report from Odisha police on the alleged harassment – stripping and parading of migrant workers from West Bengal in Sundargarh district.

Acting on a petition filed by rights activist and lawyer Akhand, the NHRC asked the Odisha police to ensure the needful action and submit the action taken report within four weeks.

Though the incident took place over allegations of misconduct towards a woman on 11 December last year, police kept mum by not arresting the miscreants, the petitioner alleged.

The actions of the mob constitute a blatant violation of Fundamental Rights, International Human Rights norms, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and legal provision under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), it said.

The petition also sought for adequate compensation to the victims for the mental agony, physical harm, and violation of their dignity.

Hindustan

उम्र बढ़ने के साथ महिलाएं करती हैं अधिक कामकाज

<https://www.livehindustan.com/ncr/new-delhi/story-nhrc-report-highlights-women-s-workforce-participation-in-india-201750952134004.amp.html>

एनएचआरसी की एक रिपोर्ट में बताया गया है कि उम्र बढ़ने के साथ महिलाएं अधिक कामकाजी होती जा रही हैं। यह अध्ययन बिहार, मध्य प्रदेश और तेलंगाना में किया गया। रिपोर्ट के अनुसार, बिहार में 55 साल से ऊपर की...

एनएचआरसी ने श्रम बल में महिलाओं की भागीदारी को लेकर रिपोर्ट जारी की प्रभात कुमार नई दिल्ली। उम्र बढ़ने के साथ महिलाएं ज्यादा जिम्मेदार होती जाती हैं। वह घर परिवार के साथ संभालने के लिए कामकाजी होती जाती हैं। इसका खुलासा, राष्ट्रीय मानवाधिकार आयोग (एनएचआरसी) द्वारा श्रम बल में महिलाओं की भागीदारी को लेकर जारी रिपोर्ट में किया गया। राष्ट्रीय मानवाधिकार आयोग (एनएचआरसी) और बिट्स पिलानी (हैदराबाद) द्वारा संयुक्त रूप से अध्ययन में सरकारी आंकड़ों के साथ-साथ देश के उत्तर-पूर्वी राज्य बिहार, मध्य प्रदेश और तेलंगाना में फील्ड सर्वे किया गया था। इस रिपोर्ट के आंकड़े बताते हैं कि तीनों ही राज्यों में अधिक उम्र की महिलाएं, अन्य आयु समूह की तुलना में सबसे अधिक कामकाजी हैं।

हालांकि बिहार में 55 साल से अधिक उम्र की महिलाएं सबसे अधिक कामकाजी होती हैं।

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Janta se Rishta

अंतरजातीय विवाह पर सिर मुंडवाने की घटना पर NHRC ने लिया स्वतः संज्ञान

<https://jantaserishta.com/local/odisha/nhrc-took-suo-motu-cognizance-of-the-incident-of-shaving-of-head-on-inter-caste-marriage-4107965>

Rayagada रायगढ़: राष्ट्रीय मानवाधिकार आयोग (एनएचआरसी) ने मीडिया में आई एक रिपोर्ट का स्वतः संज्ञान लिया है, जिसमें बताया गया है कि ओडिशा में अनुसूचित जाति के व्यक्ति से विवाह करने के बाद अनुसूचित जनजाति की एक महिला के परिवार का ग्रामीणों द्वारा सामाजिक बहिष्कार किया गया। रिपोर्ट के अनुसार, ग्रामीणों ने मांग की कि अगर महिला का परिवार समुदाय में वापस स्वीकार किया जाना चाहता है तो उसे शुद्धिकरण की रस्म अदा करनी होगी और अगर उन्होंने रस्म अदा करने से इनकार किया तो अनिश्चितकालीन बहिष्कार की धमकी दी गई। महिला के परिवार के सदस्यों ने ग्रामीणों के आदेश के आगे घुटने टेक दिए और रस्म के तहत उसके परिवार के 40 सदस्यों के सिर मुंडवा दिए गए।

यह घटना रायगढ़ जिले के काशीपुर ब्लॉक के बैगनगुडा गांव की है। इस खबर पर संज्ञान लेते हुए शीर्ष मानवाधिकार निकाय ने कहा कि अगर प्रेस रिपोर्ट की सामग्री सच है, तो यह पीड़ितों के मानवाधिकारों का गंभीर उल्लंघन है। सिर मुंडवाकर खेत में बैठे परिवार के सदस्यों का वीडियो सोशल मीडिया पर वायरल होने के बाद स्थानीय प्रशासन ने मामले की विस्तृत जांच के आदेश दिए हैं। घटना की जांच के लिए ब्लॉक स्तर के एक अधिकारी को गांव भेजा गया। एनएचआरसी ने ओडिशा के मुख्य सचिव को नोटिस जारी कर दो सप्ताह के भीतर मामले पर विस्तृत रिपोर्ट मांगी है।

