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HUMAN RIGHTS

Newsletter

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Consultation

Dignity and rights of the individuals engaged in manual cleaning of hazardous waste

Article

From Laws to Action: A concerted effort to end manual cleaning of hazardous waste

Report

NHRC, India Chairperson at the 13th ThinkEdu Conclave

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National Human Rights Commission

Chairperson

Justice Shri V. Ramasubramanian

Members

Justice (Dr) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi
Smt Vijaya Bharathi Sayani
Shri Priyank Kanoongo

Secretary General

Shri Bharat Lal

Editor

Shri Jaimini Kumar Srivastava
Dy. Director (M&C), NHRC

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From the desk of the Secretary General & Chief Executive

The sanitation workers play a crucial role in providing clean and healthy surroundings and the environment. However, despite several efforts to provide them with dignity and safety through mechanisation, some of whom in manual cleaning of manhole and septic tanks face significant challenges. The complete eradication of manual cleaning of sewers and hazardous waste remains an unfulfilled goal, along with the proper rehabilitation of those engaged in this dangerous work. That said, the tireless efforts of various stakeholders including the legislature, judiciary, executive and institutions such as the NHRC, India, National Commission for Safai Karamcharis, Civil Society, media and others, deserve recognition. Progress may not be as swift as expected, but their contributions remain invaluable.

The NHRC continues to engage with various stakeholders to identify gaps in laws, policies and their implementation, suggesting pragmatic solutions to the government and the concerned agencies to ameliorate the cause of human rights of those involved in sanitation work. In line with this commitment, in the month of January, 2025 the Commission hosted an Open House Discussion on the hazardous practice of sanitation workers entering sewer manholes and septic tanks for cleaning. This discussion focussed on their challenges and explored actionable solutions. A diverse group of stakeholders, including NGOs, grassroots workers, human rights defenders, government officials, researchers, academics, UN agencies, and the private sector, participated in the event. The discussion shed light on the unsafe working conditions that many sanitation workers still endure and stressed the urgent need for mechanisation to eliminate manual intervention and associated risks. Innovative solutions aimed at replacing manual labour and ensuring safer, more dignified sanitation practices were showcased. A detailed report on this consultation is included in this Newsletter.

A major milestone in this direction was the Supreme Court's landmark judgement in the Writ Petition of Dr Balram Singh v. Union of India and Others on 29th January, 2025. The verdict completely bans manual cleaning of sewer in six metropolitan cities: Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, and Hyderabad. This ruling reaffirms the nation's commitment to eradicating this inhumane practice. This edition of the Newsletter features a dedicated article, '*From Laws to Action: A concerted effort to end manual cleaning of hazardous waste*', which traces various efforts undertaken across the country to eliminate this menace.

I also had the honour to represent the Commission and the country as the Headline Speaker at 'India's Equality Moonshot' organised by the World Woman Foundation in Davos on 22nd

January, 2025. The session focused on India's bold and inclusive vision aimed at transforming lives by addressing core socio-economic challenges. It emphasised the creation of opportunities through futuristic, climate-resilient infrastructure, efficient public service delivery, and digital empowerment across the country. The discussion also highlighted India's commitment to transparent and accountable governance, empowering women with an enabling environment, and ensuring they break barriers to achieve true equality. It was reaffirmed that the Indian Constitution and its values uphold the fundamental principle of equality, ensuring that women have had equal rights since the country's adoption of the Constitution. Progressive policies have positioned women as key drivers of India's socio-economic development and rapid economic growth.

In India, women are not just participants in national development, they are equal partners in shaping the country's future. Guided by the philosophy of '*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*' (the world is one family), India continues to collaborate with nations across the globe to promote equality, justice, liberty, and fraternity, championing human rights and inclusivity at every level.

The month of January also marked the conclusion of the four-week on-site Winter Internship programme at the Commission. It was commendable to see 61 students from 18 states and 2 UTs complete the internship, which provided them with a platform to engage with eminent scholars, human rights defenders and domain experts through 50-plus insightful sessions on various aspects of human rights. They also actively participated in book reviews, field visits to shelter homes, police stations, prisons, and the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), as well as group assignments. Additionally, the Commission also commenced its online short-term internship, designed to extend human rights education to young students in the far-flung areas of the country as human rights defenders at a zero cost for lodging and boarding in Delhi.

This edition of the Newsletter also brings you reports on the visits of NHRC, India Members, along with other key engagements and activities undertaken by the Commission in the month of January, 2025. We hope you find it an insightful and engaging read.



[Bharat Lal]

Secretary General &
Chief Executive Officer

Dignity and rights of the individuals engaged in manual cleaning of hazardous waste



► NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice Shri V. Ramasubramanian chairing the meeting

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India has constituted several core groups on various human rights issues to facilitate discussions with the domain experts, academicians and senior government functionaries from relevant ministries. Besides these core group meetings, the Commission also organises open house discussions with diverse stakeholders on various human rights concerns. On 3rd January, 2025, the Commission organised one such Open House Discussion on 'Dignity and rights of the individuals engaged in manual cleaning of hazardous waste' in hybrid mode at its premises in New Delhi.

The Chairperson, Justice Shri V. Ramasubramanian chaired the session in the presence of Members, Smt Vijaya Bharathi Sayani and Justice (Dr) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi, Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal and other senior officers. Attendees included representatives from various ministries and state governments, NGOs, human rights defenders, UN agencies, private organisations, and

research scholars, who contributed to discussions on critical issues concerning the rights and dignity of workers engaged in manual cleaning of hazardous waste.

Justice Ramasubramanian stated that manual cleaning is being addressed legislatively, managed executively, and supervised judicially to eradicate it. However, despite legal provisions banning the manual cleaning of sewage and hazardous waste, deaths of sanitation workers continue to occur, which is deeply concerning

He said that it is necessary to study and understand the root causes of manual cleaning to suggest effective remedial measures. He also stressed the importance of piloting technological innovations, such as robotic cleaning, in one state as a test case, with a view to scaling it up nationwide.



► A scene from the meeting



► Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal addressing the participants

Setting the agenda for the discussion, Secretary General, NHRC, India, Shri Bharat Lal said that the Commission has been actively engaging with states on implementing mechanised cleaning processes and reviewing their progress in accordance with Supreme Court guidelines in the case of Dr Balram Singh v. Union of India & Ors. It has come out that various states have prepared up to three years of programmes for all Urban Local Bodies in accordance with the above mentioned guidelines. He further pointed out that certain castes and communities are disproportionately affected by manual cleaning, necessitating targeted interventions.

Earlier, NHRC, India Joint Secretary, Shri Devendra Kumar Nim gave an overview of the three technical sessions- 'Addressing the issue of deaths in septic and were tanks in India,' 'The need for a complete ban on manual cleaning,' and 'Rehabilitation measures for manual cleaners: A path towards dignity and empowerment and the way forward.' He said that manual scavenging remains one of the most pressing social challenges, requiring collective and concerted efforts to eliminate it.

