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HUMAN RIGHTS

Newsletter

A monthly publication of the National Human Rights Commission, India



Consultation

- Ragging in Higher Educational Institutions
- Ageing in India

HUMAN RIGHTS

Newsletter

Volume 32 | Number 09 | September, 2025

National Human Rights Commission

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The Newsletter is also available on the Commission's website www.nhrc.nic.in. NGOs and other organisations are welcome to reproduce material of the Newsletter and disseminate it widely acknowledging the NHRC, India.



► NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice Shri V Ramasubramanian presenting a memento to the visiting Indonesian Minister of Human Rights, Mr. Natalius Pigai



► NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice Shri V Ramasubramanian inaugurating the National Conference on Ageing in India in New Delhi

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Monthly Recap

From the desk of the Secretary General & Chief Executive

August, 2025 was a month of wide-ranging engagements of the National Human Rights Commission, India, reflecting its mandate to promote and protect human rights in the country. Alongside registering and disposing of complaints, including *suo motu* cognizance of more than 20 alleged human rights violations, the Commission organised an Open House Discussion, supported a National Conference, undertook spot visits, facilitated internships, moot courts and exposure visits and strengthened its international linkages. In all, 3,755 new complaints were registered and 4,287 cases disposed of during the month.

The Commission also advanced its research agenda by bringing two studies — one on the 'Prevalence of Girl Child Labour in the Indian Textile Industry in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka' and the other on 'Food and Nutritional Security among Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs): Evidences from Three Indian States.' A brief outcome report on both is carried in this edition of the Newsletter.

Education is the backbone of India's progress. New sessions are going to begin. With 1,168 universities, 45,000 colleges and 4.14 crore young learners, campuses must embody creativity, dignity and inclusion. Yet ragging persists, undermining the right to live with dignity, learn without fear and be treated equally. Each student carries the hopes of their family and the nation. Those must not be crushed by ragging. Ending this menace requires not just prohibition but awareness, accountability and systemic action.

The Commission's Open House Discussion on 'Re-examining Ragging in Higher Educational Institutions' served as a timely reminder that ragging is not a rite of passage but a violation of dignity and human rights. Despite strong laws, Supreme Court directions and the UGC Regulations of 2009, the menace persists. The statistics are stark: medical institutions with only 1.1% of India's students, account for 38.6% of ragging incidents and nearly half of the related deaths. Clearly, weak enforcement of the rules and regulations as well as a lingering cultural acceptance of this toxic practice remain major concerns.

Recommendations from the Open House Discussion included displaying anti-ragging helpline numbers on all websites, mandatory reporting to police, surprise checks, CCTV monitoring, wellness centres and representation of marginalised groups, offering practical solutions. Anonymity of complainants and automatic referral of cases to the NHRC would further strengthen victim protection. This edition of the Newsletter carries a report on the discussion.

India faces another transformation pertaining to ageing. By 2050, the elderly population will reach 350 million. The NHRC supported the Sankala Foundation

in hosting a consultation in New Delhi on 'Ageing in India: Emerging Realities, Evolving Responses' with NITI Aayog and the Union Ministries of Social Justice and Empowerment and Health and Family Welfare. On the occasion, the Foundation released a very insightful report 'Ageing in India: Challenges and Opportunities' highlighting both vulnerability and potential. Nearly one in five elderly citizens suffers from chronic illness, yet health insurance covers fewer than 20%. Mounting healthcare costs remain a leading cause of indebtedness, impacting the right to dignity of millions.

The NHRC, India has consistently stressed that healthcare is a basic human right, not a privilege. Schemes such as the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY), which offers Rs. 5 lakh coverage for those over 70 and the National Programme for Health Care of the Elderly are key milestones. Extending PM-JAY to cover those aged 60–70 would be transformative, ensuring financial and health security for millions more.

Ageing must not mean exclusion. With strong healthcare, social security and digital platforms, seniors can remain active mentors, innovators and contributors driving *Viksit Bharat* with wisdom and experience. The Newsletter carries a report on this conference also.

The vision for *Viksit Bharat* is expected to embrace a shift from retributive to reformative justice, rooted in empathy, human rights, accountability and voices from the margins. Laws should not merely punish but also transform, reshaping the very concept of justice. At the International Conference on 'From Micro Narratives to Meta Narratives: Reimagining Criminal Jurisprudence in a Globalised World' at the Central University of Karnataka on 8th August, 2025, I stressed that criminal law must link the lived realities of victims, undertrials and inmates with constitutional safeguards and global human rights frameworks.

This vision must also confront India's deep structural inequalities. Income gaps are stark: the bottom 50% earn less than \$1,000 a year, while the top 0.1% earn \$265,000. With per capita income at \$2,800, India must aim for \$15,000 to join the ranks of developed nations. Achieving this, demands concerted efforts to advance universal healthcare, education, modern infrastructure and enabling policies to bridge these divides.

Delivering the keynote address on 'Envisioning Future India: Challenges, Opportunities and the Road Ahead' in the Technology, Research, Innovation and Policy Summit at IIT Kanpur on 23rd August, 2025 offered a moment to reflect on the India we aspire to build. History shows how United States government made investments in universities, research and infrastructure leading to creation of an ecosystem that gave rise to trillion-dollar enterprises and global technological leadership. This edition of the Newsletter carries an article with deeper analysis and data on the subject.

India's demographics remain its greatest strength, with half the population under 25 at present. Artificial Intelligence, often seen as a threat, can instead serve as an enabler, bringing quality education to remote areas and digital healthcare to every citizen.

By 2047, India must aim to fuse cutting-edge science with timeless wisdom, pursuing not only economic strength but also an inclusive, compassionate and just society empowering every citizen. With these thoughts, I present this edition of the NHRC Newsletter, hoping it makes for engaging reading.



[Bharat Lal]
Secretary General &
Chief Executive Officer

Consultation

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India from time to time organises various consultations including Open House Discussions, national seminars and symposiums on various aspects of human rights with different stakeholders. The purpose is to bring such issues of importance to the mainstream of national discourse, identify the problems to find solutions to recommend to the government as a way forward. The Commission organised an Open House Discussion on 'Re-examining ragging in higher educational institutions: Creating safer campuses through awareness, accountability and Action' at its premises on 25th August, 2025. Besides this, on 1st August, 2025, the Commission extended support to the Sankala Foundation in organising an important consultation on 'Ageing in India: Emerging Realities, Evolving Responses' with the support of NITI Aayog, Union Ministries of Social Justice and Empowerment and Health and Family Welfare in New Delhi.

Open House Discussion on Re-examining Ragging in Higher Educational Institutions

The Open House Discussion on 'Re-examining Ragging in Higher Educational Institutions: Creating Safer Campuses through Awareness, Accountability and Action' was chaired by Justice Shri V. Ramasubramanian, Chairperson, NHRC, India. It was attended by NHRC Members, Justice (Dr) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi and Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani; Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal; Joint Secretaries, Shri Samir Kumar and Smt. Saidingpuii Chhakchhuak and other officials of the Commission as well as eminent domain experts, heads of higher educational institutions of repute and academic bodies, legal experts and members of civil society, among other stakeholders.

The discussion revolved around three key areas:

- i.) Understanding the challenges and impact of ragging in Indian campuses
- ii.) Reviewing the existing legal and institutional anti-ragging frameworks and
- iii.) Exploring ways to strengthen prevention through awareness, action and inclusion.

Justice Ramasubramanian expressed concern over the prevailing practice of ragging in higher educational institutions. He said that despite the laws, statutes, committees and regulations such as the 2001 guidelines, the R. K. Raghavan Committee and the 2009 UGC Regulations, enforcement remains a major challenge.

He called for stronger monitoring mechanisms to stop ragging in its various manifestations. He emphasised the need to enforce statutes with greater sensitivity in handling complaints and strict anonymity for complainants to ensure victims' protection and justice.

Before this, in his opening remarks, Shri Bharat Lal, Secretary General, NHRC said that ragging damages self-respect, dignity and in some cases, the whole career of a student. He drew attention to the data highlighting medical institu-



► NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice Shri V. Ramasubramanian, flanked by Members, Justice (Dr) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi and Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani, chairing the Open House Discussion



► NHRC, India Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal delivering his opening remarks

tions as hotspots for ragging, accounting for 38.6% of incidents despite having only 1.1% of the total student population in the country. He recalled the constitution of the R. K. Raghavan Committee and reiterated the three fundamental principles of Prevention, Prohibition and Punishment as the framework to combat this menace. Stressing the pivotal role of the NHRC, he urged that the discussion must lead to meaningful outcomes and concrete actions.

Justice (Dr.) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi, Member, NHRC stressed the need to identify the root causes and urged participants to recommend practical preventive measures to control this scourge. Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani, Member, NHRC further highlighted the prevalence of caste-based ragging in certain parts of the country. She emphasised the need for inclusive and targeted interventions.

At the outset, while welcoming the participants, Shri Samir Kumar, Joint Secretary, NHRC outlined the agenda aimed at collectively charting a path forward to ensure that higher education institutions remain spaces of growth, creativity and equal opportunity.

The Open House Discussion was attended by Smt. Rina Sonowal Kouli, Joint Secretary (Higher Education), Ministry of Education; Prof. Manish R. Joshi, Secretary, University Grants Commission; Dr. N. H. Siddalinga Swamy, AICTE; Prof. Manas K. Mandal, Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur; Shri Bharat Parashar, Member Secretary, National Legal Services Authority; Dr. Rakesh Lodha, Associate Dean, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi; Dr. Gururaj Gopinath Pamidi, Chief Administrative Officer, Indian Institute of Management, Indore; Dr. Arvind Kumar Drave, Consultant, National Medical Commission, New Delhi; Prof. Sampa Saha, Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi; Prof. Royana Singh, Banaras Hindu University; Prof. Rajendar Kachroo, Founder, Aman Movement; Smt. Alka Tomar, Chairperson, Centre for Youth; Dr. Meet Ghonia, National Secretary, The Federation of Resident Doctors Association; Shri Gaurav Singhal, Vice President and Smt. Meera Kaura Patel, Legal head, Society Against Violence in Education among others.