मानवाधिकार संरक्षण अधिनियम, 1993 के तहत स्थापित, एनएचआरसी, एक स्वायत्त वैधानिक निकाय है, जो मानवाधिकारों के प्रचार और संरक्षण के लिए भारत की चिंता का प्रतीक है। इसकी प्राथमिक भूमिका मानवाधिकारों की रक्षा और प्रचार करना है, जिसे संविधान द्वारा गारंटीकृत या अंतर्राष्ट्रीय वाचाओं में सन्निहित व्यक्तियों के जीवन, स्वतंत्रता, समानता और सम्मान से संबंधित अधिकारों के रूप में परिभाषित किया गया है और भारत में अदालतों द्वारा लागू किया जा सकता है। सर्वोच्च मानवाधिकार निकाय के पास मानवाधिकार उल्लंघन की औपचारिक शिकायत प्राप्त किए बिना, मीडिया रिपोर्टों, सार्वजनिक ज्ञान या अन्य स्रोतों के आधार पर स्वप्रेरणा से (अपनी गति से) कार्रवाई करने की शक्ति है।

Janta se Rishta

NHRC ने कुलगाम के 3 लोगों के लापता होने और मौत का संज्ञान लिया

<https://jantaserishta.com/local/jammu-and-kashmir/nhrc-takes-cognizance-of-disappearance-and-death-of-3-people-from-kulgam-4107524>

Srinagar श्रीनगर, राष्ट्रीय मानवाधिकार आयोग (एनएचआरसी) ने दक्षिण कश्मीर के कुलगाम जिले में गुज्जर-बकरवाल अनुसूचित जनजाति के तीन लोगों के रहस्यमय ढंग से लापता होने और उसके बाद हुई मौतों के बारे में शिकायत दर्ज कराई है। इस मामले में “उदासीनता और सत्ता के दुरुपयोग” के गंभीर आरोप लगाए गए हैं, जिसकी पैरवी अधिवक्ता अकीब वानी और यावर रमजान कर रहे हैं। आयोग को मिली शिकायत के अनुसार, जिसकी एक प्रति ग्रेटर कश्मीर के पास है, तीन लोग - मोहम्मद शौकत, रियाज अहमद बजाद और मुख्तार अहमद - 13 फरवरी, 2025 को एक पारिवारिक समारोह में शामिल होने के लिए अश्मुजी गांव में अपने घरों से निकले थे। तीनों कथित तौर पर कार्यक्रम में जाते समय गायब हो गए, और कुछ ही देर बाद उनके मोबाइल फोन बंद पाए गए।

उन्हें खोजने के लिए बेताब परिवार के सदस्यों ने काफी खोजबीन की और दोस्तों और रिश्तेदारों से संपर्क किया, लेकिन उनका कोई सुराग नहीं मिला। परिवारों का आरोप है कि कुलगाम में स्थानीय पुलिस से मदद के लिए बार-बार संपर्क करने के बावजूद, अधिकारियों ने तब तक कोई सार्थक कार्रवाई नहीं की, जब तक कि मामले ने सोशल और प्रिंट मीडिया पर व्यापक ध्यान आकर्षित नहीं किया। दुखद बात यह है कि बाद में तीन में से दो लोग पास के नाले में मृत पाए गए। जब परिवारों ने तीसरे लापता व्यक्ति मुख्तार अहमद के बारे में जवाब मांगा, तो शिकायत में आरोप लगाया गया कि अधिकारियों ने सहायता के बजाय आक्रामकता से जवाब दिया। इस टकराव, दो प्रियजनों को खोने की पीड़ा और तीसरे के बारे में अनिश्चितता के साथ, स्थानीय आक्रोश को भड़का दिया।