The discussion featured insights from distinguished speakers including Shri Prabhat Kumar Singh, Managing Director, National Safai Karamacharis Finance & Development Corporation, Shri Bezwada Wilson, National Convenor, Safai Karamchari Andholan, New Delhi, Shri Sujoy Majumdar, Senior WASH specialist, UNICEF India, Shri Yusuf Kabir, Water Sanitation and Hygiene Specialist, UNICEF, India, Rohit Kakkar, CPHEEO, Shri Rashid Karimbanakkal, Director, Genrobotics Innovations, Kerala, Baishali Lahiri, International Labour Organisation, Dr Vinod Kumar, Law and Director of Centre

for Human Rights and Subaltern Studies, National Law University, Manjula Pradeep, WAYVE Foundation, Ms Raj Kumari, Solinas Integrity Pvt. Ltd., Tamil Nadu, Prof. Sheeva Dubey, FLAME University, Pune, Shri M. Krishna, Managing Director, Kam-Avida Enviro Engineers Pvt. Ltd., Ms Smriti Pandey, Consultant, NITI Aayog, among others. The following key recommendations emerged from the deliberations;

- i. Strengthening ground-level monitoring and representation to ensure effective welfare implementation;
- ii. Conducting surveys to enhance the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs and ensure fair wages;
- iii. Clarifying the distinction between sanitation workers and manual scavengers under the 2013 Act;
- iv. Incentivising mechanisation of cleaning processes and providing training, particularly empowering women-led self-help groups (SHGs) for sustainable livelihoods;
- v. Enhancing transparency in data related to manual cleaning and sewer deaths, budget allocations, and awareness campaigns under SBM and NAMASTE schemes;



► A section of participants attending the meeting

- vi. Providing capacity-building training for workers involved in the cleaning of sewers manually;
- vii. Offering financial assistance for technological innovations in hazardous waste cleaning;
- viii. Regulating and formalising the desludging market operations;
- ix. Ensuring the availability of safety gear and organising awareness workshops; and

- x. Developing a monitoring mechanism to identify manual cleaners and create a database for health insurance, education, and other welfare benefits.

The Commission will further deliberate upon these suggestions to strengthen the implementation of legal and policy provisions, bridge existing gaps and work toward the complete eradication of manual scavenging while ensuring effective rehabilitation of the affected individuals.

Reports

13th ThinkEdu Conclave: NHRC, India Chairperson highlights crucial role of human rights in governance



► NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice Shri V. Ramasubramanian in conversation with Dinamani Editor, Shri Vaidyanathan

Justice V. Ramasubramanian, Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India, delivered a keynote address at the 13th ThinkEdu Conclave 2025, held in Chennai. Speaking on the theme 'Balancing the Scales: Rights, Duties, and the Indian Soul,' he emphasised the crucial role of human rights, governance, and the evolving balance between rights and duties in contemporary India. The session, moderated by Shri Vaidyanathan, Editor, Dinamani, provided a platform to discuss India's human rights framework, challenges, and global recognition.

Justice Ramasubramanian highlighted that historically, Indian society has been duty-conscious rather than rights-conscious. However, in the 20th century, the focus shifted towards individual rights. He noted that a global shift is now happening, where people are becoming more aware of their duties toward society, realising that the protection of rights is intertwined with fulfilling responsibilities. He stated, *"Without imbibing upon ourselves the duty to respect the rights of others, our own rights will be put in jeopardy."*

Speaking on India's unique challenges in enforcing human rights, Justice Ramasubramanian highlighted the country's immense diversity, where more than eight major religions are practiced, over 1,640 castes and communities coexist, and 22 official languages along with several ethnic groups shape its socio-cultural

landscape. This vast diversity makes human rights enforcement both complex and crucial, necessitating a balanced approach that respects cultural sensitivities while upholding universal rights.

Justice Ramasubramanian also strongly disagreed with the reasons given by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) for delaying NHRC's accreditation for two years. The reason cited was that NHRC was not constituted according to the Paris Principles of 1993. He said that there is a fundamental

flaw in their argument saying, "If you assess the performance of the NHRC and say that it is not up to the standard, we do not give you accreditation, I agree. But if you say that there is a congenital deformity in the way you are born, then I think it's not about the accreditation of the NHRC, but it is an accreditation of the government." He acknowledged that the delay in NHRC's global accreditation is a significant challenge, especially since he took over as its Chairperson just over a month ago. However, he assured that efforts are underway to resolve the issue.

Article

From Laws to Action: A concerted effort to end manual cleaning of hazardous waste

Manual scavenging is a practice that involves the manual cleaning, carrying, and disposal of human excrement from insanitary latrines, sewers, and septic tanks. It is not only an abomination in terms of human dignity but also an egregious violation of human rights. Despite long-standing calls and intentions for its elimination in the national discourse, the practice continues to persist in parts of India, even with several legal provisions aimed at its abolition.

The issue was again brought into sharp focus on 29th January, 2025, with the Supreme Court of India issuing a significant judgement banning manual cleaning and manual sewer cleaning in six metropolitan cities: Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, and Hyderabad after it held that the Centre's affidavit lacked clarity in response to its earlier judgement in October, 2023 while hearing the petition filed by Dr Balram Singh v. Union of India and Others seeking complete eradication of the manual cleaning and rehabilitation of those engaged in the practice. The court has also directed the authorities to submit a detailed affidavit by 13th February, 2025, stating exactly when and how manual scavenging and sewer cleaning had ceased in their respective cities. The Court with this judgement has sent a strong message towards addressing this long-standing menace while highlighting persistent gaps in clarity, transparency, and enforcement.

Before this, the court called for a comprehensive survey of manual scavengers, and compensation for deaths related to manual sewer cleaning. It noted that despite reports from 456 out of 775 districts stating no cases of manual cleaning of sewer of hazardous waste, a lack of transparency and progress was evident, particularly in major cities. It also highlighted disturbing statistics, with 347 deaths reported between 2018 and 2022 due to manual sewer cleaning. Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Delhi were responsible for 40% of these fatalities. The

Court had instructed the Centre to collaborate with States to assess efforts to end manual cleaning while issuing 14 directives, underscoring the responsibility of both the Centre and State governments to fully eradicate manual cleaning. One among the other notable measures included raising compensation for sewer cleaning-related deaths from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 30 lakh.

The latest Supreme Court judgment in the matter has also given an opportunity to evaluate India's progress in eradicating manual cleaning. Over the years, India has introduced several laws to eradicate manual scavenging, including the Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act, 1993, and the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013. The 2013 Act made significant strides in addressing the issue by criminalising manual cleaning, mandating rehabilitation, and introducing alternative livelihood provisions for those who are involved in manual cleaning.

Despite these laws, the churning of stated data and realities on the ground does not indicate that the practice of manual cleaning has disappeared completely as also noted by the Apex Court. Several reports and studies reveal that manual cleaning continues to exist in certain parts of the country, particularly in rural areas and urban slums where infrastructure is lacking. Fatalities continue to occur due to workers being forced to clean sewers without protective gear.

Recognising the need for technological interventions to tackle the menace, the Centre through the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) launched the Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban) to improve sanitation in urban areas. It has allocated significant funding to encourage Municipal Corporations across the country to adopt automated sewer cleaning machines and other robotic devices to clean septic tanks, manholes, and sewers, eliminating human involvement in hazardous cleaning tasks. As part of this vision, the government is also introducing training programmes for local sanitation workers on the operation and maintenance of mechanised equipment, ensuring long-term sustainability.

