

INFORMAL

Vol. 32, No. 1, April-June, 2012

Special Issue

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Years

*On Human Rights and
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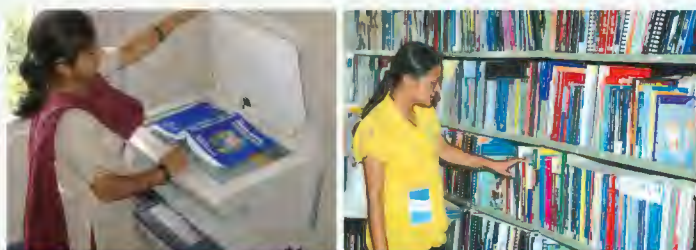
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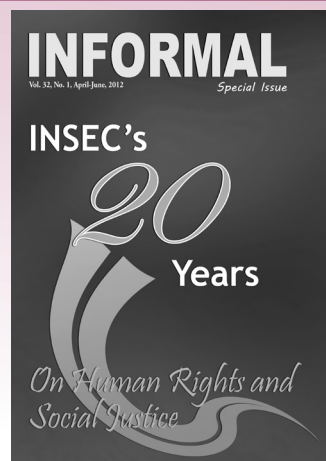
Nepal : NRs 25
South Asia : US\$ 15 (equivalent)
Rest of the World : US\$ 25

Published By

Informal Sector Service
Centre (INSEC)
P.O. Box: 2726, Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: 977-1-4278770, Fax: 977-1-4270551
E-mail : informal@insec.org.np
Website: www.insec.org.np, www.inseconline.org

Printed at

Dream Graphic Press, Thapathali, KTM
Tel: 4102087



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INSEC Will Work More Efficiently

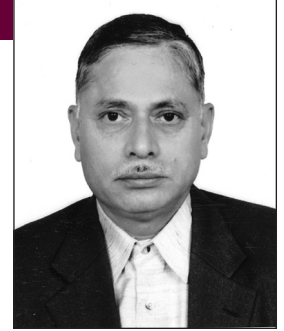
INSEC has been working on human rights and social justice related issues in Nepal for 20 years. As the organization was established also for the restoration of democratic polity in the country and its consolidation, INSEC's initial years had laid emphasis on civil and political rights of people. It worked on a number of human rights issues over time. INSEC had started to work on the economic, social and cultural rights after the second half of the 1990's. However, the armed conflict waged by the then Maoists against the state since 1996 compelled INSEC to concentrate its programs more on civil and political rights than on other rights. Saving the lives of people, cautioning the warring sides not to harm the civilians who were not connected to conflict in any way was more important for the organization at that time. Therefore, INSEC designed and implemented its programs at that time accordingly.

With the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2006, Nepalis heaved a sigh of relief. They were optimistic that Nepal, now, would embark on a journey towards lasting peace. However, the post-CPA days too could not provide with reliable ground for backing their optimism. The country plunged into various forms of mismanagement, anarchy and inter-party feuds slowly. Similarly, violence perpetrated by armed groups in different parts of the country and the degree of violence meted out to general life across the country was intolerable. However, people tolerated the situation believing that political transition is not a usual situation. INSEC had similar view in this connection but it had been putting forth its opinions that the transition in Nepal was not heading towards right direction. The organization was especially wary of and alarmed by the dishonesty of the political parties. Ultimately, the Constituent Assembly (CA), which was meant to write historical constitution, expired without writing the new constitution.

The expiry of the CA has jeopardized the ongoing peace process in the country. On the one hand, it has created a political vacuum, and, on the other hand, a situation has been created at the same time that the progress made on civil and political rights of the Nepali people since 1990's liberal political set up might be undone.

INSEC is worried that the present situation in the country might set stage for an autocratic rule in one way or another and that civil society groups that have been working on human rights might require to put their total strength for defending civil and political rights again. The organization is equally concerned that now is not and should not be the time to be advocating for civil rights only, which are apparently accepted by almost all the governments of the world for granted in this 21st century. Rather, now, is the time to emphasize economic, social and cultural rights of the Nepalis on an equal footing with their civil and political rights. However, the unfolding political situation is likely to compel us to concentrate solely on civil and political rights of people leaving so many social and economic issues aside. Hopefully, the civil and political rights of people won't be taken away.