With the active participation of all the stakeholders in the discussions, the following key suggestions emerged:



► The Open House Discussion on ragging in progress

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- i.) The decision architecture in higher education institutions needs to be changed by emphasis-ing the 'nudge technique' by Richard Thaler to subliminally change people's mindset for preventing ragging.
 - ii.) Display of the UGC's 24x7 anti-ragging helpline on every institution's website.
 - iii.) Immediate mandatory reporting to police.
 - iv.) Encourage anonymous complaints of ragging.
 - v.) Representation of Schedule Castes, Schedule Tribes, Other Backward Castes and Minorities in anti-ragging committees.
 - vi.) Ensuring victim safety and protection post-reporting.
 - vii.) Regular audits, surprise checks, CCTV surveillance and police visits to campuses.
 - viii.) Establishing Wellness and Inclusion Centres with trained mental health professionals.
-
- ix.) No closure of complaints without the approval of the district administration.
 - x.) Annual anti-ragging reports from institutions with evidence and accountability measures.
 - xi.) Recognition of ragging-free campuses as a best practice.
 - xii.) Parental involvement in complaint cases.
 - xiii.) Collaboration between NHRC, National Legal Services Authority and University Grants Commission.
-

National Conference on Ageing in India: Emerging Realities, Evolving Responses

The focus of the discussions was on protecting the human rights and dignity of senior citizens and redefining ageing as an opportunity. The aim was to promote innovative policies, encourage stakeholder dialogue and highlight scalable best practices in response to the evolving challenges and opportunities for India's ageing population.

In his inaugural address, NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice Shri V. Ramasubramanian said that India has a rich cultural tradition advocating care and reverence for the elderly as a fundamental societal value. In this context, he also drew references from the ancient Sangam literature and the Yajur Veda. He called for the integration of those values and principles into modern policy frameworks to ensure the dignity, protection and well-being of senior citizens in alignment with the NHRC's mandate to uphold human rights. Underscoring the Commis-



► NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice Shri V. Ramasubramanian inaugurating the National Conference on 'Ageing in India: Emerging Realities, Evolving Responses'



► Dr. Vinod k. Paul, Member, NITI Aayog addressing the participants

sion's commitment to protecting the rights of the elderly, he highlighted various initiatives, including advisories, core group meetings, research studies and *suo motu* cognizance cases.

In his special address, Dr. Vinod K. Paul, Member (Health, Nutrition and Education), NITI Aayog emphasised the importance of healthcare and social security frameworks for the ageing population. He said that empowering families to take care of their elderly should remain the foundation of India's approach.

Before this, setting the agenda of the conference, NHRC, India Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal, in his keynote address said that India will have nearly 35 crore elderly people by 2050, when one in every five will be a senior citizen posing a critical policy challenge. He stressed the need to evolve family and community-based care models rooted in India's family value system and supplemented by global best practices. He cited the NHRC Advisory on the Rights of Widows issued in 2024 which urged state authorities to ensure

access to pension, housing and healthcare for destitute and elderly widows. He also recalled the NHRC Advisory on protecting older persons during the COVID-19 pandemic which focused on equitable access to vaccination, home-based care, mental health support and protection from neglect or abandonment during lockdowns.

Viewing elderly people as men and women of knowledge, experience and wisdom, Shri Lal emphasised community-based services and inter-generational engagements for elderly care on the models of Scandinavian



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



► Dignitaries releasing the report titled 'Ageing in India: Challenges and Opportunities'

countries and Japan by adapting them to the Indian cultural context. He called on stakeholders to study the report titled 'Ageing in India: Challenges and Opportunities' released in the inaugural session for inclusive and community-led healthcare enabling the elderly people to play a continued meaningful role in nation building.

Earlier, Shri Devendra Kumar Nim, Director, Sankala Foundation outlined the objectives of the conference. It was spread into four thematic sessions addressed by eminent experts. These included 'Strengthening Elderly Welfare: Policy and Practice' chaired by Shri Amit Yadav, Secretary, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, 'Health and Mental Wellbeing of the Elderly' by Smt Preeti Sudan, Former Chairperson, UPSC and Former Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, 'Leveraging Ageing for Growth and Development' by Shri Amitabh Kant, Former G20 Sherpa, India and Former CEO, NITI Aayog and 'Shaping Futures: Preparing for an Ageing Society' by Dr. Vinod K. Paul, Member (Health, Nutrition and Education), NITI Aayog.



► A panel discussion in progress

Some other eminent speakers were: Dr. Kiran Bedi, Former Lt. Governor of Puducherry; Shri Amarjeet Sinha, Former Secretary, Department of Rural Development and Former Advisor, Prime Minister's Office; Shri V. Srinivas, Secretary, Department of Pension and Pensioners Welfare; Shri Manoj Yadava, DG, Railway Protection Force; Ambassador Lim Sang Woo, Charge d'Affaires, Embassy of the Republic of Korea in New Delhi; Shri Vijay Nehra, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare; Ms. Preeti Nath, Economic Adviser, MEITY; Dr. Sanjay Wadhwa, Professor and Head, Dept. of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, AIIMS, New Delhi; Shri Mathew Cherian, Global Ambassador for Ageing, HelpAge International; Dr. Manohar Agnani, Professor of Public Health, Azim Premji University, Bhopal; Professor T. V. Shekhar, International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai; Smt Pavithra Reddy, COO, Vayah Vikas, Bengaluru; Shri Jaydeep Biswas, Chief of Policy, Advocacy and Partnerships at UNFPA India; Shri Asheesh Gupta, Founder and MD, Samarth Elder Care; Shri Yudhistir Govinda Das, Director of Communication, ISKCON India among others.

The participants included senior government functionaries, member of academia, research organisations, startups, tech and healthcare companies, representatives of civil society, geriatric care and palliative care institutions, among others.

Some of the key outcomes of the deliberation were:

- i.) Better nutrition and improved healthcare have increased the life expectancy resulting in a growing elderly population. This creates both challenges as well as opportunities for a developing country like India amid 'ageing without affluence'.



► Other eminent panelists of the National Conference on Ageing in India

- ii.) Need to make ageing aspirational through early preparation, active and productive ageing by adopting a lifestyle approach with investment from a younger age.
- iii.) Create an enabling atmosphere to give opportunity to 60+ aged people to make meaningful contributions using technology.
- iv.) Need for creating a competitive environment among states to improve elderly care along with greater decentralisation to encourage local self-governments to take larger responsibilities.
- v.) Model programme like Kerala's Palliative Care may be adopted for elderly care.
- vi.) Ensure financial security, digital literacy, long-term care insurance, digital healthcare, assistive devices and platforms for engaging and integrating the elderly into India's 'silver economy.'

- vii.) Give primacy to family and community-led initiatives in the Indian model for elderly care.

The conference called upon all stakeholders, including government institutions, civil society organisations and people in general to actively engage in initiatives aimed at upholding the dignity and rights of the elderly population. This may contribute to the establishment of a just and equitable society.



► A section of participants

Envisioning Future India: Challenges, Opportunities and the Road Ahead

- Bharat Lal
Secretary General, NHRC, India

(Excerpts of his address in 'Technology, Research, Innovation and Policy Summit 2025' at IIT Kanpur on 23rd August, 2025)



Technology, innovation, research and policy are not ends in themselves. They are instruments that allow us to shape the society we wish to see. The real question before us is what kind of society do we want in the next 25 years and how do we harness these instruments to get there?

A Vision Beyond 2047: When we imagine India in 2047, the centenary of our independence, we just do not speak about the GDP, trade or ranking numbers. We speak about a society where prosperity, dignity and justice reach every citizen. In the last ten years over 25 crore poor people have overcome poverty creating a new 'neo middle class.'

The Challenges of the Next 25 Years: Before we talk of solutions, we must be honest about the challenges that await us.

- i.) **Climate and Environment:** Extreme heat, erratic monsoons and rising seas will test our resilience. According to NITI Aayog's Composite Water Management Index, nearly 600 million Indians at present face water stress.
- ii.) **Demography and Employment:** The Economic Survey 2023-24 notes that the Indian economy needs to generate an average of nearly 78.5 lakh jobs annually until 2030 in the non-farm sector to cater to the rising workforce.
- iii.) **Health and Ageing:** We will face both pandemics and lifestyle diseases, alongside an ageing population. By 2050, one in five Indians will be over 60.
- iv.) **Urbanisation and Migration:** By 2050, over half of India's population will live in cities, creating opportuni-

ties but also immense stress on housing, infrastructure and social harmony.

- v.) **Inequality and Social Cohesion:** If unchecked, technology could widen gaps between rich and poor, rural and urban, skilled and unskilled.
- vi.) **Geopolitics and Global Role:** As India rises as a global leader, we will be called upon to balance growth with sustainability and technological power with ethical responsibility.

These are formidable challenges. But they are not road-blocks, they are opportunities for transformation.

State-Driven Instruments Today: Over the last decade, India has built a powerful foundation of state-driven innovation.