विरोध में, निवासियों ने काजीगुंड के पास जम्मू-श्रीनगर राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग पर शांतिपूर्ण धरना दिया, मृतकों के शवों को अपने साथ लाया। स्थिति तब और बिगड़ गई जब एक पुलिस उपाधीक्षक (DySP) ने कथित तौर पर लापता पुरुषों से संबंधित एक बुजुर्ग महिला को लात मारी। वीडियो में कैद इस परेशान करने वाली घटना की पूरे जम्मू-कश्मीर में व्यापक निंदा हुई और यहां तक कि इसे जम्मू-कश्मीर विधानसभा में भी उठाया गया। एनएचआरसी को दी गई शिकायत ने मामले को कानून प्रवर्तन द्वारा 'शक्ति के दुरुपयोग' के रूप में वर्गीकृत किया। अभी तक तीसरे व्यक्ति मुख्तार अहमद का पता नहीं चल पाया है। एनएचआरसी वर्तमान में शिकायत की जांच कर रहा है, जो जवाबदेही, हाशिए पर पड़े समुदायों के साथ व्यवहार और क्षेत्र में कानून प्रवर्तन की भूमिका के बारे में परेशान करने वाले सवाल उठाती है।

Jharkhand State News

NHRC issued notice to CS seeking report on 'purification ritual' of a ST woman for marrying SC man in Odisha

<https://jharkhandstatenews.com/article/top-stories/9725/nhrc-issued-notice-to-cs-seeking-report-on-purification-ritual-of-a-st-woman-for-marrying-sc-man-in-odisha>

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India, has taken suo motu cognisance of a media report that the family of a woman from a Scheduled Tribe community was subjected to a social boycott by the villagers after her marriage to a man belonging to a Scheduled Caste in Rayagada district of Odisha.

Reportedly, the villagers demanded a purification ritual if the family of the woman wanted to be accepted back into the community. They were threatened with an indefinite boycott in case they refused to comply with the ritual.

The Commission has observed that the contents of the news report, if true, raise serious issues of violation of the human rights of the victims. Therefore, it has issued a notice to the Chief Secretary, Government of Odisha, calling for a detailed report on the matter within two weeks.

According to the media report, carried on 21st June, 2025, the members of the family of the woman reportedly succumbed to the diktat of the villagers, and as a part of the ritual, the heads of 40 members of her family were tonsured.

Kashmir Life

Public Parade of Theft Accused in Jammu Sparks National Outcry, NHRC Complaint Filed

<https://kashmirlife.net/public-parade-of-theft-accused-in-jammu-sparks-national-outcry-nhrc-complaint-filed-395141/>

SRINAGAR: A public parade of a theft accused in Jammu, where he was allegedly garlanded with slippers and made to sit shirtless on a moving police vehicle, has triggered sharp condemnation across the country. Eleven lawyers, including advocates from the Supreme Court and High Courts of Delhi, Patna, and Jammu and Kashmir, have filed a formal complaint with the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), calling the incident a “gross violation of human dignity and constitutional safeguards.”

The complaint, led by Nikhil Padha, an advocate at the Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh High Court and founder of the group Human Rights and Harmony, points to at least two recent episodes of alleged police misconduct — one in Gangyal on June 11, and the second in Bakshi Nagar on June 24.

The most recent case involves a 24-year-old man, reportedly from Kashmir, who was arrested on theft charges from the premises of a government hospital in Jammu. He was allegedly garlanded with shoes, stripped shirtless, tied up, and paraded on the bonnet of a police vehicle. Videos of the incident went viral on social media, drawing outrage and prompting comparisons with previous custodial abuse cases.

The group of signatories in the NHRC petition includes Supreme Court lawyers Sonal Gupta and Reetik Jasrotia, Delhi High Court advocates Namita Chhabra and Padamja Sharma, Patna High Court advocate Rameez Rena, and several others from the Jammu and Kashmir High Court. Their joint complaint to NHRC Chairperson Justice V Ramasubramanian said:

“These actions, widely circulated through media and social platforms, constitute a gross violation of human rights, the right to dignity, and established jurisprudence on custodial rights under Indian law.”

The complaint further alleges that instead of following lawful procedures, police are turning to public humiliation as a form of “performative punishment,” undermining the foundational principles of justice and constitutional order.

Meanwhile, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, chairman of the Hurriyat Conference and the Valley’s chief cleric, also issued a strongly-worded statement. “Is this how Kashmiris will be treated in their own land? Stripped of human dignity! Paraded and shamed!” he wrote on social platform X, accusing the police of targeting individuals based on their region and religion. He compared the incident to the 2017 Budgam case where a Kashmiri

civilian was tied to an army jeep by Major Gogoi and paraded through villages. “It’s a shame on the system and mindset,” the Mirwaiz said, demanding action against the perpetrators.