INSEC, now, has turned 20 years old. It has reached the present situation passing through various stages and difficult periods including armed conflict and the King's direct rule. Standing firmly for people and speaking on behalf of them even at politically unfavorable time is the hallmark of INSEC. During its two decades, it obtained support from various stakeholders from national and international levels. It has contributed a lot toward ensuring people's rights and has also learnt simultaneously as to how an organization working on people's rights can be stronger for making people further empowered. INSEC is committed to work for people wholeheartedly in the days to come too. It is committed to work for people by keeping the possible violation and abuses of people's rights into consideration. For this, INSEC is all set to be further invigorated through injection of new blood into its organizational structure and through adoption of further efficient modus operandi.



INSEC is Committed to Human Rights

Unhesitatingly, INSEC is Nepal's campaign on human rights movement. By the time it has completed 20 years since its establishment; many friends once affiliated to this organization have been working also for international organizations as human rights activists. Locals feel proud of INSEC for its presence at every nook and corner of Nepali geography. It is high time INSEC has to advance its campaigns for bringing the violators of human rights to justice and also for ensuring justice of the victims, besides protecting human life. INSEC has turned 20 years old now and has already established itself in its field. It, now, has to utilize its adulthood energetically and further productively.

The decision of establishing INSEC was based on the then need. It was established with an aim to study and propagate the human rights situation of the country through legitimate means in any way that was possible at that time. No policy was in place at that time to register non-governmental organizations under District Administration Office. Some benevolent organizations, however, were registered. It was impossible to register human rights organizations. So, "Anaupacharik Kshetra Adhyaan Kendra" (Informal Sector Research Centre) was registered at the

Department of Cottage and Small Industries under the guise of a study group on April 7, 1989. The Kendra was supposed to carry out studies on various socio-economic issues. As it was impossible to register the organization as such in known human rights activists' name, the study center was registered in family members and kinfolks' name at that time. The very organization has turned into a big service center as INSEC now. Although the ulterior motive of the organization was to document the incidents of human rights violations committed by the then autocratic Panchayati regime, the organization had initiated its programs saying that it would study the health, education and overall situation of porters especially of the cart pushers working at some particular places in Kathmandu. This history should not be concealed here. During the initial years, it simply engaged in recording the incidents of human rights violations, torture and disappearances committed by the autocratic Panchayati regime. Following the success of People's Movement in 1990, the Adhyaan Kendra was registered at District Administration Office formally as Informal Sector Service Center (INSEC) on July 22, 1991.

If the democratic polity, rule of law and human rights friendly political set up provided by the People's

The decision of establishing INSEC was based on the then need. It was established with an aim to study and propagate the human rights situation of the country through legitimate means in any way that was possible at that time. No policy was in place at that time to register non-governmental organizations under District Administration Office.

INSEC's twenty years since its establishment has been spent as honest attempt to materialize the dream of its founders. We have been continuously involving to enable people to utilize civil and political rights as the ideological tools to advocate, attain and monitor their economic, social and cultural rights.

Movement 1990 were utilized properly for establishing an accountable state Nepal could stand as one of the developed countries in the world. However, the Nepali politics, which was accursed beginning from the Kot Massacre, again entrapped into the cycle of "people's war", but with different method of violence now. Hence, a situation was created in the country that rather than focusing on the economic, social and cultural issues it had been raising since its establishment, INSEC had to be focused on people's right to life. So, INSEC automatically engaged towards minimizing the activities that could possibly be committed by the warring parties going against the humanitarian laws. During a decade long war, we continued to urge the warring parties- the Maoists and the state, to abide by the rule of war. INSEC was the only one organization that reached every village in the country even in difficult and warring situation.