The government's efforts to push for mechanisation have been complemented by the National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC), which provides financial aid for the rehabilitation of manual cleaners and their families. This assistance includes skill development programmes and the provision of loans to start small businesses, enabling manual cleaners to transition to dignified work. The Indian Railways has also made significant progress in modernising sanitation practices to reduce manual cleaning on platforms and coaches. Implementing mechanised systems such as robotic devices, vacuum-based toilet cleaning, and bio-toilets has minimised human involvement in hazardous sanitation tasks. The Swachh Rail, Swachh Bharat campaign promotes passenger cleanliness awareness. However, infrastructure gaps and maintenance challenges persist.

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India has also been consistently raising concerns and issuing guidelines to stop manual cleaning of sewer and hazardous wastes substituting it with mechanised cleaning and relief and rehabilitation of the workers involved in this practice and stringent action against those who engage workers without protective gear. The NHRC has been urging the Centre, States and Union Territories to address the root causes of manual cleaning, provide relief to the

victims, and ensure justice through enforcement of legal measures. The NHRC has also been organising seminars and workshops, bringing together key stakeholders from governmental bodies, civil society organisations, and the private sector to discuss the way forward.

The NHRC, through its advisory in 2021, which also finds its echo in the 2023 Supreme Court guidelines, also highlighted the need for regular monitoring of sewer cleaning activities, ensuring that no person is employed in hazardous conditions. The Commission emphasised the importance of holding accountable the municipal corporations, contractors, and government agencies that still employ manual cleaners by strict implementation of penalties under the Manual Scavengers Act. Over the years, the Commission has also handled numerous complaints related to manual cleaning, holding authorities accountable for violations of the law. In many cases, it has intervened through *suo motu* cognisance of the media reports alleging deaths of manual cleaning due to unsafe working conditions in sewers in several states and to ensure that the affected families received compensation as per the law.

Despite some progress, challenges remain in the battle against the complete eradication of manual cleaning of sewage and hazardous waste. The way forward lies in increasing public-private partnerships to promote the development and deployment of advanced cleaning technologies, ensuring that these solutions are both affordable and accessible to smaller municipalities. The municipalities must have a mechanism available on call to provide services for mechanised cleaning of sewer pits and manholes in private spaces, which is a challenge.

The sanitation workers' role and contribution in ensuring clean surroundings and the environment can never be disrespected or undermined. The importance of a work may not be denounced for the way it is executed. Therefore, all that is required is to end the bare-hand cleaning of sewage and hazardous waste by extending the mechanised support and safety gear to the workers for their security and hygiene which will lend them dignity and maximise other people's participation irrespective of their caste and community. Further, there is a need for sustained awareness campaigns among them not to clean hazardous and sewage waste without protective gear to fully eliminate the practice of manual cleaning and restore the dignity of the affected communities through their rehabilitation and integration into society.

Important interventions

The media reports have been a very useful instrument for the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India to know about the incidents of human rights violations. Over the years, it has taken *suo motu* cognisance of many such issues and brought succour to the victims of human rights violations. During January, 2025, the Commission took *suo motu* cognisance in 06 cases of alleged human rights violations reported by the media and issued notices to the concerned authorities for reports. Summaries of some of these cases are as follows:

Suo motu cognisance

Suicide by a senior citizen due to denial of treatment

(Case No. 13/10/1/2025)

On 25th December, 2024, media reports highlighted the case of a 72-year-old man who tragically took his own life after being denied Rs 5 lakh coverage under the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY) at the State Government-run Kidwai Memorial Institute of Oncology in Bengaluru, Karnataka. Despite his enrollment in the scheme, the hospital reportedly refused to extend the benefit, citing the absence of official directives from the State Government regarding its implementation for senior citizens. Additionally, media reports have mentioned several other instances where beneficiaries of the AB PM-JAY senior citizen scheme have faced difficulties in accessing its benefits.

Taking cognisance of the matter, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India has issued notices to the Secretary, Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, and the Chief Secretary, Government of Karnataka, seeking a comprehensive report on the issue. The response is expected to include an update on the current implementation status of the AB PM-JAY senior citizen scheme in Karnataka and other States/ Union Territories.

Sexual abuse of a girl by several individuals

(Case No. 12/11/15/2025)

On 15th January, 2025, the media reported that a girl belonging to the Scheduled Caste in Pathanamthitta district of Kerala was sexually abused by several people. Reportedly, 44 people out of 59 accused in the 30 FIRs in the matter were arrested. Two of the accused are absconding abroad and the remaining 13 others are yet to be arrested. The Commission has issued notices to the Chief Secretary and the Director General of Police, Kerala calling for a detailed report in the matter. It is expected to include the status of the FIR, her health and the medical care, counselling and compensation, if any, provided to her in the detailed report being sought by the Commission in the given matter.

Death of two workers while cleaning a sewage pumping station

(Case No. 34/6/24/2025)

On 21st January, 2025, the media reported that two workers died due to asphyxiation after they were trapped in an underground sewage pumping station in the Surendranagar district of Gujarat. Reportedly, the incident occurred when the workers entered the sewage pumping station to clean it

without any safety gear. The victims were contractual workers with the Patdi Municipal Corporation. Accordingly, the Commission has issued notices to the Chief Secretary and the Director General of Police, Gujarat calling for a detailed report in the matter. The Commission has made it mandatory to include the status of the investigation of the cases as well as compensation paid, if any to the aggrieved families.

Death due to electrocution

(Case No. 53/7/5/2025)

On 22nd January, 2025, the media reported that a lineman with the Dakshin Haryana Bijli Vitran Nigam (DHBVN) died on the spot due to electrocution while working on an electricity transformer in Sikanderpur Badha, Gurugram, Haryana on 21st January, 2025. Reportedly, the electricity supply was resumed while he was working. The Commission has issued notices to the Chairman, Dakshin Haryana Bijli Vitran Nigam (DHBVN) and the Commissioner of Police, Gurugram calling for a detailed report. It is expected to include the status of the FIR and compensation if any, granted to the next of kin of the deceased in the report.

Death of 474 homeless persons during this winter season

(Case No. 130/30/0/2025)

On 16th January, 2025, the media reported that according to the Centre for Holistic Development (CHD), an NGO working with the homeless,

about 474 persons have lost their lives within a span of 56 days during this winter season in Delhi. Reportedly, these deaths have taken place between 15th December, 2024 to 10th January, 2025, due to the unavailability of essential protective measures such as warm clothing, blankets, and adequate shelters. According to the reported

claim of the NGO, about 80 percent of the unidentified dead bodies in Delhi were believed to be of homeless individuals. The Commission has issued notices to the Chief Secretary and the Commissioner of Police, Delhi calling for a detailed report in the matter.

