

# SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS THIS MONTH



In this fast-paced world, people seldom have time to read the news every day. Month Human rights update is a new INSECOnline series aimed at disseminating a brief overview of National and International Human rights situation once in every two weeks. The series will be covering severe cases of Human rights violations Nationally and Internationally.

Human rights violations noted this fortnight have been enlisted below:

## NATIONAL UPDATES

### 1. Nepali Students Attacked by Hamas in Israel, Prime Minister Calls for Humanitarian Action

Ten Nepali students lost their lives, and four others sustained injuries in armed attacks conducted by the Palestinian Islamist group Hamas in Israel on Saturday. These attacks caused fear and tension across the country. Seventeen Nepali students in Kibbutz Alumim, an area near the Gaza Strip, were directly affected by the militants. At the time of the attacks, a total of 265 Nepali students were studying in Israel under the 'Learn and Earn' program of the Israeli government. Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal has expressed deep condolences to the families of the victims and called for the protection of all civilians in Gaza, an immediate humanitarian ceasefire, the unconditional release of all hostages, and the delivery of sustained humanitarian relief that meets the needs of the people of Gaza.

### 2. Four Family Members Found Murdered in Mugu District

In Mundugaun, Chhayanath Rara Municipality - 6, Mugu district, four family members were discovered murdered. The victims, identified as 27-year-old Shreedevi Bohara, her 11-year-old son Manoj Bohara, seven-year-old Apsara Bohara, and eight-year-old Rahar Bohara, were killed with sharp weapons during the night. The accused remains missing, and Shreedevi's husband is working in Qatar. The incident occurred on October 25 when the victims returned home after receiving tika in Kotila, and the alleged perpetrator locked the door from outside before fleeing. Investigations are ongoing.

### 3. Necessity of Physically Carrying Patients to Healthcare in Humla

In over 100 locations across seven Rural Municipalities in the district, patients still require manual transportation due to the absence of road connectivity. Janak Shahi, a resident, had to carry his ailing sister-in-law for two hours to reach a healthcare facility. Bhai Bahadur Tamang shared an incident of an eight-hour patient transport due to incomplete road construction.

### 4. Allegation Against Police of Supporting Rape Accused

On October 17, 2023, a 47-year-old rape victim accused the police of supporting the 30-year-old rape accused, Sangesh Limbu of Ilam Municipality-3. She reported the sexual assault on September 9 but, on September 12, her complaint was not registered by the authorities, who instead registered unrelated complaints. Despite reporting threats from the accused, the court refused to extend the investigation. The victim alleged that the police provided protection to the accused and faced police suppression when reporting such a sensitive case. Sangesh was initially arrested on September 12 but was released later. Journalists and human rights activists are now taking action to ensure justice for the victim, who underwent a health examination on the same day, September 12.

### 5. Journalist Alleges Death Threat: Investigation Underway

In a recent incident, 33-year-old journalist Vivek Kumar Maheta, from Dewanganj Rural Municipality-1, accused 40-year-old Bechan Khatve of making death threats against him during a visit to the Dewanganj rural municipality office on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2023. Maheta, employed by Sunsari-based Darshan FM and Nagarik Abhiyan Online, promptly filed a complaint at the Dewanganj local police office on the same day, seeking protection and safety due to concerns about the threats affecting his work in news and radio. He has also requested INSEC in Sunsari to take action and ensure justice in the matter. An investigation has been initiated by law enforcement agencies based on the journalist's complaint, emphasizing the importance of recognizing journalists as human rights defenders under the 1998 Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

### 6. The Impact of INSEC Online: Generous Financial Support from Various Donors for Bereaved Children

On October 22, a group of individuals joined forces to provide financial support to four orphaned children in Manthali Municipality-8, Valuvajor, Ramechhap, who had tragically lost both their parents. Lekh Bahadur Bassel (18 years old), Sanjeev Bassel (16 years old), Saroj Bassel (12 years old), and Sandeep Bassel (8 years old) were left without parental care after the passing of their father, Bhakta Bahadur Bassel, and their mother, Geeta Bassel, who had died less than a year earlier. Mahesh Basunke, a resident of Sunkoshi Rural Municipality-5 in Sindhuli, initiated a fundraising appeal, collecting NPR 18,250 from friends and relatives. INSEC Online featured the situation on October 18 and provided support to the children on October 20. Mahesh Basunke contributed NPR 4,000, Sukumar Basunke Bhuvan donated NPR 5,100, and an additional NPR 9,150 was collected from other contributors. This collective effort aims to assist these children as they cope with the loss of their parents and ensure

their well-being. Lekh Bahadur and Sanjeev had to discontinue their education, while Saroj and Sandeep are still pursuing their studies, with Saroj in grade five and Sandeep in grade three.