Responding to the backlash, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Jammu Joginder Singh has ordered a departmental inquiry into the June 24 incident. Police sources say that the officer involved may face suspension pending the outcome of the investigation. The National Human Rights Commission is yet to issue a formal response to the complaint. However, the growing chorus of voices — from human rights advocates to political and religious leaders — suggests that the issue is unlikely to die down soon.

Kashmir Observer

Lawyers Move NHRC Over Public Shaming Of Accused By Jammu Police

<https://kashmirobsvr.net/2025/06/26/lawyers-move-nhrc-over-public-shaming-of-accused-by-jammu-police/>

Jammu- A group of prominent advocates has lodged a complaint with the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) alleging public shaming and unlawful parade of accused persons by the police in Jammu.

The complaint was lodged by 11 lawyers led by Nikhil Padha, an advocate in the Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh High Court and founder of Human Rights and Harmony.

It came a day after a man accused of stealing was paraded on the streets Jammu after being garlanded with shoes.

Supreme Court lawyers Sonal Gupta and Reetik Jasrotia, advocates Namita Chhabra and Padamja Sharma of Delhi High Court, advocate Rameez Rena of Patna High Court, advocates Akarshan Magotra and Abrar Hussain of J-K and Ladakh high Court and lawyers Lavanya Bhatt, Rishika Chaurasia and Jiya Gupta were the other signatories in the complaint, which flagged the public shaming of alleged criminals after their arrest in Gangyal on June 11 and in Bakshi Nagar on June 24.

“We, the advocates enrolled with various courts across India, write to you with grave concern and utmost urgency regarding recent events in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir wherein police personnel engaged in unconstitutional acts of public shaming and parade-like punishments of accused persons.

“These actions, widely circulated through media and social platforms, constitute a gross violation of human rights, the right to dignity, and established jurisprudence on custodial rights under Indian law,” said the complaint addressed to NHRC Chairperson Justice V Ramasubramanian.

The advocates said they have observed with collective anguish, and professional obligation, that law enforcement authorities are bypassing constitutional safeguards and replacing lawful investigation procedures with performative public punishment, leading to irreversible damage to the dignity and fundamental rights of the accused persons.

In a dramatic incident in the heart of Jammu on Tuesday, a suspected thief, linked to a busted gang, was publicly humiliated with a garland of shoes and made to sit on the bonnet of a moving police vehicle, prompting an official inquiry.

A video of the incident, purportedly showing several onlookers cheering the act, surfaced online, sparking a debate among social media users, with many questioning the legality and ethics of the police action, with some even terming it “jungle raj”.

Condemning the incident, Jammu SSP Joginder Singh ordered a department inquiry into the matter.

Singh said the police action was “unprofessional, unbecoming of the members of a disciplined organisation”, and called for stern action.

“To ascertain the actual facts, a preliminary inquiry is hereby ordered and entrusted to the SDPO, City North, Jammu, who will inquire into the matter and submit his findings to this office within a week’s time,” the SSP said in an order.

Ommcom News

NHRC Seeks ATR From Sundargarh SP In Mob Violence Case

<https://ommcomnews.com/odisha-news/nhrc-seeks-atr-from-sundargarh-sp-in-mob-violence-case/>

Bhubaneswar: National Human Rights Commission sought an Action-Taken Report (ATR) from Sundargarh SP in connection with a mob violence and public humiliation case.

The Commission's order came in response to a petition filed by rights activist and High Court advocate Akhanda.

According to petition, the incident occurred on December 12, 2024, where local residents attacked a group of workers, forcibly stripping them, tying their hands, and parading them semi-nude on Mission Road. The mob action reportedly followed a police complaint filed by a local woman alleging one of the workers had attempted to outrage her modesty.

Despite being taken to the police station, the victims saw no action against the perpetrators, with no arrests made in connection with the brutal mob assault.

Advocate Akhand, deeply disturbed by the incident, filed a complaint with the NHRC on December 16, 2024, highlighting serious human rights violations.

Taking note of the complaint, the NHRC has issued formal directions to the Superintendent of Police, Sundargarh to conduct an impartial and time-bound investigation into the matter and submit an ATR.

Statesman

NHRC issues notices to UP govt over death of 3 prisoners in Varanasi

<https://www.thestatesman.com/india/nhrc-issues-notices-to-up-govt-over-death-of-3-prisoners-in-varanasi-1503449877.html>

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has issued a notice to the Uttar Pradesh government over the reported death of three prisoners in two days in the jails of Varanasi.