Recommendations for relief

One of the primary responsibilities of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India is to address cases of human rights violations, listen to the grievances of victims, and recommend appropriate relief in such instances. It

regularly takes up various such cases and gives directions and recommendations to the concerned authorities for relief to the victims. In January, 2025 monetary relief of more than Rs 18 lakh was recommended for the victims or their next of kin (NoK) in the 05 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 the NHRC website by logging the case number given in the table below:

S. No.	Case Number	Nature of complaint	Amount (Rs in lakh)	Authority
1.	3900/4/1/2022-JCD	Death in judicial custody	5.00	Bihar
2.	446/18/12/2023-JCD	Death in judicial custody	3.00	Odisha
3.	1521/36/7/2021-JCD	Death in judicial custody	3.00	Telangana
4.	3895/18/2/2022	Custodial torture	2.00	Odisha
5.	13359/24/32/2024	Death due to electrocution	5.00	Uttar Pradesh

Payment of relief to the victims

During January, 2025, the Commission closed 07 cases, either on receipt of the compliance reports and proof of payment from the public authorities or

by giving other observations/ directions. An amount of Rs 30 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 the NHRC website by logging the case number given in the table below:

S. No.	Case Number	Nature of complaint	Amount (Rs in lakh)	Authority
1.	1107/20/14/2020-JCD	Death in judicial custody	5.00	Rajasthan
2.	4/21/3/2022-JCD	Death in judicial custody	5.00	Sikkim
3.	1693/24/39/2018-JCD	Death in judicial custody	7.00	Uttar Pradesh

S. No.	Case Number	Nature of complaint	Amount (Rs. in lakh)	Authority
4.	31853/24/78/2021-JCD	Death in judicial custody	5.00	Uttar Pradesh
5.	4688/30/1/2021-WC	Police inaction in a case of sexual	5.00	Delhi
6.	2842/18/5/2017	Inaction by the state central Govt. officials	1.00.	Odisha
7.	9165/24/31/2021	Death due to consumption of illicit liquor	2.00	Uttar Pradesh

Case studies

In many cases, the Commission, contrary to the claims of the concerned State authorities found that the human rights of the victims were violated due to their lawful action, inaction, or omission. Therefore, the Commission, under the Protection of Human Rights Act, not only recommended punitive action against erring officials on a case-to-case basis but also recommended monetary relief to the victims of human rights violations or their next of kin. The Commission also received reports of compliance with its recommendations by the respective state authorities. Summaries of some of these cases are as under:

Custodial death

(Case No. 1693/24/39/2018-JCD)

The matter pertained to the custodial death of a man in District Jail, Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh in 2018. Based on the material received in response to its notices, the Commission found that the inquiring Chief Judicial Magistrate had stated that no evidence substantiated claims of misbehaviour or physical assault by any officer or official of the District Prison, Jaunpur, against the deceased prisoner. However, the MER did not address the allegation made by the deceased's wife during the magisterial inquiry, in which she claimed that police personnel had told her that her husband's head injury resulted from a scuffle in the jail. Besides, the medical expert in the panel of the Commission opined that the site of head injury was in such a position that could not have been caused due to a self-fall. Therefore, the Commission held that the incident indicated negligence on part of the prison authorities in protecting the life of the man in their custody and hence recommended that the Government of Uttar Pradesh pay Rs 7 lakh as relief to

the NoK of the deceased, which was paid.

Deaths due to consumption of spurious liquor

(Case No. 9165/24/31/2021)

The matter pertained to the death of some persons after drinking poisonous alcohol in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh in 2021. The complainant alleged that State authorities connived with some traders who were selling illegal liquor in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh in 2021. The enquiry report stated that three accused were arrested and sent under judicial custody and another surrendered before the court. Based on the material on record received in response to its notices, the Commission found that two persons had died due to the consumption of the spurious liquor due to failure of the police and excise department to check the manufacturing and selling of illicit liquor. Therefore, it recommended the Government of Uttar Pradesh to pay Rs 1 lakh each as relief to their next of kins. The recommended amount was duly paid.

Murder and sexual abuse of minors

(Case No. 620/4/26/2024)

The matter pertained to the rape of two minor girls, one of whom was killed while the other was seriously injured in Patna, Bihar in 2024. Reportedly, the parents of the victim girls had approached the police to lodge a missing complaint, but no action was taken. Based on the material on record, the Commission found that had the police taken timely action, the heinous crime may have been averted. Therefore, holding the Government of Bihar vicariously responsible for the negligence of its public servants, the Commission recommended it to pay Rs 8.25 lakh as relief to the NoKs of the girl who died and Rs 3.75 lakh to the other. The recommended amount was duly paid. The Commission was also informed that the accused was sentenced to life imprisonment by the court.

Delay in the release of dues

(Case No. 1071/1/2/2024)

The matter pertained to the delay in

the release of the amount to the complainant who supplied food worth Rs 20,52,650/- to COVID-19 patients as was ordered by the District Collector, Ananthapuramu, Andhra Pradesh in 2022. Based on the material on record in response to its notices, the Commission found that the District Medical & Health Officer did not forward the bills

with authenticated letters to the Commissioner of Health, Government of Andhra Pradesh, and, therefore, the bills were rejected or lapsed.

The Commission transmitted a copy of the complaint to the Secretary, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of Andhra Pradesh, and

the District Collector, Ananthapuramu, to ensure the needful action and submit their action taken report including fixing of the responsibility of the concerned officers/ officials in the matter. Following the Commission's intervention, the pending bills of the complainant were paid.

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 the status of the implementation of the Commission's advisories, guidelines and recommendations by the respective state governments and their concerned authorities. They also visit shelter homes, prisons, observation homes, etc. and sensitise the government functionaries to make necessary efforts towards ameliorating the cause of human rights. Submission of timely reports by the state authorities to help the Commission in the early disposal of cases of human rights violations is also emphasised.

Visits of NHRC, India Members

- i.) On 7th January, 2025, and from 10th-17th January, 2025, Shri Priyank Kanoongo, Member, NHRC, India visited Jhuggi Basti situated at Okhla, Delhi and Bhopal, Vidisha and Raisen districts of Madhya Pradesh to spread human rights awareness and interact with the local communities/people as well as civil society organisations to encourage their efforts.
- ii.) From 6th-7th January, 2025, NHRC, India Member, Smt Vijaya Bharathi Sayani visited the Central Jail in Bengaluru and ST Post Matric Girls Hostel at HD Kote Taluk in Mysuru, Karnataka to assess the human rights situation there. The visit aimed to understand their concerns & challenges and identify areas for improvement.
- iii.) On 31st January, 2025, NHRC, India Member, Smt Vijaya Bharathi Sayani met with the sanitation workers in the Grama Panchayat of Kovur, Nellore District in Andhra Pradesh and discussed their duties and issues related to benefits of subsidies, schemes and pensions. The Member also made a surprise visit to ZP Girls High School in Kovur. She found that the facility with 800 students had only 10 toilets, lacked hygiene, proper drinking water supply and irregularities in the distribution of food.



► NHRC, India Member, Smt Vijaya Bharathi Sayani inspecting the ST Post Matric Girls Hostel at HD Kote Taluk in Mysuru, Karnataka



► NHRC, India Member, Smt Vijaya Bharathi Sayani visiting the Central Jail in Bengaluru



NHRC, India Member, Smt Vijaya Bharathi Sayani with the sanitation workers in the Grama Panchayat of Kovur, Nellore

Special Rapporteurs and Monitors

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India has designated 14 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, compiling reports for the Commission that detail their observations and suggestions for future action. Additionally, the Commission has appointed 21 Special Monitors tasked with overseeing specific thematic human rights issues and reporting their findings to the Commission. Throughout January, 2025, both Special Rapporteurs and Monitors conducted visits to numerous locations.

Special Rapporteur

- i.) From 11th- 15th January, 2025, Shri Umesh Kumar Sharma visited Government Health Care Institutions catering to Primary, Secondary and Tertiary levels of healthcare in Bhuj District Children Homes/ Old Age Homes in Bhuj District to assess the facilities.
- ii.) From 23rd -30th January, 2025, Smt Suchitra Sinha visited Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidhyalaya, SC/ ST Residential School, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Observation Home, Shelter Home, Nari Niketan in Chaibasa in West Singhbhum, Jharkhand to assess human rights situations.