- i.) Through India Stack-Aadhaar, UPI, DigiLocker and ONDC, India created one of the most inclusive digital public infrastructures in the world. As of July, 2024, 138.04 crore Aadhaar numbers have been generated; more than 30 crore users have been facilitated and 675 crore issued documents made available by DigiLocker. India Stack Global has been developed and rolled out with the aim to share the success of Indian Digital Public Infrastructure's with the global community and to facilitate replication in friendly countries.
- ii.) With the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission, we began the journey of a connected and equitable health ecosystem. As of 6th February, 2025, more than 73.98 Crore Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA) were created. Over 49.06 Crore health records were linked with the ABHA as per the data of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

- iii.) The National Green Hydrogen Mission and rapid adoption of renewable energy are transforming our energy future. The National Solar Mission has propelled solar energy growth with installed capacity rising from 9.01 GW in 2016 to 97.86 GW in 2025. Additionally, PM-KUSUM and PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana are accelerating solar adoption among farmers and households.
- iv.) The National Education Policy 2020 has opened doors to flexible and multi-disciplinary learning for our youth. Over 1.15 lakh Socio-economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDG) students and 7.58 lakh girls were enrolled in inclusive residential schools. PRASHAST App supports disability screening in line with the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPwD Act). Indian Sign Language is now a subject with 1000+ videos and talking books developed. 72% schools now have internet and e - Jaadui Pitara brings AI-powered multilingual learning to early grades. SWAYAM saw 5.15 crore+ enrolments. Virtual Labs developed 900+ labs; National Digital Library of India (NDLI) hosts 8 crore+ resources scaling access, credit transfer and multilingual learning nationwide.
- v.) And through governance innovations like direct benefit transfers, India has shown the world how technology can be an instrument of social justice. As on 14th August, 2025, over Rs. 45.70 lakh Cr have been directly transferred to the beneficiaries. The Reserve Bank of India released Financial Inclusion Index (FI-Index) for the year ending March, 2025 which stands at 67.0 and increased by 24.3 % since 2021.

Future Evolution of these Instruments

But these instruments are not static. They are evolving and, in their evolution, lies the story of India's future.

- i.) Digital Public Infrastructure will move from enabling payments to enabling prosperity-UPI with AI-driven micro-credit and Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) expanding into global South-South trade networks.
- ii.) Healthcare systems will shift from treatment to prediction with AI forecasting outbreaks, personalised therapies and rural kiosks blending telemedicine with preventive AYUSH care.
- iii.) Energy innovation will progress from green hydrogen and EVs to a circular bio-economy, with indigenous sodium-ion batteries and AI-managed smart grids.
- iv.) Education will become lifelong and immersive with

Virtual Reality / Augmented Reality classrooms in Indian languages, micro-credentials for reskilling and ITIs co-designed with industry.

- v.) Governance will evolve from delivering schemes to co-creating policies with citizens helping design welfare through digital democracy platforms with blockchains ensuring transparency.

This is the India we are building and not just a consumer of innovation, but its author.

Community Wisdom – The People's Innovation: Yet, while we speak of satellites and AI, let us remember that the future of India is also being written in its villages, forests and communities.

- i.) In Rajasthan, traditional Johads for water harvesting are being revived with IoT sensors to create climate-resilient systems.
- ii.) In Odisha and Karnataka, tribal farmers leading the millet revival are giving the world lessons in nutrition and sustainability.
- iii.) In Tilonia, Rajasthan, the women trained as Barefoot Engineers to build and maintain solar grids, show us how the energy transition can be rooted in empowerment.
- iv.) Across Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, self-help groups of women act as community health leaders, blending traditional remedies with telemedicine.
- v.) And in remote villages, Ekal Vidyalayas and community radios are carrying education and voice to the last mile.

This is India's unique strength: while the state builds institutions, the people build resilience. Our innovation comes not only from laboratories and universities, but also from the lived experiences of our communities.

Role of IITs, Intellectuals and the Intelligentsia: The Indian Institute of Technologies (IITs) are the temples of modern India, envisioned by our first Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. These institutions were meant to produce engineers who can be nation builders.

As India faces the challenges of the next 25 years, the role of IITs and institutions of national importance will be three-fold:

- **Knowledge Creation:** To move beyond incremental improvements and lead in frontier research in the field of AI, quantum technologies, green hydrogen, sustainable agriculture and biotechnology.

- **Knowledge Application:** To bridge the gap between the laboratory and the village by turning research into real solutions for farmers, workers and small entrepreneurs.
- **Knowledge Leadership:** To guide society in making ethical choices about technology on privacy, AI, environment and equity.

The intelligentsia, our scholars, scientists and policy thinkers must not only solve technical problems but also ask the deeper questions: What kind of progress do we seek? How do we ensure that technology serves humanity, not the other way around?

If India is to become not just a \$30 trillion economy but also a moral and intellectual leader of the world, it is institutions like IIT Kanpur that will provide the compass.

Conclusion

So, when we ask, what kind of society we will be in 25 years, the answer is: we will be a society that fuses the cutting edge of science with the timeless wisdom of our communities.

A society where digital technology delivers dignity wherein renewable energy delivers not just power but empower people: Where research is not only in journals but in the hands of every citizen and where policy is not only made for the people but with the people.

If we succeed, India will not only be the world's largest economy. It will be the world's most humane economy, an economy of compassion, inclusion and justice powered by innovation and guided by wisdom. This is India of 2047 and it begins with the choices we make today.

Suo motu cognizance

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* cognizance of many such issues and brought succour to the victims of human rights violations. During August, 2025, the Commission took *suo motu* cognizance of more than 20 incidents 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:

Medical negligence

(Case No. 1652/1/2/2025)

On 4th August, 2025, the media reported that a 34-year-old woman died due to medical negligence in the Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh. She was admitted to a private hospital and suffered excessive bleeding after the surgery resulting in her death. The Commission has issued notices to the State Principal Secretary, Department of Health, Medical and Family Welfare and the Superintendent of Police, Anantapur, calling for a detailed report on the matter including the status of the investigation.

Death of three children after falling into an open pit

(Case No. 16618/24/54/2025)

On 5th August, 2025, the media

reported that three children, aged 8-9 years, died due to drowning in a six-foot-deep pit left open by a builder during the construction of a building in a newly developed colony in Meerut district of Uttar Pradesh on 3rd August, 2025. Reportedly, they fell into the pit while coming back from a shop after buying chocolates. The Commission has issued notices to the Chief Secretary and the Director General of Police, Uttar Pradesh, calling for a detailed report on the matter. It is expected to include the status of the investigation of the case as well as compensation, if any, provided to the next of kin of the victims.

Burning of a girl student by the cook

(Case No. 3212/4/13/2025)

On 5th August, 2025, the media

reported that a girl student was burnt with a hot spatula by the cook of her residential school when she asked for food. Reportedly, the incident happened at Kasturba Gandhi Girls Residential School in the Shakurabad area of Jehanabad district, Bihar. The Commission has issued notices to the District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police, Jehanabad, calling for a detailed report on the matter. The report is expected to include the health status of the injured student.

Assault of a journalist by two police officers

(Case No. 918/19/6/2025)

On 7th August, 2025, the media reported about the two Punjab Police officers publicly assaulting a journalist in the Batala area of Gurdaspur district,

Punjab. Reportedly, in a video grab of the incident, the victim could be seen lying motionless while the police personnel were walking away after assaulting him. The Commission has issued a notice to the Director General of Police, Punjab, calling for a detailed report on the matter. The report is expected to include the status of the investigation and the health of the victim journalist.

Corporal punishment fracturing a student's shoulder

(Case No. 16872/24/30/2025)

On 7th August 2025, the media reported that corporal punishment by a teacher fractured a shoulder of a third standard student at a government-run primary school in the Gautam Budh Nagar district, Uttar Pradesh. Reportedly, the boy did not disclose the incident but refused to go to school till after 3-4 days, his younger brother informed that he was injured due to beating with a stick by a teacher. The Commission has issued notices to the Principal Secretary, Department of Basic Education, Uttar Pradesh and the District Police Commissioner, calling for a detailed report on the matter.

Death due to self-immolation

(Case No. 1369/18/27/2025-WC)

On 7th August, 2025, the media reported that a 19-year-old girl immolated herself in Odisha's Kendrapara district amid allegations of police inaction for nearly six months on a complaint that she was being blackmailed by her former male friend. Reportedly, he was threatening to post her obscene photos and videos on social media. The complaint was given to the police by the father of the victim but neither an

FIR was registered, nor any action was taken against the alleged perpetrator. Rather, a police officer reportedly discouraged him from pursuing the matter and suggested blocking the phone number of the blackmailer. The Commission has issued a notice to the Director General of Police, Odisha, calling for a detailed report on the matter, including the status of the investigation.

Gangrape

(Case No. 2418/12/45/2025-WC)

On 7th August, 2025, the media reported that a 20-year-old woman, who had gone out with her fiancé, was allegedly raped by four persons in the Sidhi district of Madhya Pradesh. They also assaulted her partner. Reportedly, after managing to escape from the attackers, the victims reached a police station to register an FIR. The Commission has issued a notice to the Director General of Police, Madhya Pradesh, calling for a detailed report on the matter. The report is expected to include the status of the investigation as well as the health of the victim.

Death of three girls due to drowning in a pit

(Case No. 1838/7/22/2025)

On 7th August, 2025, the media reported that three girls drowned to death in a deep pit in Sewli village in the Palwal district of Haryana. Reportedly, the girls were bathing in the pit near a brick kiln. The Commission has issued notices to the District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police, Palwal, calling for a detailed report on the matter. The report is expected to include action against persons responsible for the mishap and details of compensation, if any, paid to the next of kin of the victims.

Death of a patient left unattended

(Case No. 16843/24/79/2025)

On 11th August, 2025, the media reported that due to the alleged mismanagement of the hospital staff and lack of their coordination with police, a 25-year-old patient died without any treatment at the Kanpur Medical College, Uttar Pradesh. Reportedly, two persons admitted him to the hospital in a serious condition and left. He was in an unconscious state. The doctor on duty referred him to another hospital, but nobody was there to accompany him. Hence, a message was sent to the local police station to provide a guard to go with him. The police escort did not reach the hospital for about 6-7 hours and the patient died during this period.

Not only this, the body of the victim also remained in the ward for several hours till it started stinking, forcing the other patients to leave the place. Reportedly, the police claimed that a guard was sent to the hospital to escort the patient, but he could not be taken to the referral facility due to non-availability of an ambulance. However, the hospital authorities reportedly claimed that an ambulance was available. The Commission has issued notices to the Chief Secretary and the Director General of Police, Uttar Pradesh, calling for a detailed report on the matter.

