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National Human Rights Commission

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MESSAGE

The Commission again welcomes 9th December i.e. the day when Declaration on Human Rights Defenders was adopted. The Human Rights Defenders are working for promotion and protection of human rights in India and across the globe. The acknowledgement of their work started with the Declaration on Human Rights Defender on 09th December, 1998, but has now matured into a movement. That augurs well for the overall strengthening of the human rights situation through out the world.

2. The Commission has witnessed growth in the presence of the Human Rights Defenders through out India. The Commission is receiving complaints of human rights violation from the Human Rights Defenders from all corners of the country. It shows the increasing work of the Human Rights Defenders at the grassroot level. This also enables the common man to be abreast of their rights and keep the State actors aware of the demand of the common man and compel them to abide by the laws of the land.

3. The Commission has also been receiving complaints of harassment and torture of the human rights defenders at the hands of the State functionaries like police, administration etc. The Commission strongly condemns such acts. The State actors should encourage their participation and also work hand in hand with them to ensure best results. The Commission has also proactively worked for the

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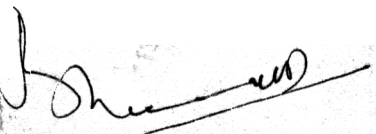


NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

cause of the Human Rights Defenders. The creation of Focal Point for Human Rights Defenders, inclusion of chapter on Human Rights Defenders in the Annual Report, publication of cases of Human Rights Defenders of NHRC Web Site are just few of them. There are cases of Human Right Defenders, where the Commission has called the State functionaries in person and asked to explain their conduct. In one of the cases, the Commission has conducted an inquiry through its own team and moved an application before the concerned court to establish the facts.

4. The Commission will always support the Human Rights Defenders in their endeavors. 9th December is a day when we think about them and acknowledge the role being played by them. This day can be the better observed if it is declared as the "*Human Rights Defenders Day*".

5. The National Human Rights Commission looks forward to a greater support from the Human Rights Defenders so that it can serve its mandate of promotion and protection of human rights in the country in the letter and spirit.


(Justice K.G. Balakrishnan)