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has issued a notice to the Uttar Pradesh government over the reported death of three prisoners in two days in the jails of Varanasi.

The Commission has taken suo motu cognizance of the incident and has issued notices to the State Director General, Prisons, and the Varanasi Police Commissioner calling for a detailed report on the matter within two weeks time, an official press release of the Commission said on Thursday.

The report is expected to include the inquest and post-mortem examination reports, along with initial health screening reports of all three prisoners, as well as the magisterial inquiry reports.

According to a media report, three prisoners died in custody in Varanasi, one after the other on June 15 and 16. Reportedly, a male doctor and a female prisoner lodged in the District Jail died due to illness, whereas another lodged in the Central Jail of Varanasi died due to heart attack.

The Commission has observed that the contents of the news report, if true, raise serious issues of violation of human rights. Therefore, it has issued notices to the Director General, Prisons and the Commissioner of Police, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, calling for a detailed report on the matter within two weeks.

Statesman

Stripping of migrant workers from Bengal: NHRC seeks ATR from Odisha police

<https://www.thestatesman.com/india/stripping-of-migrant-workers-from-bengal-nhrc-seeks-atr-from-odisha-police-1503449928.html>

The National Human Rights Commission has asked the Odisha police to submit an action taken report on the alleged stripping and parading of migrant workers from West Bengal, with their hands tied by a group of locals in Sundargarh district.

The National Human Rights Commission has asked the Odisha police to submit an action taken report on the alleged stripping and parading of migrant workers from West Bengal, with their hands tied by a group of locals in Sundargarh district.

The top rights panel acting on a petition filed by rights activist and lawyer Akhand, asked the State police to ensure the needful action and submit the action taken report within four weeks on the alleged public humiliation of migrant workers.

Though the incident took place over allegations of misconduct towards a woman on 11 December last year, police kept mum by not arresting the miscreants despite the sensitive nature of the incident, the petition stated.

The actions of the mob constitute a blatant violation of Fundamental Rights under the Constitution of India, International Human Rights Norms like Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and legal provision under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), it said.

The petition also sought adequate compensation to the victims for the mental agony, physical harm, and violation of their dignity.

It also urged the apex rights panel to Issue directions for the protection and rehabilitation of the victims to ensure their safety and prevent further harassment.

The News Minute

First ever Global Torture Index flags India as 'high risk' country

<https://www.thenewsminute.com/news/first-ever-global-torture-index-flags-india-as-high-risk-country>

The Index flags India, alongside Libya, Honduras, Belarus, Colombia, Turkey, the Philippines, and Tunisia, as high risk countries for systemic torture and reprisals against victims and defenders.

When Delhi University professor GN Saibaba died six months after spending over eight years incarcerated under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), he became one among many haunting symbols of India's crackdown on dissent. From his wheelchair, to his cell in Nagpur, to his eventual death, his life marked the brutal costs of state impunity. A journalist, Siddique Kappan, spent two years in prison for merely travelling to report on a sexual violence in Hathras. These cases are not aberrations, says a new global study released on Wednesday, June 25.

India has been ranked as "high risk" in the Global Torture Index 2025, a first-of-its-kind annual assessment developed by the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) in collaboration with over 200 civil society organisations across five regions. The index evaluates 26 countries on the prevalence of torture and ill-treatment, based on seven thematic pillars and a methodology drawn from international human rights standards.

The India factsheet, based on data from 2023–24 and authored in partnership with Tamil Nadu-based People's Watch, paints a grim picture: torture in India is not just prevalent but systemic, disproportionately affecting Dalits, Adivasis, Muslims, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and migrant workers. In 2024 alone, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) reported 2,739 custodial deaths, a steep rise from the 2,400 cases in 2023, according to the report.

The Index flags India, alongside Libya, Honduras, Belarus, Colombia, Turkey, the Philippines, and Tunisia, as high risk countries for systemic torture and reprisals against victims and defenders.

Among the stark findings are:

Police brutality and institutional violence continue unchecked, with extrajudicial killings and unlawful detentions often rewarded through promotions.

Custodial conditions are dire, with over 1,995 deaths reported in judicial custody in 2022 alone—159 were unnatural deaths.

Over 75% of prisoners are under-trial detainees, and prison overcrowding stands at 131.4%.