Death of a man after severe beating

(Case No. 2058/13/12/2025)

On 13th August, 2025, the media reported that a 21-year-old man died after severe beating in public by a group of people in a village in Jalgaon district, Maharashtra on 11th August,

2025. Reportedly, the victim was sitting at a cafe with a girl belonging to a different community when a group of 8-10 men confronted him. After seeing a photograph on his mobile phone, they started assaulting him. The perpetrators dragged the man to his village and continued to beat him while parading through the streets before leaving him near his house severely injured. The Commission has issued notices to the Chief Secretary and the Director General of Police, Maharashtra, calling for a detailed report on the matter. The report is expected to include the status of the investigation, as well as compensation, if any, paid to the next of kin of the victim.

Gang rape of a speech and hearing-impaired woman

(Case No. 16918/24/11/2025-WC)

On 14th August, 2025 the media reported that a speech and hearing-impaired woman was subjected to gang rape by two people after chasing her down on the roads in Balrampur district, Uttar Pradesh on 11th August, 2025. Reportedly, the incident occurred when the victim was coming back after visiting one of her relatives. The Commission has issued notices to the State Director General of Police and the District Magistrate, calling for a detailed report on the matter. The report is expected to include the status of investigation and compensation, if any, granted to the victim.

Cremation of a man's body by GRP

(Case No. 16919/24/1/2025)

On 14th August, 2025, the media reported that a man, found dead in a general compartment of a train at a railway station in Agra, Uttar Pradesh, was cremated amidst counter claims

by the Government Railway Police (GRP) and his family. The GRP maintained that the family refused to identify the body and receive it whereas the victim's family said that they could not reach Agra from Giridih, Jharkhand in just a day to receive his body. Later, reportedly the family performed the last rites with his effigy. The family is also asking as to why the body of the deceased could not be sent to Jharkhand. The Commission has issued notices to the Chief Secretary and the Director General of Police, Uttar Pradesh, calling for a detailed report on the matter.

Denial of medical treatment

(Case No. 16976/24/68/2025)

On 14th August 2025, the media reported that in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, the parents of an ailing girl were forced to rush her to a private hospital after the doctors at a government-run hospital did not provide her any treatment despite repeated requests for two hours. Reportedly, when her condition deteriorated, the father carried her on his motorcycle to a private hospital as the government hospital did not even provide an ambulance. Therefore, it has issued notices to the Chief Secretary, Government of Uttar Pradesh, calling for a detailed report on the matter including the health status of the ailing girl.

Death of five persons while cleaning sewage tanks

(Case No. 16979/24/68/2025 and 16977/24/30/2025)

On 17th and 18th August, 2025, the media reported the death of five persons while cleaning sewage tanks in two separate incidents in the Gautam Budh Nagar and Sitapur districts of Uttar

Pradesh. Reportedly, two of them died while cleaning the sewage tank at a pumping station of the NOIDA authority on 16th August, 2025. The three others died while cleaning a septic tank at a residence in Suketha village, Sitapur on 17th August, 2025.

The Commission has issued notices to the Chairman, NOIDA Authority and the Commissioner of Police, Gautam Budh Nagar in the matter related to the incident in NOIDA. On the Sitapur incident, notices have been issued to the District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police, calling for detailed reports.

The reports are expected to include the status of the investigation of the cases as well as compensation, if any, paid to the next of kin of the deceased persons. The status of medical treatment being provided to the injured boy in the Sitapur incident has also been sought.

Death of three labourers in a building collapse

(Case No. 4064/30/1/2025)

On 21st August, 2025, the media reported that three labourers died and several others escaped narrowly when a portion of an under construction four-storey building collapsed in the Daryaganj area of Delhi on 20th August, 2025. The deceased were migrant workers from Bihar. Reportedly, around 15 labourers were present at the site when the incident occurred. A case has been registered against the owner of the building and the contractor. The Commission has issued notices to the Chief Secretary, Government of NCT of Delhi, Commissioner, Municipal Corporation and Deputy Commissioner of Police, Central Delhi, calling for a detailed report on the matter.

Death of four workers at a pharmaceutical manufacturing unit

(Case No. 2119/13/37/2025)

On 21st August, 2025, the media reported that four workers died and two were injured after inhaling Nitrogen gas that leaked at a pharmaceutical manufacturing unit located in the Boisar Industrial Estate of Tarapur, Palghar district, Maharashtra. At the time of the incident, 36 workers were present at the unit. The Commission has issued notices to the Chief Secretary and the DGP, Maharashtra, calling for a detailed report on the matter. The report is expected to include the status of the investigation of the case and compensation, if any, provided to the next of kin of the deceased and the health of the injured workers.

Death of a Zimbabwean student

(Case No. 947/19/2/2025)

On 21st August, 2025, the media reported that a Zimbabwean student died after he was assaulted by a security guard and his associates in Bathinda, Punjab on 13th August, 2025. Reportedly, he had an altercation with the security guard a day before. The victim was pursuing graduation at the Guru Kashi University in Talwandi Sabo Town of Bathinda. The Commission has issued notices to the Director General of Police, Punjab and the Registrar, Guru Kashi University, Bathinda, calling for a detailed report on the matter.

Death of a man amidst allegations of torture at a De-addiction centre

(Case no. 17246/24/30/2025)

On 19th August, 2025, the media

reported that a 38-year-old man allegedly died due to torture at a De-addiction centre in Meerut, Uttar Pradesh. He was declared dead at AIIMS, New Delhi when brought from the centre for treatment on 19th August, 2025. Reportedly, he was shifted to this De-addiction centre in Meerut district from another centre in NOIDA, Gautam Buddha Nagar district of Uttar Pradesh on 17th August, 2025. An officer of the District Tobacco Control Cell was reported to have said that not even a single De-addiction centre operating in the Gautam Buddha Nagar district of Uttar Pradesh was authorised and registered with the authorities.

The Commission has issued notices to the Chief Secretary and the Director General of Police, Uttar Pradesh, calling for a detailed report on the matter. The report is expected to include the status of de-addiction centres being run in the state of Uttar Pradesh.

Corporal punishment to several students

(Case no. 3376/4/16/2025)

On 22nd August, 2025, the media reported that about 18 students at a government school were subjected to corporal punishment by their teacher after locking them inside a room in the Haflaganj area of Katihar district, Bihar on 21st August, 2025. Their ordeal stopped when some parents raised the alarm while visiting the premises in connection with some work. Several villagers gathered at the school and started protesting. Sensing trouble, all the male teachers fled the school. The police also reached the spot. The Commission has issued notices to the State Chief Secretary and the Superintendent of Police, Katihar, calling for a detailed report on the matter.

Death of a speech and hearing-impaired gang rape victim

(Case No. 17245/24/31/2025-WC)

On 22nd August, 2025, the media reported that a speech and hearing-impaired gang rape victim was found dead at her house in Ghaziabad district, Uttar Pradesh on 21st August, 2025. Reportedly, she was gang raped by two men in the Loni area of the district after abducting her from an isolated stretch on 18th August, 2025.

The Commission has issued notices to the Director General of Police (DGP), Uttar Pradesh and the District Magistrate, Ghaziabad, calling for a detailed report on the matter.

Death of a woman due to medical negligence

(Case No. 2560/20/14/2025)

On 22nd August, 2025, the media reported that a 26-year-old woman allegedly died due to medical negligence after delivery at the Women Hospital attached to the SMS Medical College in Jaipur, Rajasthan on 21st August, 2025. Reportedly, the family members of the woman have alleged that neither the hospital staff nor the doctors took care of her, even as she was profusely bleeding and writhing in pain after the surgery. They did not even allow the family members to meet her or to shift her from the ward to the ICU. The Commission has issued notices to the State Chief Secretary and the Commissioner of Police, Jaipur, calling for a detailed report on the matter.

Sexual abuse of a 7-year-old boy

(Case No. 679/35/6/2025)

On 22nd August, 2025, the media reported that an Imam sexually abused

a 7-year-old boy at a mosque in the Jhabreda area of Roorkee, Uttarakhand. Reportedly, the victim boy had gone to study in the mosque. The Imam forcefully took him to his room and committed the heinous act on 20th August, 2025. The Commission has issued notices to the District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police, Roorkee, calling for a detailed report on the matter.

Branding of students with a hot iron rod

(Case No. 2559/20/4/2025)

On 22nd August, 2025, the media reported that a teacher, annoyed with the bedwetting by some students, branded them with a hot iron rod at a hostel inside a temple complex in Barmer district, Rajasthan. Reportedly, one of the injured boys reached his

home and reported the matter to his family. Following this, the villagers gathered in large numbers to protest. The video of the incident also went viral on social media. The Commission has issued notices to the District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police, Barmer, calling for a detailed report on the matter, including the health status of the victim students.

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 recommenda-

tions to the concerned authorities for relief to the victims. In August, 2025, besides the number of cases taken up daily by the Member Benches, 51 cases were heard by the Full Commission, 25 cases by Division Bench-I and 52 cases by Division Bench-II. Monetary relief of more than Rs 20.5 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.	380/30/2/2023-JCD	Custodial death (Judicial)	3.00	Delhi
2.	275/13/3/2021-JCD	Custodial death (Judicial)	5.00	Maharashtra
3.	6/20/21/2024-JCD	Custodial death (Judicial)	7.50	Rajasthan
4.	941/6/30/2024	Custodial death (Judicial)	5.00	Gujarat

Payment of relief to the victims

During August, 2025, the Commission closed 11 cases, either on receipt of the compliance reports and proof of payment from

the public authorities or by giving other observations/ directions. Rs 41.35 lakh was paid as relief to the victims or their next of kin (NoK) on the recommenda-

tions 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.	78/1/5/2021-JCD	Custodial death (Judicial)	5.00	Andhra Pradesh
2.	7186/22/13/2020-JCD	Custodial death (Judicial)	5.00	Tamil Nadu

S. No.	Case Number	Nature of complaint	Amount (Rs in lakh)	Authority
3.	498/33/3/2022-PCD	Custodial death (Judicial)	5.00	Chhattisgarh
4.	488/7/6/2021-PCD	Custodial death (Judicial)	5.00	Haryana
5.	1008/25/13/2023-PCD	Custodial death (Judicial)	5.00	West Bengal
6.	1109/7/7/2020-AD	Custodial death (Judicial)	5.00	Haryana
7.	906/34/8/2020-AD	Custodial death (Judicial)	5.00	Jharkhand
8.	920/18/18/2024	Police atrocity on woman	0.10	Odisha
9.	18/19/6/2025	Abuse of power by police	0.75	Punjab
10.	1532/4/26/2024	Abduction and murder	5.00	Bihar
11.	6298/30/9/2022	Police inaction	0.50	Delhi

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 unlawful action, inaction or omission. Therefore, on a case-to-case basis, the Commission issued notices to them to show cause why monetary relief should not be recommended to be paid to the victims of human rights violation or their next of kin and action against the erring/ negligent officials. The merits of the states' approach to responding to its show cause notices prompted the Commission to recommend 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 such cases are as under:

Non-registration of an FIR

(Case no. 6298/30/9/2022)

The matter pertained to the allegation that the police personnel of Police Station Mayapuri, in Delhi refused to register a complaint on the matter of a theft at the house of the victim. On the basis of the material received from the concerned authorities in response to its notices, the Commission observed that the allegations made by the complainant were true. Therefore, it recommended that the Commissioner of Police, Delhi pay Rs. 50,000/- to the victim as relief, which was paid.