It was due to our intervention, concern and effort that hundreds of lives could be saved. Regrettably, however, thousands of others could not be protected and hundreds of thousands had to undergo a pitiable situation. Nepal is also an appendage of the world society of the 21st society. This is the age of internet. The UN does publish the Human Development Index of Nepal as well. Equality in opportunities, competition for the opportunities and providing priority to those who are backward in terms of capacity development is the slogan of human rights. Nepalese politics should have established a culture of kindness, humanity, equality and integrity. Contrary to popular expectation, politics of division and hatred is dominant in the country. Indecisiveness, distrust and resentment have engulfed people.

During a decade of warring period and also during the period of

peaceful movement organized thereafter for peace, INSEC had been receiving frequent commitments from the warring sides on human rights. Nepal has become a party to almost all the international human rights laws now. INSEC is at the frontline in the matter of expressing its commitment for human rights. Also, it has progressed in the field of women's health and children's education during transition. People's awareness against racial discrimination and domestic violence is increasing. However, especial efforts and honesty deem to be necessary for acknowledging human rights as daily-life culture and for giving first priority to others' rights.

INSEC's twenty years since its establishment has been spent as honest attempt to materialize the dream of its founders. We have been continuously involving to enable people to utilize civil and political rights as the ideological tools to advocate, attain and monitor their economic, social and cultural rights. INSEC's members, staff members, volunteers, donors and well-wishers as a whole have helped a lot for the present position of the organization. Some individuals might have felt unpleasant situation due to our expression at particular times. However, we can't help speaking truth no matter how badly reality bites. We do know that views converge for the truth ultimately.

While evaluating INSEC's 20 years' contribution to Nepali society, I would like to remember its founders with due respect. I would like to express condolences to Late Prakash Kaphle, the founding General Secretary of INSEC. Believing firmly that all the existing problems of the country can be resolved through human rights approach; I would like to express commitment that INSEC will remain resolutely active for the cause of human rights and social justice in Nepal in the days to come too.



INSEC is Moving Ahead in Line with Changing Situation

INSEC, since its establishment some twenty years ago, has been changing its organizational structure and program frameworks as per the changing situation of the country. In its initial days, INSEC's programs were run depending on limited human resources and physical infrastructures. Over time, INSEC has been changing itself and implementing its programs as a movement in line with the changes in its programmatic strategies.

INSEC's programs got decentralized along with the expansion of the organization. Now, a total of 83 regular staff members are working under its offices that range from the center to regional and district level. Similarly, a total of 75 district representatives are active in their corresponding districts to accelerate INSEC campaigns. Its representatives and 25 district offices are independent on running programs and campaigns. They fix their annual programs independently. Due to the fact that INSEC's programs are decentralized, achievement level is increasing and the presence of the organization is receiving more importance in the country.

With the initiation of its monitoring and follow up system eight years ago, INSEC's programs have become further effective and the system has also helped a lot to select

programs as per the need of the people. The central office monitors the regional offices and district offices. Similarly, the regional offices monitor district offices. This has helped in revising the impact of INSEC programs on people. The donors that helped INSEC in its initial years have continued their supports by evaluating its work. They have appreciated INSEC through their annual reports. The Human Rights Yearbooks published by INSEC annually are available in the important human rights libraries across the world. Every day, INSEC has been providing 5-7 people with data on human rights situation in Nepal. The individuals pursuing their studies at the national and international universities have benefitted from these data. The US Department of State, while including the Human Rights Report on Nepal in World Human Rights Report, takes the data of INSEC as one of the bases. Other countries also utilize INSEC reports and data to prepare their views on human rights situation of Nepal.

INSEC organizes different trainings and visits for enhancing the capacity of its staff members. Due to the knowledge and skills gained while at INSEC, many former campaigners of the organization are working in many national and international organizations. Although INSEC has its own internal evaluation system to evaluate its

The Human Rights Yearbooks published by INSEC annually are available in the important human rights libraries across the world. Every day, INSEC has been providing 5-7 persons with data on human rights situation in Nepal. The individuals pursuing their studies at the national and international universities have benefitted from these data.

