

**Report on “Major Activities of the Commission”
by the Secretary General, NHRC
10.12.2022**

Hon'ble President of India, dignitaries on the Dais and off the Dais, Ladies and Gentlemen!!

I am feeling honoured to present the report on the key activities of the National Human Rights Commission for the last one year. The Commission is deeply committed to protect the four founding pillars of Human Rights, i.e. Right to Life with dignity, Liberty and Equality.

2. The Commission has developed a wide range of mechanisms to achieve the objectives as envisaged in the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993. One of the important instruments is taking *Suo-Motu* cognizance of media reports of human rights violations. During the past one year, *Suo-Motu* cognizance has been taken in 53 cases. Holding 'Camp Sittings' at Shillong, Guwahati and Ranchi strengthened the eco-system for better protection of human rights. Interaction with NGOs and Human Rights Defenders was also held.

3. Adoption of Digital Technology for the registration of grievances and its processing by young Legal Consultants has resulted in quick decisions of more than 1,00,000 cases and resultant compensation of Rs. 9.14 crore in suitable cases. The Investigation Division conducted 46 Spot Enquiries.

4. Based on directions of the Hon'ble High Court of Calcutta, a committee headed by the Hon'ble Member of NHRC enquired and submitted a report into cases of post-poll violence in West Bengal. The Committee has recommended a grant of compensation.

5. Deaths in police custody are the most significant violation of the Human Rights of an individual. The in-house research has indicated that the number of police custody death cases reported to NHRC has registered a fall of 26.5% during 2015-2019. It appears that one of the factors of this impact is due to the fact that the NHRC has issued a number of guidelines and instructions which have infused a sense of accountability and sensitivity in the police force.

6. To deal with the Human Rights issues of under-trial prisoners and convicts, recently the Commission has sought a report on 07.09.2022 from States and UTs as to how many under-trial prisoners and convicts are languishing in jails after the completion of one-half of the maximum period of sentence and expiry of sentence period, respectively.

7. About 2450 cases of marginalised people from Odisha were taken up, and more than 51,000 names of beneficiaries were included in the list of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana. The benefits of other social welfare schemes were also extended. About 500 similar cases from West Bengal are under active consideration.

8. Consultation with the Core Group Members and other stakeholders resulted in the issuance of Advisories. Accepting the recommendations of the Commission, the Central Government has directed all States to maintain a minimum Corpus Fund of Rs.10,00,000/- to provide immediate assistance to the rescued Bonded Labourers and has enhanced the minimum financial assistance at the initial stage up to Rs.30,000/- for rehabilitation of rescued Bonded Labourer.

9. About two lakhs teachers were facing removal from service. Owing to NHRC intervention, the Ministry of Education relaxed a one-time stipulation for the regularisation of services of post-graduate and graduate teachers.
10. Transport is a significant sector of the business world over. To ensure the human rights of commercial truck drivers, this year, the Commission issued an Advisory for providing Rs.15.00 lakhs insurance cover and other amenities for the truck driver.
11. The Commission has also identified 97 provisions in different Acts which contained discriminatory provisions against persons suffering from Henson disease. States have been requested to look into these provisions.
12. The Commission issued Advisory to address the problem of deaths of sanitary workers involved in cleaning of sewer and septic tanks, sans safety gear, and a direction to report deaths within 48 hours.
13. Recently, the Commission visited four Mental Hospitals, held workshops at three locations and got inspected 35 Mental Hospitals by Special Rapporteurs. The Commission advised the authorities to send back the patients who have been cured to their families as it is a total violation of Section 19 of the Mental Health Act, 2017.
14. NHRC is a Member of the APF Governing Committee and Bureau of GANHRI and is playing an active role as Chair of GANHRI's Finance Committee.
15. To highlight tenets of Human Rights and Culture, a National Conference on Human Rights in Indian Culture and Philosophy was organized

16. The Debate Competition on the topic "Maintenance of Human Rights is the primary pre-requisite of Rule of Law, and Constitutional Governance" was held for Armed Police Forces. The Commission holds flagship internship programme and competition of painting, short films.

17. Commission has increased dialogues with 25 State Human Rights Commissions, focusing on the difficulties being faced by them in the States and also developing a mechanism for effective handling of the grievances.

With these affirmative actions, we hope that our efforts will be helpful in achieving the goals of dignity, freedom and justice for all, as precisely reflected in our motto, "*Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinaha*".

JAI HIND