NHRC, India Special Rapporteur, Smt Suchitra Sinha at a Shelter Home in West Singhbhum, Jharkhand

- iii.) From 26th-31st January, 2025, Shri Umesh Kumar visited and inspected the District Jail at North Lakhimpur, Assam to assess the facilities protecting the human rights of prisoners in the jail.

Special Monitor

- i.) From 20th to 25th January, 2025, Dr. Pradeepta Kumar Nayak visited the District Level Officials of the leprosy programme, Social Welfare Departments, Medical Colleges and Hospitals, Community Health Centres, Primary Health & Wellness Centres, general communities and Leprosy colonies in the districts of Jharsuguda, Sundargarh, and Keonjhar in Odisha.
- ii.) From 21st-29th January, 2025, Shri Balkrishan Goel visited Old Age Homes, Child care institutions, schools, Observation Homes, Anganwadi Centres, etc. in Maharashtra for an on-the-spot inspection and data collection.



NHRC, India Special Monitor, Shri Balkrishan Goel visiting Raja Shivaji Government School, Mumbai in Maharashtra

Capacity building

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India is mandated to protect and promote human rights and build awareness about the same. For this purpose, it has been conducting internship programmes, collaborative training and various other activities to expand its outreach and human rights sensitisation. Internships are conducted in person as well as in online mode, with a view to ensure that students from remote areas can join without any expenses for their travelling and stay in Delhi.

NHRC Winter Internship programme

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India's four-week in-person Winter Internship - 2024, for post-graduate-level students concluded on 16th January, 2025. It began on 19th December, 2024. 61 students from different academic disciplines of various universities and colleges of 18 States and two Union Territories in the country attended it. Eighty percent of them were females. The interns were shortlisted out of over 1,000 applicants.

Addressing the valedictory session NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice Shri V. Ramasubramanian in the presence of the Member, Justice (Dr) B.R. Sarangi and senior officers congratulated the students on the successful completion of the internship. He said that the youth of today must make the best and most

constructive use of the tremendous access to information that they have. They should inculcate human values in life without which they can't respect others' human rights.

He underscored the richness of the centuries-old Indian ethos and culture of respecting and practicing human rights, which immediately after independence also reflected in the Constitution of India emancipate all inalienable rights of human beings right since their birth. Equal civic and political rights were given to all; untouchability was abolished and voting rights were given to all including women.

Justice Ramasubramanian said that even in the US, the world's oldest democracy, the evolution of human rights took years of struggles to be constitutionally and legally realised. It took 90 years to abolish slavery in 1865, years after its independence from British rule in 1776, and another 90 years thereafter to declare the Segregation Law unconstitutional in 1956, which did not allow the African-Americans to use public services at par with white Americans. In this context, he cited Rosa Parks, a Black civil rights activist whose refusal to give up her bus seat to a white man ignited the American civil rights movement furthered by Martin Luther King, Jr by boycotting municipal bus rides for 381 days ultimately resulting in the end of the Segregation Law differentiating between the Black and white American citizens.



► NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice Shri V. Ramasubramanian addressing the interns



► Participants in the valedictory session



► NHRC, India interns with the Chairperson and senior officers

Emphasising the significance of an on-site physical internship, he stated that such programmes provide an irreplaceable opportunity for individuals to share happiness, joy, challenges, and value systems—an experience that cannot be replicated in an online setting. He further noted that life skills are not learned from books alone but are best developed through interpersonal communication. He appreciated the fact that 80% of the interns were females saying that historically, women have led the human rights movement.

Before this, NHRC, India Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal, in his address, urged the students to internalise and manifest the core values of empathy, sensitiveness and responsiveness. The internship allowed students to have exposure to various aspects of human rights through various eminent speakers. He urged them to make use of the knowledge that they have gained during the internship and expand human rights outreach to pay back to society by raising voices against injustice which will be a real '*Guru Dakshina*.'

Shri Devendra Kumar Nim, Joint Secretary, NHRC, India presented the internship report. He said that in addition to sessions on various aspects of human rights led by senior NHRC officers, experts, and civil society representatives, the interns were taken for field visits to Police Stations, Tihar jail, National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission, National Commission for Protection of Child Rights and the Asha Kiran Shelter Home in Delhi. These activities provided the interns with valuable insights into the functioning of government institutions, human rights protection mechanisms, and the ground realities and needs associated with safeguarding the rights of vulnerable sections of society. Shri Nim also announced the winners of the book review, group research project presentation, and declamation competition.

Online short-term internship begins

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India began its two-week Online Short Term Internship Programme (OSTI) on 27th January, 2025. 80 graduate and postgraduate level university students from diverse academic disciplines were shortlisted from different parts of the country to participate

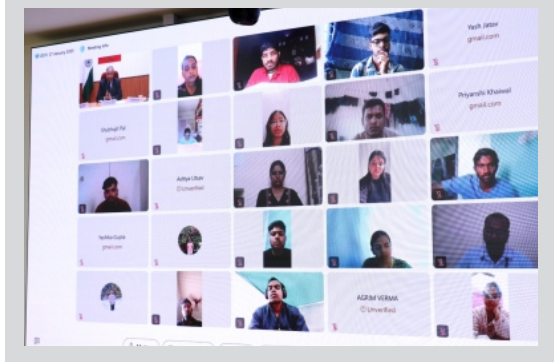
in this internship. The programme aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of human rights, related laws and their application in India.

Inaugurating the internship, NHRC, India Member, Justice (Dr) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi emphasised the importance of safeguarding human rights. He highlighted the rich legacy of respect for human rights in Indian ethos and culture that is reflected in our Constitution and legislation. He said that this internship programme aims to empower the interns to become advocates for peoples' rights, particularly for vulnerable communities. He urged them to engage deeply, learn from experts, and contribute to a more just and equitable society.

Before this, Shri Devendra Kumar Nim, Joint Secretary, NHRC, gave an overview of the programme's meticulously designed curriculum, which includes lectures, and virtual tours of institutions like Tihar Jail to provide firsthand insights into human rights realities. He also informed the interns about the various activities/ competitions, which will sharpen their knowledge about the various facets of human rights.



▶ NHRC, India Member, Justice (Dr) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi inaugurating the online internship



Workshops

During January, 2025, the Commission also supported 04 collaborative human rights awareness workshops which were as follows:

i.) On 10th January, 2025, NHRC, India, in collaboration with the Sadabai Raisoni Women's College, Nagpur, Maharashtra, organised a day-long training programme on women's rights.



▶ Human rights awareness workshop at Sadabai Raisoni Women's College, Nagpur, Maharashtra

ii.) On 11th January, 2025, NHRC, India organised a two-day training programme on 'Human rights: Issues & challenges' in collaboration with the Indian Law Institute (ILI) for judicial officers. NHRC, India Joint Secretary, Shri

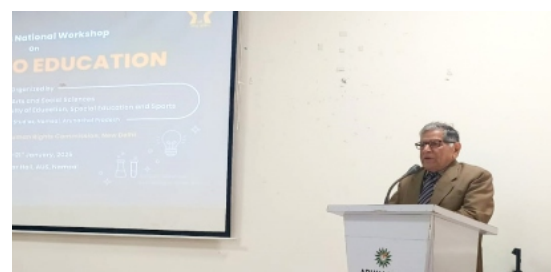
▶ Human rights awareness workshop at Arunachal University of Studies, Namsai, Arunachal Pradesh

Devendra Kumar Nim took a session on 'Human rights framework: Role of NHRC in promoting & protecting human rights.'