UAPA is routinely misused against activists and civilians, enabling arbitrary arrests and prolonged detentions

Political intent is absent

Despite these figures, India lacks any national legislation specifically criminalising torture or CIDTP (Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment), and the country has yet to ratify the United Nations Convention Against Torture (UNCAT) or its Optional Protocol, the report notes.

“Torture, especially by police and security forces, remains widespread and systemic in India,” the factsheet states. “Human rights defenders are routinely subject to arbitrary arrest, preventive detention and torture and ill-treatment, underscoring a culture of institutional violence and impunity.”

The political commitment to combat torture was rated as “considerable risk,” while all other pillars, including freedom from torture in detention, ending impunity, victims’ rights, and civic space, earned a “high risk” score.

The index categorises countries into five risk levels:

very high risk: where systematic torture occurs with virtually no safeguards or accountability;

high risk: marked by widespread torture, serious legal gaps, and weak implementation of protections;

considerable risk: where legal frameworks exist but enforcement is inconsistent and gaps persist;

moderate risk: indicating some progress toward international standards but patchy implementation; and

low risk: where strong legal safeguards and effective prevention mechanisms are in place.

In the 2025 edition covering 26 countries, no country was rated as low risk.

Need for legal reforms

In India, legal regression is also noted with the introduction of new laws replacing the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Criminal Code of Procedure (CrPC) and the Indian Evidence Act — the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and Bharatiya Sakshya Bill (BSB). The report notes that while these laws introduce certain reforms, they also extend police custody durations and continue to require executive sanction to prosecute public officials.

Impunity, the report highlights, remains deeply entrenched in India due to significant legal and institutional shortcomings.

The report also noted that NHRC has faced international censure for lacking independence.

In March 2025, the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) downgraded NHRC from 'A' to 'B' status, citing police presence in investigations and failure to address shrinking civic space and persecution of HRDs.

India's score on transparency was marked "concealed", due to limited public access to data on torture, arrests, or prison deaths.

"Victims' rights remain severely limited," says the report. "With no comprehensive law defining torture victims, most survivors lack redress or rehabilitation."

The report also stated that over 30,000 NGOs have been shut down under Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), 2010, and laws like the IT Rules 2021 continue to throttle civil society.

Despite these trends, the report says that there are some positive developments. In 2020, the Supreme Court ordered deployment of CCTVs in police stations round the clock, a decision still not fully implemented. Project 39A at NLU Delhi has secured crucial legal victories for death row prisoners.

Recommendations

However, the report notes that systemic change is lacking. The Global Torture Index offers a ten-point recommendation to India, starting with ratifying UNCAT, repealing Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) and FCRA, enforcing the Supreme Court judgement, and ensuring that detention conditions comply with the Mandela and Bangkok Rules.

The Mandela and Bangkok Rules are UN standards that set minimum guidelines for the treatment of prisoners. While the Mandela Rules apply to all prisoners, the Bangkok Rules specifically address the needs of women prisoners and offenders.

It also urges the government to stop misuse of UAPA provisions and enact a comprehensive law to protect human rights defenders.

"The misuse of national security laws, poor detention conditions, and lack of access to redress leave a majority of India's torture survivors without justice," concludes the report.

The report also rated India's transparency and access to information as "concealed", underscoring the significant challenges faced by civil society in accessing critical data on torture, custodial deaths, and human rights violations. It noted that "data access must be guaranteed in every society, both in law and in practice, to ensure State transparency and accountability."

It adds that poor availability of official data on public bodies, police protocols, and detention statistics "reflects the challenges in accessing information within the country"

and severely limits the ability of organisations and individuals to monitor and address systemic abuse.

During the launch of the Global Torture Index in Geneva on Tuesday, June 25, Henri Tiphagne, Executive Director of People's Watch and member of the Index's Steering Committee, delivered a scathing critique of India's record on custodial torture and accountability.

"We are the only country with so many human rights institutions, and yet they are not functioning," Henri said. "The NHRC has existed for 32 years and has not prosecuted even one police officer responsible for extrajudicial killings or torture."

India, he said, must "bow down in shame" for its failure to ratify the UN Convention Against Torture and for its "zero accountability" in custodial deaths.

Henri also warned of the broader human rights crisis marked by impunity, repression, and legal targeting of defenders. "Torture is used as a weapon to silence them," he said, pointing to cases like that of Khurram Parvez, the Bhima Koregaon accused, and Adivasi activist Soni Sori. "We are among only two countries in the Index that have not ratified the UN convention," he added.