Police inaction

(Case no. 1532/4/26/2024)

The matter pertained to police inaction on a complaint of assault on the grandson of the complainant by three

named accused in Patna, Bihar. Allegedly, after this assault, they kidnapped and murdered his grandson. For this, another FIR vide case crime No. 187/23 dated 23.08.2023 u/s 364/302/201/123(B)/34 and 3(1)(R)(S)3(2) was registered at Police Station Salimpur, Patna but no further action was taken by the Police. The offenders were roaming freely and attempts were being made to hush up the matter.

Based on the material on record received from the concerned authorities in response to its notices in the matter, the Commission observed that if the local Police personnel were cautious and performed their duty, the crime would have been nipped in the bud and the precious life of the complainant's grandson could have been saved. Accordingly, the Commission recommended that the Govern-

ment of Bihar pay Rs.5 lakh to the next of kin of the deceased, which was paid.

Sexual assault

(Case no. 446/22/54/2025)

The matter pertained to the allegations of sexual assault on a 10-year-old student by her teacher inside the school premises in Ariyalur district, Tamil Nadu last year. Based on the material on record received from the concerned authorities in response to its notices, the Commission observed that the perpetrator was arrested and criminal proceedings against him were initiated. However, the report was silent about the compensation to the victim. Therefore, the Commission issued a notice to the Government of Tamil Nadu to show cause why it should not recommend payment of Rs. 5 lakh as relief to the victim.

Killing in forest department firing

(Case no. 397/3/34/2022-afe)

The matter pertained to the killing of a tribal man and serious injuries to another in firing by Forest Department officials at Khalingduar Reserve Forest in Udalguri district of Assam on 16th November, 2022. Allegedly, the incident also forced disappearance of a

man. Based on the material on record received from the concerned authorities in response to its notices, the Commission observed that the forest department failed to justify the right of its officers to private defense. The firing made by the forest personnel was targeted, unjust, unnecessary and excessive as also mentioned in the judicial enquiry.

Therefore, a notice was issued to the Chief Secretary, Government of Assam to show cause why the Commission should not recommend payment of Rs. 5 lakh as relief to the next of kin of the deceased and Rs. 2 lakh each to the two injured persons. The Commission also sought to know why action was not taken against the accused forest officials both criminally and departmentally on the matter.

Field visits

Special Rapporteurs and Special Monitors

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India has designated 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 also appointed Special Monitors tasked with overseeing specific thematic human rights issues and reporting their findings to the Commission. Here is a brief on the spot visits by the Special Monitors to numerous locations during July, 2025.

Special Monitors

- From 5th to 13th August, 2025, Shri Balkrishan Goel visited the Child Care Institutions, Jails, Anganwadi Centres, Community Health Centres (CHCs), Primary Health Centres (PHCs), District Hospitals and Old Age Homes in the districts of Pathankot, Kapurthala and Sangrur in Punjab to assess human rights situation.



- From 18th to 23rd August, 2025, Dr. Pradeepta Kumar Nayak visited the districts of Bengaluru Urban, Bengaluru Rural, Tumakuru and Ramanagara in Karnataka. During the visit, he met with the State Leprosy Officers, the Collectors and District Magistrates, the District Heads of Health and Leprosy Programmes, Social Security, Social Welfare, Mental Health, Livelihood and other Departments, Hospitals, Community Health Centres and Public Health Centres. He also met with the leprosy affected persons to examine, monitor, evaluate, advise and report to the NHRC on human rights violations and emerging issues from a human rights perspective.
- From 25th to 29th August, 2025, Shri Prem Singh Bisht visited District Dehradun and adjoining areas in the State of Uttarakhand to assess human rights situation.

Spot Enquiry

The Commission deputes its own team of investigation officers from time to time to conduct spot enquiries into some cases of human rights violations. The following spot enquiries were conducted in August, 2025:

- From 18th to 22nd August, 2025 a team conducted spot enquiries at TIT College and other places in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh in connection with the allegations of harassment, threat, coercion and sexual exploitation with reference to the Case no. 2309/12/8/2025-WC and 791/12/8/2025-WC.



- From 18th to 21st August, 2025, a team conducted a spot inquiry in District Munger, Bihar in connection with allegations about the death of a person under suspicious circumstances while being taken by police with reference to the Case no. 68/4/22/2023-AD.



- From 10th to 15th August, 2025, a team conducted a spot enquiry into the allegations of mass graves of several women and children who were assaulted, murdered and buried over a period of 16 years at Dharmasthala, Dakshina Kannada, Karnataka with reference to the Case no. 746/10/19/2025.

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 online. The online internships are organised to ensure that students from remote areas can join without any expenses for their travel and stay in Delhi. In addition, the Commission also organises a tailored human rights training programme for the officers of various services as its mission to uphold and safeguard human rights across all institutions, ensuring that the rights and dignity of every individual are protected.

Online Short-Term Internship

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India concluded its 2nd two week Online Short-Term Internship Programme (OSTI) of 2025-2026 on 22nd August, 2025. It was inaugurated on 11th August, 2025. 72 out of 80 university-level students successfully completed the internship. They came from various universities in different regions, representing 20 states and union territories. They were shortlisted out of 1,957 applicants to participate in this programme.

Addressing the valedictory session as the Chief Guest, Justice Shri V. Ramasubramanian, Chairperson, NHRC, India articulated the programme's core objectives through a vivid metaphor "to ignite a fire and to light a lamp." He encouraged the interns to emerge as dedicated ambassadors for human rights, fostering a society rooted in mutual respect.



► NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice Shri V. Ramasubramanian delivering the valedictory session



► A section of online interns

Drawing from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) adopted in 1948, Justice Ramasubramanian emphasised that true societal progress begins when individuals learn to honour the rights of others. Quoting philosopher Will Durant that "education is the progressive discovery of one's own ignorance," he urged the interns to commit themselves to lifelong learning for self-improvement.



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

Smt. Saidingpuii Chhakchhuak, Joint Secretary, NHRC, presented the internship report. Besides the sessions on different aspects of human rights by the senior NHRC officers, experts and civil society representatives, the interns were also taken for virtual tours to the Tihar Jail, Police Station and Asha Kiran Shelter Home in Delhi. They were given an understanding of different government institutions' functioning, the mechanisms to protect human rights, the realities on the ground and the necessary steps to protect the rights of vulnerable sections of society. Winners of the book review, group research project presentation and declamation competition were also announced.

Earlier, while inaugurating the internship, the NHRC, India Member, Justice (Dr) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi said that protecting human rights is intrinsic to leading a life with dignity, liberty, equality and justice. Therefore, understanding the issues related to human rights is crucial to protect the rights of others. He said that the contributions of human rights defenders (HRDs) must be valued.

Justice Sarangi also gave an overview of the NHRC's mission under the Protection of Human Rights Act (PHR Act) and the Constitutional guarantees to the citizens under Articles 14, 19 and 21 protecting the rights to equality, liberty and life, aligning with the UDHR. He also highlighted NHRC's various interventions including initiatives such as mainstreaming the concerns related to rights of transgender community.

The OSTI is designed to equip students from diverse academic backgrounds with the knowledge and skills necessary to address human rights challenges. Through interactive sessions and engaging activities, interns are expected to gain a deeper understand-

ing of national and international human rights law and perspectives for inculcating effective advocacy strategies. Beyond building knowledge, the programme also aims to foster sensitivity among the interns and to equip them to contribute more meaningfully to the society with human values.

Workshops

- On 6th August, 2025, NHRC, India in collaboration with the Education Department of Jamia Millia Islamia started a day-long training on “Child Rights” in New Delhi. Chairperson Justice, Shri V. Ramasubramanian delivered the inaugural address as the Chief Guest. Quoting Kahlil Gibran, he highlighted children's rights to survival, education, protection and participation. He traced child rights from the 1924 Geneva Declaration to the 1989 UN Convention. Commending checks on female infanticide, he stressed the urgency of safeguarding 200 million vulnerable children in India. He urged educators to foster safe, inclusive schools, ensuring compliance with laws like the Right to Education Act. He reaffirmed NHRC's commitment to justice, equity and the protection of rights for India's 460 million children.



- On 13th August, 2025, NHRC, India in collaboration with the Prince Dr K Vasudevan College of Engineering and Technology, Chennai, Tamil Nadu organised a one-day training programme on human rights for the students. Ms Illakkiya Karunakaran, SSP, NHRC addressed the inaugural session as the Chief Guest. About 120 students attended.



- On 22nd August, 2025, NHRC, India supported Sher-I-Kashmir Police Academy, Udhampur, Jammu and Kashmir in organising one day training of about 50 police personnel on human rights. Inaugural session Chief Guest, Shri Samir Kumar, Joint Secretary informed them about the NHRC's role in safeguarding and promoting human rights.