▶ NHRC, India Joint Secretary, Shri D.K. Nim addressing the participants at ILI training programme, New Delhi

iii.) On 20th January, 2025, NHRC, India organised a two-day workshop on the 'Right to Education' in collaboration with the Arunachal University of Studies (AUS), Namsai, Arunachal Pradesh. Over 200 participants, including educators, researchers, and students attended.



iv.) On 22nd January, 2025, NHRC India organised a two-day international seminar in hybrid mode on 'Right to privacy & digital space: Towards building a robust human rights legal framework' in collaboration with Prof N.R. Madhava Menon Interdisciplinary Centre for Research Ethics & Protocols, CUSAT, Kochi, Kerala.



▶ Human rights seminar at Prof N.R. Madhava Menon Interdisciplinary Centre for Research Ethics & Protocols, CUSAT, Kochi, Kerala

Exposure visit

To promote human rights awareness among college-level students and their faculties, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India invites them to visit the Commission to understand human rights, their protection mechanism, and its functioning for this purpose in line with the Protection of Human Rights Act, (PHRA), 1993. During January, 2025, 118 students and faculty members from various colleges and universities visited the Commission and were briefed by senior officers about the functioning of the Law & Investigation Divisions and Complaints Management System. Their visits were as follows:

i.) On 20th January, 2025, 32 students and faculties from the Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology, Chengalpattu, Tamil Nadu visited NHRC.



ii.) On 21st January, 2025, 56 students and faculty members from the Amex Law College, Burdwan, West Bengal visited NHRC, India.



iii.) On 24th January, 2025, a batch of 30 students and faculties from the College of Vocational Studies, University of Delhi, visited NHRC, India.



Moot court

The Commission also supports various institutions in organising moot court competitions to build legal awareness and acumen among the students of Law for promoting and protecting human rights. During the month of January, 2025 the following moot court competitions were supported:

i.) From 3rd - 5th January, 2025, the Commission organised the 1st NHRC-NLSIU Moot Court Competition at the National Law School of India University (NLSIU), Bengaluru, Karnataka. The event saw the participation of several teams of students from across the country. The moot problem focused on freedom of speech and expression and offered a platform to engage with key constitutional principles. NHRC, India Member, Smt Vijaya Bharathi Sayani was the Chief Guest of the valedictory session of the competition. She said that the competition was very engaging and hopefully such exercises will help in shaping the budding lawyers in human rights advocacy. She was also part of the judging panel in the final round of the moot court.



▶ NHRC, India Member, Smt Vijaya Bharathi Sayani attending the valedictory session of the 1st NHRC-NLSIU Bengaluru Moot Court Competition

ii.) On 7th January, 2025, the Commission organised the NHRC-RGSOIPL National Moot Court Competition on the theme 'Human rights & technology' at the



▶ NHRC, India Joint Secretary, Shri D.K. Nim delivering the inaugural address at the NHRC-RGSOIPL Kharagpur Moot Court Competition

Rajiv Gandhi School of Intellectual Property Law, IIT Kharagpur, West Bengal. The moot problem focussed on the right to privacy and related aspects. NHRC, India Joint Secretary, Shri Devendra Kumar Nim delivered the inaugural address. He expressed the hope that the students will make the best use of this opportunity to sharpen their skills in arguing for the cause of human rights.

iii.) On 25th January, 2025, the Commission organised a moot court competition in collaboration with the Army Institute of Law, Mohali, Punjab. The competition challenged participants to engage with fundamental constitutional principles.



▶ Moot court competition in progress at the Army Institute of Law, Mohali, Punjab

NHRC, India's Equality Moonshot at Davos

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India continues to engage with various international programmes to foster an exchange of ideas on various aspects of human rights. Several foreign institutional delegates visit the Commission and meet the Chairperson, Members and senior officers to understand the functioning of the Commission for the promotion and protection of human rights. The Commission's Chairperson, Members and other senior officers also visit various international forums to share their thoughts on the achievements of the Commission, interact with other NHRIs, and discuss the challenges to human rights in the fast-evolving world.

Secretary General shares Indian ethos of empowering women and transforming economies

The Secretary General, NHRC, India, had the honour of delivering keynote address at the World Woman Davos Agenda 2025, held on January 22-23, 2025, in Davos, Switzerland. As the headline speaker for the session titled '**India's Equality Moonshot**,' the Secretary General highlighted India's progressive journey toward ensuring equality, dignity, and empowerment for all citizens,

particularly women. The session served as a platform to showcase India's achievements in promoting human rights, gender equality, and socio-economic inclusion on both national and global scales.

The Secretary General emphasised India's commitment to fostering an inclusive and equitable society, built



► NHRC, India Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal at the World Woman Davos Agenda 2025

on constitutional values, cultural heritage, and governance frameworks. With a population of 1.4 billion people, India's diversity, consisting of 22 official languages, 1,800 dialects, and multiple religious and cultural identities, is a foundation for its equality agenda. Progressive policies have enabled women to become key drivers of socio-economic development, making them instrumental in the nation's goal of becoming a developed country by 2047. He further added that India has been a global leader in granting equal political and civic rights to women. Early constitutional guarantees ensured women's participation in governance, and today, 50% of local self-government seats are reserved for women, with the recent parliamentary bill extending this initiative to national and state legislatures. Currently, 46% of elected representatives in rural local bodies are women, marking a significant shift toward gender-balanced governance.



► NHRC, India Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal delivering the keynote address

The Secretary General underscored the role of digital public infrastructure in ensuring financial inclusion and economic empowerment. With over 1 billion internet users, millions of rural women have embraced digital technology. The Jan Dhan Yojana scheme has facilitated the opening of over 550 million bank accounts, 66% of which are owned by women, leading to increased financial autonomy and economic participation. He further mentioned that India's proactive affirmative actions have integrated marginalised sections into the mainstream by ensuring access to education, employment, healthcare, and essential services. Schemes focusing on universal income transfers, housing, sanitation, and clean water have uplifted millions. India's commitment is not just about offering assistance but about ensuring that every individual has the opportunity to stand on their own feet and thrive.

India's civilisational ethos of '*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*' (The World is One Family) was a recurring theme during the discussion. The Secretary General emphasised how India extends its commitment to equality beyond its borders, advocating for inclusive global decision-making and justice. As a leader in the G20, India championed the inclusion of the African Union, reinforcing its commitment to collective global progress. This advocacy ensures that no country or community is left behind in the pursuit of sustainable development and human rights.

Drawing from India's rich cultural heritage, the Secretary General highlighted how compassion, empathy, and non-discrimination are deeply embedded in the nation's traditions. India is home to major world religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism,



▶ A section of participants

and Sikhism, while also serving as a thriving home for Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and Zoroastrianism. This coexistence has shaped an environment where equality, justice, and dignity for all remain paramount. India has consistently promoted policies and programs that break social barriers and create pathways for inclusive growth.

The Secretary General's address at the World Woman Davos Agenda 2025 reinforced India's leadership in gender equality, digital empowerment, and inclusive governance. The session provided a platform to showcase India's achievements and inspire global action toward a more equitable and just

world. India's progressive policies, strategic use of technology, and emphasis on inclusive governance have created transformative opportunities for its citizens. As India continues its journey toward development by 2047, its unwavering commitment to equality serves as a model for nations worldwide.

