

SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS THIS MONTH



In this fast-paced world, people seldom have time to read the news every day. Fortnight 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 month have been enlisted below:

NATIONAL UPDATES

1. NHRC CALLS FOR URGENT COORDINATION IN RESCUE, RELIEF, ACCOMMODATION, AND HEALTHCARE FOR DISASTER VICTIMS

The National Human Rights Commission has called on all parties involved in the disaster situation to act with the utmost humanitarian spirit, emphasising sensitivity in rescue, relief, and rehabilitation efforts. Due to the continuous rainfall on September 27 and 28, 2024, floods, landslides, and inundation in various parts of the country have resulted in the death of more than 200 people, with 30 plus missing and 194 plus injured, as stated in a press release on 30 September. Additionally, serious attention has been drawn to the situation where thousands of passengers are stranded in various places due to road blockages. Expressing deep sorrow over the loss of lives and property caused by this natural disaster, it is mentioned in the statement that teams deployed from the central office, provincial offices, and provincial branch offices of the commission have monitored disaster-affected areas about relief, rescue, medical treatment for the injured, and the living conditions of the affected people.

2. LANDLESS SETTLERS FACING PROBLEMS AFTER FLOOD

Seven districts in Bagmati Province were severely impacted by the heavy rains on September 26, 27, and 28. As a result, the Bagmati River flooded with mud and inundated the landless settlement area of Banshighat, Kathmandu Metropolitan City-11, leading to a shortage of clothes, food, and clean drinking water for the residents. As a result, residents in Bansighat are unable to cook meals in their homes. The ward office has arranged free meals for those affected. Floodwaters washed away their belongings, leaving the residents in distress. Despite the situation appearing normal, the road in front of their homes remains muddy, with motorcycles and cars continuing to pass through the same road.

3. NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION URGES SENSITIVITY TOWARDS CONSUMER RIGHTS

Lalitpur, October 5, 2024 – The National Human Rights Commission has raised concerns over reports of vehicles charging beyond specified prices, despite the ongoing challenges caused by floods and landslides. In a press release on October 4, the commission highlighted the rising prices of daily essentials and the lack of affordable air transport fares as the festival season approaches. The commission urged the business sector to uphold commercial responsibility and help alleviate citizens' suffering. It also called on the government to monitor and regulate violations of consumer rights, including price hikes, black marketing, food adulteration, and the sale of expired products during the festive period.

4. TWENTY FIVE POLITICAL PARTIES REGISTERED FOR LOCAL LEVEL BY-ELECTIONS

The Election Commission has announced that 25 political parties have been registered for the local-level by-elections scheduled for 1 December 2024. According to Narayan Prasad Sapkota, the Joint Secretary and Spokesperson, of the Commission, these parties have been registered after completing the legal process as per the Political Party Regulation 2017. The registration of these political parties was done by Sub-rule (4) of Rule 17 of the Political Party Regulation 2017, based on the Election Commission's decision on October 6. After the government announced the by-elections, the Election Commission provided a registration period for parties from September 26 to October 2.

5. COMMITTEE RECONSTITUTED TO RECOMMEND APPOINTMENTS OF OFFICIALS TO TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE COMMISSION

The government has reformed the committee to recommend the appointment of the chairperson and members of the Commission of Investigation on Enforced Disappeared Persons and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on 18 October. Government Spokesperson and Minister of Information and Communication Prithivi Subba Gurung has informed that the recommendation committee formed by the decision of 12 April 2024 has been reconstituted in the meeting of the Council of Ministers held on 18 October. Former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Om Prakash Mishra has been appointed as the chairman of the reconstituted committee. Minister Gurung informed that among the members, the chairman of the National Human Rights Commission or the person appointed by him will be the member of the recommendation committee. Its members include former Attorney General Khamba Bahadur Khatri, Arjun Kumar Karki, and Stella Tamang.

INTERNATIONAL UPDATES

1. ABOUT 85% OF JOURNALIST KILLINGS GO UNPUNISHED

From 2006 to 2024, UNESCO reports a staggering toll of over 1,700 journalists killed worldwide, with a disturbing 85% of these cases never reaching court, highlighting a severe crisis of impunity in crimes against media workers. The situation has worsened with a 38% increase in journalist killings compared to the previous study, with Gaza currently experiencing the highest number of media casualties in any conflict in decades.

2. THAILAND'S LANDMARK MOVE: HALF A MILLION STATELESS PEOPLE TO GAIN CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS

Thailand has taken a historic step towards ending statelessness with its cabinet approving a groundbreaking initiative that offers an accelerated path to permanent residency and citizenship for nearly 500,000 stateless people. The landmark decision will benefit 335,000 longtime residents and members of recognized ethnic minority groups, plus approximately 142,000 of their Thailand-born children, representing one of the region's most significant citizenship initiatives.

3. UN EXPERTS CHALLENGE FRANCE'S HIJAB BAN IN SPORTS AS RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION

UN experts have criticised France's decisions to ban hijab-wearing athletes from sports competitions, including the 2024 Paris Olympics, as discriminatory. France's football and basketball federations have also banned hijabs at all levels, citing the country's secularism laws. The UN experts, including special rapporteurs on cultural rights and religious freedom, argue that these bans violate Muslim women's rights to express their identity and participate in cultural and sporting life.

4. 2024 SET TO BE HOTTEST YEAR AS OCTOBER RECORDS SECOND-HIGHEST TEMPERATURES

October 2024 marked the second-warmest October on record, with global surface temperatures reaching 1.32°C above the 20th-century average, just slightly below October 2023's record. While most regions experienced above-average temperatures, with North America having its warmest October ever and South America and Oceania their second-warmest, some areas like Greenland, parts of Africa, central Asia, and eastern Antarctica saw below-average temperatures. Notably, about 12% of Earth's surface experienced record-high October temperatures, and ocean temperatures were largely above average, except for regions like the tropical eastern Pacific. The National Centers for Environmental Information projects with over 99% certainty that 2024 will become the warmest year on record, highlighting the ongoing trend of global warming and its widespread impact on both land and sea temperatures.

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