- On 24th August, 2025, NHRC, India organised 2-day training programme for the police personnel on 'Police and Human Rights: Issues and Challenges,' in collaboration with the Indian Law Institute. Joint Secretary, Shri Samir Kumar spoke about the role of NHRC in promoting and protecting human rights.



Moot court

- From 21st-24th August, 2025, NHRC, India organised a National Moot Court Competition in collaboration with the IFIM Law School, Bengaluru, Karnataka. The valedictory session Chief Guest was Justice Shri B.A. Patil, Former Judge, High Court of Karnataka and Guest of Honour was Shri Joginder Singh, Registrar (Law), NHRC. The moot proposition focused on the human rights implications of AI-generated deepfakes, particularly their misuse against women and minors. 48 teams across the country participated.



Exposure visits

The Commission encourages college and university students and their faculty to visit its premises for their human rights orientation by the senior officers. They are also briefed about the Commission's functioning for processing complaints as well as promoting and protecting human rights. Some of the visits during August, 2025 were as follows:



On 12th August, 2025, a group of 31 students and 3 faculty members from the IMS Law College, NOIDA, Uttar Pradesh, visited NHRC, India.



On 20th August, 2025, 44 students and 2 faculty members from the Lovely Professional University, Kapurthala, Punjab, visited NHRC, India.



On 25th August, 2025, a batch of 21 students and one faculty member from the SRM University, Sonipat, Haryana, visited the NHRC, India.



Research Study

The National Human Rights Commission, (NHRC), India awards research projects to expert researchers on various aspects of Human Rights for an assessment of the related policies and legal provisions and the situation on the ground. Below is a brief outcome of two such recently concluded research studies:

Prevalence of Girl Child Labour in the Indian Textile Industry in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka

Commissioned by: National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India

Principal Investigator: Dr. M. Karthik, Associate Professor, Institute of Public Enterprise (IPE), Hyderabad

Full Report available at: www.nhrc.nic.in

The garment and textile industry in India, with its global reputation and economic significance, is also a site of persistent labour rights violations, particularly in its informal and subcontracting segments. The hypothesis of this research study was that despite constitutional safeguards and strict labour laws in India, adolescent girls (aged 14–18 years) continue to form a significant share of the workforce in textile clusters, often under exploitative conditions. The study also hypothesised that coercive recruitment schemes by brokers and “marriage-linked contracts” contribute to the continued existence of girl child labour.

Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the employment practices in textile and garment units of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

2. To assess the working conditions of adolescent girls employed in the sector.
3. To examine the role of brokers, contractors and company representatives in recruitment.
4. To provide policy recommendations for preventing girl child labour in industrial clusters.

Methodology

The study followed a mixed-method design combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches:

- **Primary Data:** Nearly 400 structured interviews were conducted in each of the four selected cities (Coimbatore, Tirupur, Bengaluru, Mysuru). Only female respondents were selected to focus on girl child labour and adolescent employment.
- **Age Distribution of Respondents:**
 - o Tamil Nadu: 149 (14–16 yrs), 367 (16–18 yrs), 204 (18+).
 - o Karnataka: 87 (12–14 yrs), 229 (14–16 yrs), 314 (16–18 yrs), 160 (18+).

- **Secondary Data:** Analysis of laws, policies, government reports and academic studies was undertaken.
- **Stakeholder Interactions:** Industry heads, trade associations (e.g., Tirupur Export Association, South India Textile Mills Association), brokers and parents were consulted.
- **Statistical Tools:** Chi-square, t-test, standard deviation and ANOVA were used to test correlations between age, wages, working hours, caste and other socio-economic factors.

Key Findings

1. Extent of Girl Child Labour

- **Below 14 years:** No systematic evidence of child labour under 14 in organised textile mills.
- **14–18 years:** A significant presence across both states with adolescents often making up a quarter to one-third of factory floors.
- Many respondents above 18 admitted to having entered employment at 13–15 years of age, pointing to hidden early child labour.

2. Working Conditions

- **Hours:** Average of 9.8–10 hours daily, sometimes longer during peak export seasons.
- **Rest and Safety:** Breaks were minimal; safety equipment unevenly enforced. Younger girls reported fewer breaks.
- **Leave:** Correlated with age, workers under 16 received the least leave entitlements.

3. Wages and Discrimination

- Wages were often below statutory minimums. Adolescents in the 14–16 years group faced higher wage irregularity (20% reported “highly irregular” payments).
- **Caste disparities:** Forward caste girls reported relatively better wages, while SC/ST/OBC girls faced lower daily earnings and delayed payments.

4. Recruitment Patterns

- Most respondents stated they joined “voluntarily,” but deeper inquiry revealed indirect coercion:
- Sumangali Scheme in Tamil Nadu – exploitative scheme deployed by employers to lure young girls

into the job on the promise of lump-sum payments for dowry/ marriage.

- Recruitment through sub-brokers and local contractors, who earned commission per girl employed.

5. Educational and Social Impacts

- A majority of 14–16 year olds were school dropouts, often pushed by families to supplement household income.
- Girls' wages were commonly used to support siblings' education, highlighting a gendered sacrifice.

6. Impact of COVID-19

- Post-pandemic economic distress drove many girls back into the workforce.
- In Tamil Nadu, prevalence of child labour among vulnerable communities increased by nearly 280% during COVID-19.

Major Observations

- **Shift from Hazardous to “Non-Hazardous” Work:** Organised mills largely avoided direct child labour violations but sub-contracted work to smaller unregulated units. This created a “hidden layer” of exploitation.
- **Inter-sectionality of Poverty, Gender and Caste:** Dalit and tribal girls were disproportionately represented, often in the lowest-paying tasks.
- **Marriage-Linked Exploitation:** Schemes promising to cover marriage expenses kept girls bonded for years with families reluctant to release them mid-contract.
- **Global Supply Chain Pressure:** Fast fashion and international demand for “cheap exports” pushed units to cut costs, perpetuating low wages and reliance on adolescents.

Policy suggestions

1. **Strengthen Enforcement:** Expand monitoring to subcontracting and informal clusters, not just registered mills.
2. **Ban on Adolescent Labour in Hazardous Processes:** Strict implementation of the Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 (amended 2016).

3. **Regulate Recruiters and Brokers:** Introduce licensing and penalties for those coercing minors.
4. **Community Support Systems:** Establish district-level child labour helpline numbers and bridge schools to reintegrate working girls into education.
5. **Livelihood Alternatives:** Provide conditional cash transfers or stipends to families that withdraw adolescent girls from work and keep them in school.
6. **Industry Responsibility:** Global brands sourcing from Tamil Nadu and Karnataka should adopt child-labour-free certification and mandatory third-party audits.

Outcome

The study concludes that while visible child labour under 14 has reduced in India's organised textile sector, adolescent girl labour (14–18 years) remains entrenched, particularly in informal and semi-formal settings. Structural inequalities, poverty, caste hierarchies, gender roles and coercive recruitment sustain the practice. Unless a multi-pronged strategy combining legal enforcement, educational alternatives and social protection is adopted, the textile industry will continue to be shadowed by adolescent girl exploitation, undermining India's commitment to eliminating all forms of child labour by 2025 under the SDGs.

Food and Nutritional Security among Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs): Evidences from Three Indian States

Commissioned by: National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India

Principal Investigator: Dr. Amit Kumar Basantaray, Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Central University of Himachal Pradesh.

Full Report available at: www.nhrc.nic.in

One of the most important opportunities before humanity is to ensure freedom from hunger, food insecurity and nutritional challenges, particularly for women in reproductive age and children under five among vulnerable communities. The NHRC, India sponsored a research project titled 'Food and Nutritional Security among Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs): Evidences from Three Indian States.' The study explored the food security, dietary diversity and nutritional status of children under-5 by collecting data from Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan and Odisha.

Objectives

- a) To measure the extent of food and nutritional insecurity in the selected states
- b) To document the differences in food and nutritional insecurity status of SC, ST and general category households
- c) To find out the determinants of food insecurity.
- d) To examine the problems and challenges with the current programmes in place to check food and nutritional insecurity

- e) To provide policy suggestions to eradicate food and nutritional insecurity in the sample districts

Research Methodology

Sampling Method

The report draws on both primary and secondary data to ensure a comprehensive analysis. Primary data was collected through a multistage sampling approach ensuring representativeness and reliability. The secondary data primarily comes from various rounds of the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) conducted by the Indian Institute of Population Sciences under the guidance of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), Government of India.

Sample Size: The total sample size consists of 1000 households, out of which 400 each are from Odisha and Rajasthan and the rest 200 households are from Himachal Pradesh. From each of the three selected states, one district was chosen for SC households and the other for ST households.

Sampling Tools

To assess the development status of districts, an index was constructed using key development indicators such as literacy rate, infant mortality rate and poverty rate. Based on this composite index, districts were ranked according to their level of development. From this ranking, the lowest-performing districts, referred to as underdeveloped districts, were identified. Within this group, districts having at least 25 % SC or ST population were selected for focused analysis.

Food security has been analysed at the household level and individual level using Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) introduced by the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) in 2014. Nutritional status of the children under-5 has been examined using WHO classification of weight-for-height z-score.

Statistics used

The Chi-square test was employed to examine the statistical significance of the association between the independent and dependent variables along with the other statistical tools.

Some Key Findings

The study found that going by the secondary data based on the National Family Health Survey, NFHS-3 (2005-06), NFHS-4 (2015-16) and NFHS-5 (2019-21), the three states - Odisha, Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan are doing better than all India over time in terms of nutrition among children. The primary data from Odisha, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh was collected through a large-scale survey of SC, ST and other households selected through multistage sampling method. It shows a notable reduction in the incidence of stunting, wasting, underweight and anaemia in all the three states. There is also narrowing of gap across socio-economic groups such as castes, wealth quintiles, mother's education, mother's health and age group of children.