News from State Human Rights Commissions

The promotion and protection of human rights is always a work in progress given the ever-expanding dimensions of human life and related challenges. In India, besides the democratically elected governments constitutionally committed to ensuring the welfare of the people by protecting their basic human rights, there are institutions of legislature, judiciary, a vibrant media, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and State Human Rights Commissions (SHRCs), as well as the other National Commissions and their state counterparts working as watchdogs of rights issues of various segments of society. This column intends to highlight the exceptional activities of the SHRCs undertaken to protect and promote human rights.

Punjab State Human Rights Commission

The Punjab State Human Rights Commission (PSHRC) for the past 15 years has been conducting biannual four-week summer and winter internship programs. During January, 2025, the PSHRC trained 70 interns in its winter internship programme. The uniqueness of this internship has been the principle followed for the training of the interns to "Each One Teach Ten".

Under this initiative, every intern shoulders the responsibility of educating at least ten individuals about their human rights and the workings of the Human Rights Commissions to protect and promote these rights.



► Students' internship in progress at PSHRC

Maharashtra State Human Rights Commission

The Maharashtra State Human Rights Commission (MSHRC) organised several outreach activities, educational engagement programmes, and community-focused visits in its mission of promoting justice, equality, and inclusion across the State during January, 2025.

Internship

From 2nd-30th January, 2025, the MSHRC organised Winter Internship Programme for 28 law students from three law colleges. The programme was designed to expose students to the functioning of the Commission and deepen their understanding of human rights issues. Besides the lectures on different aspects of human rights, the students were taken for field visits to various institutions to get a firsthand experience on different aspects of human rights work. These included Kalyan Prison, Thane Mental Hospital, Tribal Ashram School, BMC Sewage Site, and Women's Shelter Homes. The students also presented a comprehensive report based on their field experience.



► Winter Internship in progress at MSHRC

Visits

Throughout January, 2025, the MSHRC Secretary, Shri Nitin K Patil undertook several significant visits in different parts of the State to understand the needs of marginalised communities and suggest the measures to the Commission for consideration of making necessary recommendations to the concerned public authorities for improvements. The places he visited included the Yusuf Mehrauli Tribal Centre and its Hostel for the boys and girls in the Raigad, Shantivan, a rehabilitation centre for leprosy patients and an old age home, tribal pockets in Sudhagad Taluka. He focused on Aadhar card distribution to the Katkari tribal community, a group often in migration, many of whom have been unable to access this vital identification.

The Members of the Forum for Autism visited the MSHRC seeking its intervention to resolve their various issues. The Acting Chairperson Shri Sanjay Kumar advised them to file a complaint in the matter for consideration of the MSHRC's intervention.

Karnataka State Human Rights Commission

During the month of January, 2025 the Karnataka State Human Rights Commission (KSHRC) organised several activities for protecting and promoting human rights in different districts of the State.

Visit to Bellary and Kolar districts

The KSHRC conducted the full bench sittings to hear complaints of human rights violations in Bellary and Kolar districts on 9th and 30th January, 2025 to



► KSHRC Acting Chairperson, Dr T. Sham Bhatt and Member, Shri S.K. Vantigodi visiting the Bellary Institute of Medical Science

give on-the-spot necessary directions to the concerned public authorities to resolve the issues. The Deputy Commissioner, CEO Zilla Panchayat, Superintendent of Police and other officers of these districts were present during the hearing.

The Commission also made surprise visits to the prisons, Government girls' and boys' hostels and other government-funded institutions in these districts besides interacting with the public and other social groups to assess the human rights situation and make them aware of their rights.

Visit to Mysuru

The KSHRC Acting Chairperson and Member also visited Central Prison in Mysuru on 20th January, 2025 to conduct a spot enquiry into the death of three convicted prisoners and directed the concerned authorities to be more active and vigilant in their duties to ensure such incidents do not recur. They also visited the K. R. Hospital- Mysore Medical College and Research Institute,



► KSHRC Acting Chairperson and Judicial Member inspecting the Central Prison, Mysuru

Mysuru and interacted with the patients. The necessary directions were given to the District Health Officer and the Dean of Mysore Medical College and Research Institute to improve the facilities ensuring the protection of the human rights of the patients.

The Commission also organised an awareness training programme at the PES University, Bengaluru on 28th January, 2025, which was attended by about 1,000 students.

Goa State Human Rights Commission

To create awareness of human rights, the Goa State Human Rights Commission visited the Institute of Psychiatry and Human Behaviour (IPHB), Bambolim - Goa. It has around 190 in-patients. The team visited the female as well as the male wards and interacted with the patients. The Commission also visited the canteen and kitchen areas, which are kept in hygienic conditions and well supervised by a dietician and trained staff.

The Commission observed that a lot of its patients who require rehabilitation post treatment, continue to remain in the hospital due to the lack of intake capacities of the existing two rehabilitation units at Majorda, in South Goa and at Mapusa, in North Goa. Therefore, it recommended that the following departments coordinate and expedite the process of creating rehabilitation homes in the different Talukas of Goa, as needed:- (1) The Director, Department for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Porvorim-Goa; (2) The Director, Directorate of Social Welfare, Panaji-Goa; (3) The Director, Institute of Public Assistance (Providoria), Panaji-Goa.



► GSHRC officers visiting the Institute of Psychiatric & Human Behaviour (IPHB), Bambolim, Goa

Voices of the victims

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India has brought succour to several victims of human rights violations or their next of kin through its interventions since its inception on 12th October, 1993. This column carries a brief extract of the voices of such victims who have been the beneficiaries of the NHRC's recommendations implemented by the different government authorities.

Delay in release of family pension

(Case No. 3433/13/23/2022)

The complainant from Pune, Maharashtra alleged that she is widowed daughter of an employee of the ordinance factory board, Jalgaon, Maharashtra, who after retirement passed away but the family pension was being denied to her despite repeated requests to the concerned authorities. After the Commission's intervention, it was found that certain

documents were required to be submitted by the complainant for sanctioning of the family pension. The General Manager, Ordinance Factory, Varangaon, Jalgaon, Maharashtra was directed to take effective steps immediately in the matter. The complainant has conveyed her gratitude to the Commission that after its intervention in the matter, the family pension payment was made to her.

Delay in family pension

(Case No. 2009/25/22/2024)

The complainant from Kolkata, West Bengal alleged that she is a divorcee and that after the death of her mother, the Welfare Inspector of Khadagpur Railways Division mishandled the matter of her family pension by raising unnecessary objections thereby causing undue delays. Despite submitting all required documents, the Inspector requested irrelevant documents and failed to act promptly.

The complainant has conveyed her gratitude to the Commission for its intervention in the matter due to which eventually the matter was resolved.

Death due to electrocution

(Case No. 2470/18/18/2023)

The complainant alleged that a 65-year-old poor farmer died while working on an agriculture field due to electrocution by live snapped electric wires in Bhadrak district, Odisha on 23rd October, 2023. The Commission identified negligence on the part of the electricity department (TPNODL) in maintaining safety measures and recommended that, holding vicarious responsibility for the lapses of its functionaries, the Government of Odisha provide 5 lakh as compensation to the victim's family. The complainant has conveyed his gratitude to the Commission for its intervention in the matter resulting in

the payment of monetary relief to the family of the deceased farmer.