Financial and programmatic transparency is the beauty of INSEC. Anyone interested to know about its programs and account system can visit INSEC office for information. Upon the Legislature Parliament passed a bill on right to information, INSEC had issued a statement welcoming the passage of the bill and had appointed an Information Officer at its office.

programs, international organizations have also been evaluating the INSEC run programs. British minister had visited districts to monitor the program run by INSEC. The minister had met with the conflict victims of the locality and heard their reactions on the impact of the programs run by INSEC. The donor agencies such as Danida, ICCO and EED have been providing support to INSEC annually. This year, a team from Social Welfare Council of Nepal conducted a monitoring evaluation on the programs run in the Banke, Bardiya and Kailali districts, among other districts, and provided suggestions through a report. Recommendation was made in the report to remain active for the rights of the human rights defenders and to air human rights education related programs via television along with radios. INSEC has been changing its strategies based on the important suggestions received from different organizations.

INSEC has been reforming its account system. The system is updated in line with government regulations and policies. Its audited financial reports have been made public since the initial years of its establishment. Financial and programmatic transparency is the beauty of INSEC. Anyone interested to know about its programs and account system can visit INSEC office for information.

Upon the Legislature Parliament passed a bill on right to information, INSEC had issued a statement welcoming the passage of the bill and had appointed an Information Officer at its office. The account system has been updated utilizing the latest and advanced software as per the changing time. This has enabled all the regional offices to carry out their account related works online. Hence, the offices have gotten rid of the nuisance of using paper based accountancy.

Many people still commemorate the role played by INSEC during a decade long armed conflict in the country and also during people's movement II in 2006. Due to its activities and campaigns, INSEC has become synonymous to Nepal's human rights movement. As it has its nationwide coverage and presence, INSEC is embedded with the human rights issues of Nepal one way or another.

During 20 years since its establishment, INSEC has undergone a qualitative leap. The invaluable roles played by its founders, general members, donor agencies and the staff members will be always remembered. I would like to assure that INSEC, as always, will remain proactive for the human rights campaign in Nepal.



INSEC Activists Celebrating 57th International Human Rights Day, Kathmandu



INSEC: A Human Rights and Civil Organization

Although INSEC started its series of works for the rights, benefits and security of the cart pushers; its two decades since establishment are fruitful and interesting. INSEC, which is dedicated to the contemporary human rights movement in the country since the people's movement in 1990, has been playing crucial role on the protection and promotion of human rights and for social justice. It has also contributed to organize and consolidate civil society in the country.

It is apparent that democracy and pluralistic polity cannot be lively without the expansion and consolidation of civil society. It was our experience that civil society and the professional organizations had become political sanctuary even during the autocratic Panchyati era when civil freedom and the party politics were banned. Under the pluralistic democratic system, civil society and the professional organizations receive a conducive environment for them to burgeon and consolidate. Their failure to sacrifice for and dedicate to the pluralistic democracy makes the latter worthless and impassive. The current politics in Nepal is the best example in this connection. On the one hand, anarchy and corruption have flourished unobstructed in the pretext of loktantra and political transition, and, on the

other hand, the daily life across the country is engulfed by killings, violence, threats, terror and extortion. Human rights defenders and journalists are also becoming helpless gradually. The involvement of the political party cadres and organizations of their affiliation in crime has become the main cause of this situation, which we are compelled to bear. Moreover, rather than arresting, prosecuting and punishing those accused of crimes; even the cases being prosecuted are revoked unlawfully. This situation has embarrassed us while facing the autocratic rulers and their courtiers of other countries.

The relationship between human rights organizations should be affable. No organization should disregard the wider human rights society and its networks. Therefore, the reports meant to be submitted to the international organizations reflecting the human rights situation of the country and the activities of the national institutions and their weaknesses should get sufficient space for mutual discussion and responses. Such the reports should be factual and based on proofs and not be premeditated or partisan. Although the reports and comments that seem premeditated and prejudiced, even by their look, can create a momentary illusion. However, their reactions will be counterproductive and will leave negative impact on the protection and