Food Security and Nutrition in Odisha, Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan

The primary survey shows a high food security among households in Odisha and Himachal Pradesh. Households in Odisha had the highest food security and it was even higher among SC and ST households compared to the food security of other castes. However, it was puzzling to find high incidence of stunting, wasting and underweight in Odisha despite the high food security. It is possible that not giving enough emphasis on dietary diversity may be resulting in the high incidence of malnutrition.

Incidence of malnutrition was relatively lower in Himachal Pradesh. The regression on the primary data suggests positive effect of food security on nutritional status of children.

In comparison, Rajasthan had the lowest food security. The food insecurity was much severe among ST and SC households. Malnutrition among children found to be higher in Rajasthan.

Relation with wealth and education

Food security in Odisha did not show any significant relation with wealth and education either. Food security in Rajasthan was associated with wealth and education level. In Himachal Pradesh, though caste and wealth are becoming less important, there is still significant gap among caste groups and wealth quintiles.

Overall, mother's characteristics with reference to education and health seem to be extremely important in terms of reduction in incidence of malnutrition.

Policy Implications:

Food security always helps in achieving higher state of nutritional security through target policy instruments.

A. General Policy Prescriptions

1. Ensuring Food Security

Since the regression results in case of Odisha and Rajasthan suggest that food security is an important determinant of malnutrition, especially among SCs and STs, policy makers can take steps to improve the situation of food security. This is particularly true for Rajasthan as it experiences higher food insecurity and high malnutrition as well.

2. Dietary Diversity

Increase awareness about necessity of dietary diversity and policy steps to ensure dietary diversity will not only help in improving food security but also can check malnutrition.

3. Mother's Education

Mother's education is a significant determinant of malnourishment among children. Therefore, government and policy makers may try to check malnourishment by improving education of mothers.

4. Mother's Health

Mother's health is a key determinant of children's nourishment. India has achieved much success in providing all the necessary facilities to pregnant mother and supplying diets in the initial months after delivery of child. This policy needs to be continued.

5. Lowering Income Inequalities

Various quintiles of wealth are found to be significant determinants of malnourishment. Therefore, government and policy makers can tackle the problem of malnutrition by improving upon the wealth inequality situation.

6. Improved Sanitation and Safe Drinking Water

The recent Government policies have improved the sanitation facilities and access to safe drinking water, there is still lot to be done. Improved toilet facility has shown significant association (Chi-square test) with stunting, wasting, underweight, and anaemia in case all of states. Similarly, access to safe drinking water has shown significant effect on nutritional status. Although Further improvement on these two fronts will be highly useful in improving nutritional status, in general, and among SCs and STs in particular.

B. Specific Policy Prescription

1. Providing variety of Ration through PDS

One of the major issues in ensuring food and nutritional security is availability of less variety of food through Public Distribution System (PDS). There is need to fix the number of food items provided at subsidised rate keeping in mind the nutritional requirements of the people. Subsidised ration shops in Rajasthan provide only wheat. Odisha provides wheat and rice and it has recently announced to include

pulses, millets, and vegetables in its PDS items. Himachal Pradesh is going better in terms of providing variety of food items.

2. Delays in getting subsidised Ration

Delays in getting subsidised ration are common, particularly in Rajasthan. The delay multiplies the problem for ST households given their geographical location which usually is far away from nearest market places. The delay increases the cost of getting the food and increases uncertainty leading to higher food insecurity. Therefore, specific policies are needed to make delays more accountable.

3. Evolve plans to meet excess demand in crisis

People depend on own produce and market to satisfy the excess demand above the limit set for subsidised food grains. It is a significant share of total consumption in Rajasthan and Odisha. The government must identify vulnerable households and keep a watch on situations that may cause distress among them.

NHRC in the International arena

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 towards promoting and protecting 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.

Visit of Indonesian delegation

On 27th August, 2025, the Indonesian Minister of Human Rights, Mr. Natalius Pigai visited NHRC, India and held a bilateral meeting with the Chairperson, Justice Shri V. Ramasubramanian. NHRC, India Members, Justice (Dr) B. R. Sarangi, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani, Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal, senior officers of the Commission, delegates from Government of Indonesia, Embassy of Indonesia and Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India were also present.



▶ Meeting between NHRC, India Chairperson, Members, Secretary General and Indonesian delegation



► NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice Shri V Ramasubramanian, Members, Justice (Dr) B.R. Sarangi, Smt Vijaya Bharathi Sayani and Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal interacting with the visiting Indonesian delegation led by Minister of Human Rights, Mr. Natalius Pigai

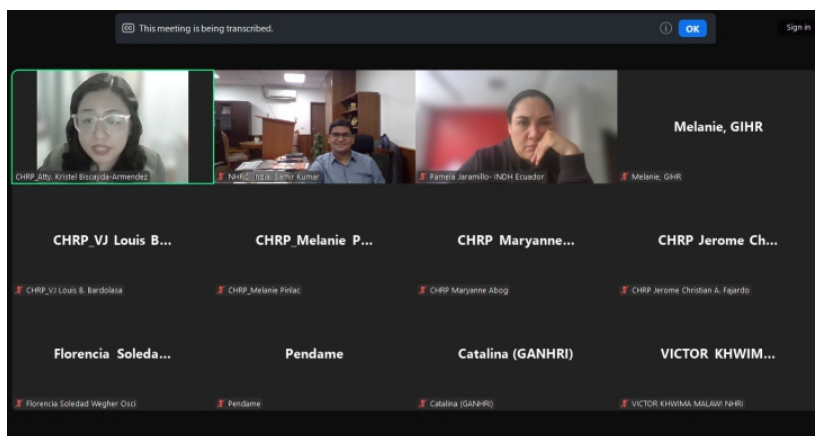


Justice Ramasubramanian emphasised India–Indonesia historical ties and NHRC's two-pronged approach in protecting and promoting human rights, focusing on both prevention and cure. Discussions focused on future collaboration, exchange of best practices and capacity-building initiatives. Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal briefed them about the evolution of human rights in India. The NHRC's role as the apex body safeguarding the rights of marginalised and vulnerable sections was highlighted.

The Indonesian delegation shared insights into the human rights landscape in Indonesia, highlighting that the Ministry of Human Rights of Indonesia is the first of its kind globally. They elaborated on the country's integrated framework comprising the Ministry of Human Rights, the National Human Rights Institution and various specialised agencies focusing on women, children and other vulnerable groups.

Other International Engagements

- On 13th August, 2025, Shri Samir Kumar, Joint Secretary along with Ms. Perna Hasiya, Junior Research Consultant attended the online GANHRI Working Group on Business and Human Rights.



- On 19th August, 2025, Ms. Varsha Apte, Consultant (Research) attended the webinar organised by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on “Intersecting Inequities: Age, Gender and Structural Violence in Global Contexts.”

News from State Human Rights Commissions

Given the ever-expanding dimensions of human life and related challenges, the promotion and protection of human rights is always a work in progress. 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 and welfare measures related to various segments of society. This column intends to highlight the exceptional activities of the SHRCs undertaken to protect and promote human rights.

Haryana State Human Rights Commission

The Haryana State Human Rights Commission (HSHRC) recently intervened in a series of incidents of human rights violations across the state directing the concerned authorities for corrective measures to deliver justice to the victims. Each case, taken up either on complaints or *suo motu* cognizance, reflects a recurring pattern of administrative apathy in healthcare, policing, education and labour protection resulting in violations of basic human rights.

Denial of entitlements to a senior citizen

In Panipat, a senior citizen alleged that his Family ID was deactivated without notice cutting him off from pension, ration and housing benefits. Despite being an Antyodaya beneficiary, he continued to live in unsafe conditions at the Red Cross Old Age Home. Calling this a grave case of insensitivity and administrative failure, the HSHRC held that such denial of entitlements violates the right to live with dignity under Article 21 of the Constitution as well as the Senior Citizens Act, 2007 and issued notices to seven departments of the Haryana Government.

Medical negligence

In another case, the HSHRC took *suo motu* cognizance of the severing of a newborn's arm during delivery at the Mandi Khera Civil Hospital, Nuh. The Commission termed it a gross violation of child rights under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and sought a detailed report from the Civil Surgeon. The HSHRC underlined that the right to safe childbirth is integral to Article 21 and cautioned that such negligence in government facilities not only endangers lives but also erodes public trust.

Illegal custody of a youth

Concerns of police misconduct surfaced in Panchkula where 18-year-old Parvesh Sharma of Pinjore was re-arrested in an Arms Act case despite being on bail. A Kalka court had already declared the re-arrest illegal and even the public prosecutor refused to defend the police action. Finding discrepancies in records, absence of a Daily Diary entry and allegations of political influence, the HSHRC directed the concerned DCP to appear with case files. It described the incident as a *prima facie* violation of human rights raising suspicions of custodial torture.

Unsafe schools

Equally significant was the HSHRCs *suo motu* action on reports of 27 government schools in Hisar running in dilapidated buildings with broken staircases, unstable roofs, damaged water tanks and sealed toilets. Noting that such unsafe environments expose children to risks and psychological trauma, the HSHRC held the state accountable for gross negligence and violation of the constitutional right to education in safe conditions directing officials to act urgently.

Discrimination against a transgender educator

In Karnal, a transgender educator alleged discriminatory denial of recognition to her school for underprivileged children. The HSHRC observed that refusal despite compliance with norms violated both the Right to Education Act and the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019. Following HSHRC's intervention, recognition was finally granted in April, 2025 and the transgender teacher was later honoured with the Teacher Warrior Award at the Global Education Festival for her work in inclusive education.

Worker wrongly marked dead

The HSHRC also took note of the plight of a worker in the Public Health Department at Rohtak. He was not paid

for more than three years after being wrongly marked as “dead” in official records, despite reporting for duty daily. Calling it an egregious violation of Article 21 and labour rights, the Commission described the case as an example of administrative apathy that robs a person of both identity and livelihood. It ordered immediate correction of records, payment of dues and accountability of negligent officials.