#### **7. Protest Against Police Assaulting Street Vendor**

On October 22, 2008, a distressing incident occurred at a fair in Bindwasini Temple in Birganj Metropolitan Municipality-19, during the Badadasai celebration. Barun Ram, a 19-year-old resident of Birgunj, was selling balloons when Assistant Sub Inspector Navlesh Tiwari, associated with the Bindwasini temporary police post, allegedly demanded money from him, leading to a dispute. Ram was instructed to remove his balloons, but as he did so, other policemen arrived and threw his balloons on the road. Ram questioned this and was taken to the police station, where he claims to have been beaten by two or three policemen in front of Assistant Sub-Inspector Tiwari. His balloons, valued at 5,000 to 6,000 rupees, were also damaged, and he did not receive medical treatment despite his injuries. Inspector Mohan Bikram KC reported that the dispute was resolved, while Assistant Sub-Inspector Tiwari declined to comment on the incident.

## INTERNATIONAL UPDATES

#### **1. Mauritius Supreme Court: Striking Down Colonial-Era Anti-LGBTQI+ Laws**

In a landmark ruling, the Mauritius Supreme Court declared the criminalization of consensual sex between adult men unconstitutional, overturning a colonial-era law dating back to 1838. This historic decision highlights the shift in perspective, acknowledging that criminalization is the colonial legacy that needs to be discarded, not homosexuality itself. While this is a significant advancement, challenges remain, including comprehensive protections against discrimination, marriage equality, adoption rights, and recognizing and safeguarding transgender individuals. Nevertheless, Mauritius' move represents a positive step forward in the global trajectory towards LGBTQI+ rights, showing that progress is being made despite setbacks in some regions.

#### **2. Landmark Ruling in Brazil: Indigenous Rights Triumph Over 'Temporal Framework'**

Brazil's Supreme Court has made a significant ruling, rejecting the 'Temporal Framework' principle and upholding the claims of Indigenous peoples to their traditional lands. This framework had previously limited land demarcation and titling to areas physically occupied by Indigenous groups before October 5, 1988, thus excluding communities expelled from their ancestral lands, particularly during the military dictatorship from 1964 to 1985. While this victory is crucial for Indigenous rights and the protection of the Amazon rainforest, politicians backed by agribusiness interests have pushed legislation to uphold the Temporal Framework, despite the court's decision. The struggle continues as Indigenous communities fight for their rights and land protection.

#### **3. Mass Migration March: Migrants Head North from Mexico in Search of Relief**

Approximately 5,000 migrants, including people from Central America, Venezuela, Cuba, and Haiti, began a journey from Mexico's southern border towards the U.S. They complained about the slow processing of visas in Tapachula, leading to lengthy waits and an inability to work. The march is one of the largest since June 2022, but it's overshadowed by the surge of migrants at the U.S. border. Organizers demand transit visas to reach the U.S., and the situation in Tapachula is challenging, leaving many living on the streets. The U.S. southwestern border grapples with a significant influx of migrants who cross from South America through the Darien Gap.

#### **4. Decades of Violence: Sudan's Ongoing Conflict and the Urgent Need for Women's Rights**

In Sudan, an ongoing conflict spanning decades is characterized by severe violence against civilians, perpetuated by a militarized regime relying on the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and armed militias like the Janjaweed in Darfur, later rebranded as the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). This protracted strife is marked by mass atrocities, including sexual violence, rape, and gender-based violence, with the situation showing no sign of abating. This accentuates the failure to address these issues, with women enduring ongoing brutal atrocities and a pervasive culture of impunity. The situation underscores the urgent imperative of securing women's rights and fostering their active participation in peace and political processes to achieve lasting stability.

#### **5. UN Warns of Escalating Violence in Syria**

In Syria, the situation remains highly volatile, with a significant surge in violence that has caused civilian casualties, injuries, and infrastructure damage. The conflict is marked by static front lines, persistent violence, and sporadic escalation in fighting. Recent airstrikes, attributed to Israel, have hit Aleppo and Damascus airports, impacting humanitarian operations. The lack of a meaningful political process has contributed to growing instability and violence, making the situation even more dangerous. The only viable solution, as emphasized by the UN Special Envoy, is an immediate de-escalation and a return to a credible political process.

#### **6. Unfolding Tragedy: The Ongoing Israel-Palestine Conflict**

The conflict in Israel and Palestine, intensifying since October 7, 2023, has deeply divided the world. It's marked by ongoing violence with bombs exchanged, inflicting significant civilian suffering. A dire turn occurred on October 28, as a blackout in Palestine disrupted communication. On October 15, a critical evacuation channel was bombed, complicating safety efforts. Rooted in historical and geopolitical tensions, this enduring conflict involving legitimate claims and grievances from Israel and Palestine remains a complex, global concern.

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