Delay in getting job on compassionate ground

(Case No. 1167/1/10/2024)

The complainant from Krishna, Andhra Pradesh alleged that his late son-in-law, an Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (APSRTC) bus driver passed away on 23rd July, 2020 while in service, but his widow (complainant's daughter) did not receive a job on compassionate grounds, pension or gratuity, etc. from the APSRTC. After the Commission's intervention, the Departmental

Selection Committee of the Krishna Region met the Complainant's victim daughter on 18th November, 2024, and considered her application for providing a Compassionate Appointment to the post of "Conductor Grade II". Certificate verification and medical examination have been completed and she will be issued an appointment order. The Pension claim will be forwarded to RPFO authorities to settle the EPS pension. The complainant has conveyed his gratitude to the Commission that after its intervention in the matter, not only his daughter but 29 others also got jobs on compassionate grounds in the APSRTC.

Withholding of pension

(Case No. 13231/24/48/2024)

The complainant from Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh alleged that he retired on attaining age superannuation on 31st October, 2023 from the post of Accounts Officer, EPF Organizational Regional Office. He did not receive any retirement benefits including monthly pension, gratuity, leave encashment, and commutation of pension. After the Commission's intervention, all the dues of the complainant were released. He has expressed his gratitude for its intervening in the matter due to which he got his pension benefits.

News in brief

- i.) On 1st January, 2025, joining the global fraternity in celebrating New Year, the Chairperson, Justice Shri V. Ramasubramanian, addressed the Members, senior officers and staff. He reiterated the Paramhansa Yogananda's New Year greetings & wished good health for all as the true essence of happiness in life. ▼



- ii.) On 6th January, 2025, NHRC, India Member, Smt Vijaya Bharathi Sayani met the Acting Chairperson, Members and senior officers of the Karnataka State Human Rights Commission to discuss issues related to duplicate and pending cases. ▼



- iii.) On 18th January, 2025, Smt Vijay Lakshmi Vihan, Presenting Officer, NHRC visited Nai Bhor Sanstha Garima Greh shelter in Jaipur, Rajasthan for transgender to understand their problems and the recommended improvements. ▼



- iv.) On 23rd January, 2025, NHRC, India Member, Smt Vijaya Bharathi Sayani was the Guest of Honour at the 17th Convocation Ceremony of Mody University of Science and Technology in Laxmangarh, Sikar, Rajasthan. The Governor of Rajasthan was also present. She highlighted the pivotal role of NHRC in promoting and protecting human rights in India. She spoke about the establishment, functions, and wide-ranging interventions by NHRC, emphasising its role in safeguarding the rights of every citizen. She encouraged the students to contribute to strengthening the culture of human rights in whichever field they work. She emphasised the importance of alleviating the sufferings of those at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder and creating a more inclusive society. ▼



- v.) On 24th January, 2025, NHRC, India Member, Shri Priyank Kanoongo visited Bal Kalyan Sangh, Ranchi, Jharkhand to attend as a Special Guest at the event of 'Bal Thaskari Se Aazadee' - Preventing and Combating Child Trafficking on the occasion of National Girl Child Day in Ranchi Jharkhand.

vi.) On 24th January, 2025, NHRC, India Presenting Officer, Smt Vijay Lakshmi Vihan visited Transgender Rights Association Garima Greh, Chennai, Tamil Nadu. She learnt about the organisation's achievements in securing employment for all its beneficiaries and building a network of Self-Help Groups & noted their challenges. ▼



vii.) On 24th January, 2025, NHRC, India Registrar (Law), Shri Joginder Singh visited Gautam Budh Nagar as the Chief Guest to interact with Law students of their School and N.C.R. College of Law on Human Rights being organised by B.N.M International College of Law, Bambawar, Gautam Budh Nagar, Uttar Pradesh.

viii.) On 26th January, 2025, NHRC, India joined the nation in celebration of the 76th Republic Day. Marking the day, the Tricolour was unfurled at its premises- Manav Adhikar Bhawan, New Delhi. ►

ix.) On 28th January, 2025, NHRC, India Presenting Officer, Smt Vijay Lakshmi Vihan visited Sakha Garima Greh for transgender in Bhubaneswar, Odisha to meet the inmates and understand their problems and the required improvements. With this visit, the Commission has completed the inspection of all 12 Garima Greh to prepare a report on the issues and problems concerning them and the way forward. ▼

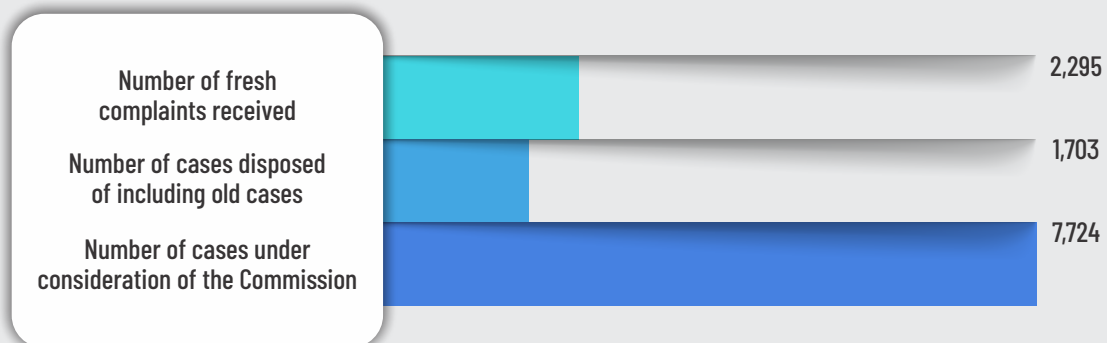


- x.) On 31st January, 2025, Shri Dushyant Singh, Dy. Suptd. of Police, NHRC, delivered a lecture for police officers from the rank of SI to Dy. SP during a three-day offline course on 'Gender Sensitisation for Prison Officers' on the topic 'Custodial death, protection of women's rights, the role of NHRC, SHRC, Press, Judicial, NGO, etc' at Central Detective Training Institute (CDTI), Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh.

Forthcoming events

4th February, 2025	The NHRC, India is set to organise a pivotal Core Group Meeting on Children, focusing on the theme 'Human Rights of Children in Conflict with Law.' This discussion aims to drive meaningful change in juvenile justice and child rights protection.
7th February, 2025	The Commission will organise a day-long National Conference on 'Combating human trafficking in the digital era' in collaboration with the Hidayatullah National Law University, Chhattisgarh. This day-long conference will shed light on digital-age trafficking challenges and innovative solutions to combat this grave issue.
17th February, 2025	The NHRC will convene a Core Group Meeting on Disability Rights, centred on the theme 'Recognising Progressive Disabilities – Adopting a Holistic Approach to Disability Rights.' The discussion will emphasise inclusive policies and empowerment strategies for individuals with disabilities.
18th February, 2025	NHRC's open house discussion in hybrid mode on 'Ensuring privacy and human rights in the digital era' in progress
19th February, 2025	The Commission will organise a meeting of the core group on women on the theme 'Empowering ASHAs- Securing the right to work with dignity.' This meeting will focus on enhancing the rights, recognition, and working conditions of Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs).

Complaints in January, 2025



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, Deputy Registrar (Law)

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

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