Bonded child labourer's ordeal

Most heart-rending was the ordeal of a 15-year-old boy from Bihar who was forced into bonded farm labour in Jind. He lost his arm in an accident and then walked 150 km to Nuh for help after being abandoned by his

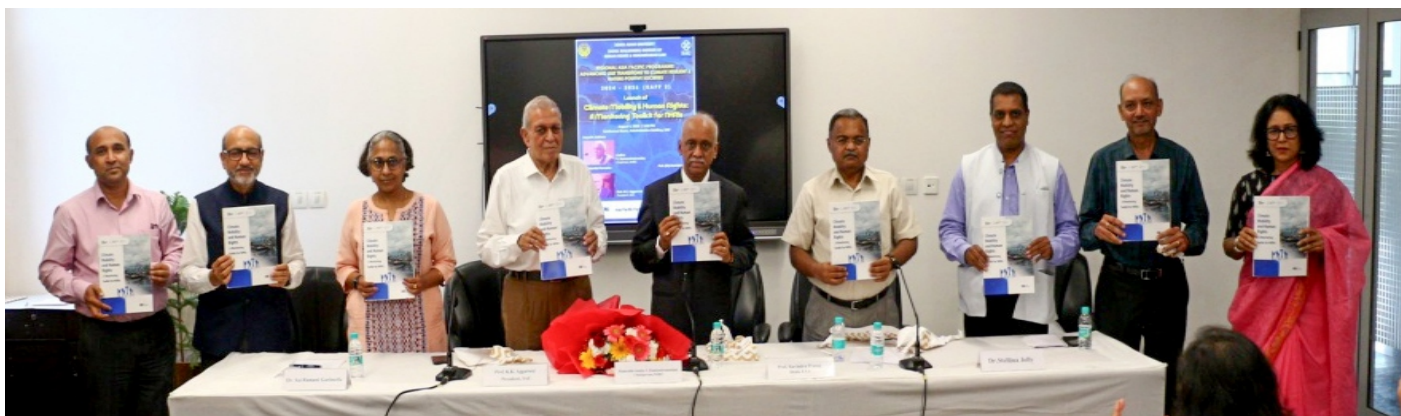
employer. Subjected to abuse, forced labour and starvation, he was rescued only through the intervention of a teacher. The Commission called it a total breakdown of child protection mechanisms and a gross violation of both the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and constitutional rights under Articles 21 and 23. Authorities have been directed to investigate bonded labour practices, punish the culprits and ensure the boy's treatment, rehabilitation and compensation.

News in brief

- On 3rd August, 2025, NHRC, India Member, Justice (Dr) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi addressed, as a Special Guest of Honour, the Induction Programme for the Law Students on Law & Human Rights at the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar National Law University, Sonapat, Haryana.



- On 4th August, 2025, NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice Shri V. Ramasubramanian delivered the keynote address on the launch of "Toolkit for Monitoring human Rights in Climate Change by NHRIs in South Asia" at the Faculty of Legal Studies (FLS), South Asian University, New Delhi.



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- On 4th August, 2025, NHRC, India Member, Shri Priyank Kanoongo attended a programme on Scheduled Castes' Rights in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.
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- On 6th August, 2025, NHRC India Member, Shri Priyank Kanoongo attended, as Chief Guest, a State level Consultation on Prevention of Child Labour and Human Trafficking and a book launch in Udaipur, Rajasthan.
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- On 6th August, 2025, the NHRC, India organised the second meeting of its Advisory Board for the 22nd issue of its annual Hindi journal 'Manav Adhikar: Nai Dishaayein' to discuss the contents. Member, Smt. Vijaya Bharati Sayani chaired the meeting in the presence of Shri Bharat Lal, Secretary General, Smt. Saidingpuii Chhakchhuak, Joint Secretary, senior officers and six external subject experts.



- On 8th August 2025, NHRC, India Member, Justice (Dr) B. R. Sarangi attended a function to commemorate the 78th Birth Anniversary of Prajatantra at Cuttack, Odisha.
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- On 8th August, 2025, NHRC, India Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal inaugurated the International Conference on “From Micro Narratives to Meta Narratives: Reimagining Criminal Jurisprudence in a Globalised World” at the Central University of Karnataka. He stressed bridging micro narratives of victims, undertrials, inmates and law enforcement with meta narratives of constitutional safeguards, restorative justice and global human rights. Citing Articles 14, 19, 21 and 22, he reaffirmed dignity, equality and humane treatment even in custody, rooted in India's ethos and international conventions like UDHR, ICCPR and CEDAW. Exposing harsh ground realities, overcrowded prisons with 573,220 inmates (75% undertrials), poor legal aid, severe mental health crises, suicides and challenges for women prisoners, he highlighted reforms paralleling global models for restorative justice, non-custodial measures and victim-centric approaches. Shri Lal said that NHRC, India's interventions in seeking prison reforms include advisories, custodial death guidelines and *suo motu* cognizance. He urged shifting from retributive to reformatory justice to laws that punish yet transform, blending empathy, accountability and global ideals.



- On 12th August, 2025, NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice Shri V. Ramasubramanian attended, as the Guest of Honour, the launch of a book “The Last Beggar: From Donation to Dignity” organised by the Beggars Corporation at Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, Janpath, New Delhi.



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- On 12th August, 2025, Shri Anand Swaroop assumed charge as Director General (Investigation) of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India. He is a 1992-batch IPS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre. Prior to joining the NHRC, he served as the Director General, Police Headquarters, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. He has held several key positions in both his cadre state and the Centre. He is credited with the introduction of National Communication Standards and Training Courses for Public Protection and Disaster Response as Director, Directorate of Coordination Police Wireless. He also significantly contributed as the Nodal Officer for the Ministry of Home Affairs' COVID response while managing a 1,000-bed Quarantine Centre at Chhawla Camp, ITBP, New Delhi besides overseeing the world's largest COVID Care Centre and Hospital at RSS, Chhattarpur which became a model for agencies during the pandemic.



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- On 13th August 2025, NHRC, India Member, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani visited the District Collector office in Bapatla, Andhra Pradesh to understand the progress in the DRDA–Velugu Project. Under the Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty, this programme focuses on empowering rural families, particularly women, through Self-Help Groups.
 - On 14th August, 2025, NHRC, India Member, Smt Vijaya Bharathi Sayani addressed a session on the 'Role of NHRC in the Protection of Fundamental and Human Rights' at the Vigyan Institute of Law, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh. She highlighted NHRC, India's core functions like investigations, prison inspections, legal reviews, research and capacity building. Interventions in custodial deaths, manual scavenging, migrant labour welfare, transgender rights, trafficking and environmental protection were illustrated. She emphasised that safeguarding rights demands not only institutional action but also civic courage and active public participation.



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- On 14th August, 2025 NHRC, India Member, Shri Priyank Kanoongo attended a programme at the Khasnampara Bru Resettlement under Kanchanpur Sub-Division, North Tripura District, Tripura.
 - On 23rd August, 2025, NHRC, India Member, Smt Vijaya Bharathi Sayani addressed a seminar on 'Human rights and struggles of denotified and nomadic tribes towards dignity, justice and inclusion.' The seminar was organised by the Ambedkar Reading Forum, University of Hyderabad, Telangana. She said that the NHRC acknowledges their historical stigma and hurdles in getting benefits of welfare schemes despite constitutional guarantees. It has been raising their concerns from time to time to bring them into the mainstream.



- On 23rd August, 2025, NHRC, India Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal delivered the keynote address on “Envisioning Future India: Challenges, Opportunity and the Road Ahead” as part of the Technology, Research, Innovation and Policy Submit (TRIPS)-2025, organised at IIT Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh from 21st to 24th August, 2025. He said that certain values are non-negotiable in pursuit of a better and sustainable future for the country. It must be driven by knowledge and innovation without compromising with empathy, equality, justices, dignity, improved quality of life and opportunities for all. An article based on his speech on the subject has been carried on the previous pages of this Newsletter.



- On 24th August, 2025 NHRC, India, Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal attended a 'Roundtable Discussion on Agenda and Approach for the Nalanda University' at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi.
- From 25th –26th August 2025, NHRC, India Member, Shri Priyank Kanoongo visited the Sambhal and Rampur districts of Uttar Pradesh to conduct a comprehensive review of the status of the implementation of welfare policies and ground-level realities concerning key thematic areas of human rights and inclusive development.
- On 27th August, 2025, NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice Shri V. Ramasubramanian attended a function for the launch of a book “Beyond the Ballot: Paradoxes of Democracy” authored by Former Chief Election Commissioner, Shri T. S. Krishnamurthy at Tagore Auditorium, Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
- On 29th August, 2025, NHRC, India Member, Justice (Dr) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi addressed as the Chief Guest "Dhwani 2025", a programme organised by the Awaken Trust in Bhubaneswar, Odisha to felicitate cancer survivors, autistic children and para-athletes.



- On 30th August, 2025 NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice Shri V. Ramasubramanian delivered the keynote address on the theme of “Rule of Law in the Indian Tradition” organised by the Bar Association of India at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi.

- On 30th August, 2025, NHRC, India Member, Smt Vijaya Bharathi Sayani addressed the National Conference on Environment organised by the Social Action Mobilizer. She emphasised urgency to protect livelihoods of tribal and traditional rural communities amid the growing impact of climate change. She said that forest dwellers and rural communities, though least responsible for the crisis, are the most affected. Yet, they safeguard 80% of global biodiversity through sustainable traditional practices ranging from sacred groves to living root bridges; their wisdom is resilient. She stressed integrating traditional knowledge into policy via climate risk mapping, local participation and capacity building.



- On 31st August 2025, NHRC, India Member, Justice (Dr) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi participated in the celebration of World Kitchen Garden Day and delivered a talk on “Agriculture vis-à-vis Human Rights” in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.



Forthcoming events

- 4th September, 2025** NHRC, India will organise a National Conference on the Rights of Transgender Persons in New Delhi.

Complaints in August, 2025

Number of fresh complaints received	3,755
Number of cases disposed of including old cases	4,287
Number of cases under consideration of the Commission	34,735

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