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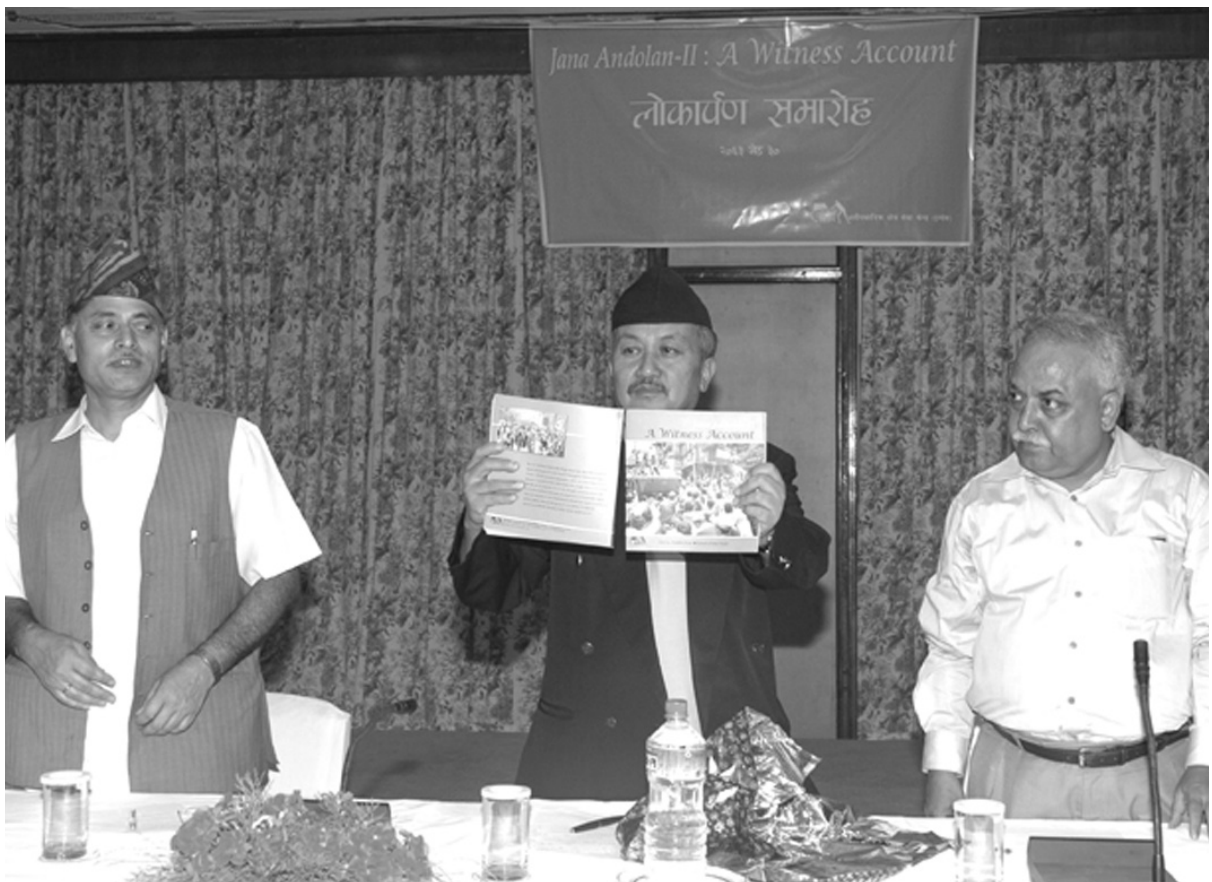
development of human rights as well. This fact has to be always taken into consideration.

Overall, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), for long, has become an admirer of INSEC. It has benefitted directly or indirectly due to the presence and movement of INSEC. The commission also wishes further progress of INSEC in its field. The organization like INSEC can contribute to, one way or another, the duties to be fulfilled by the Commission as a

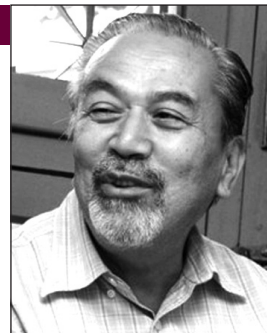
national institution. Therefore, it is expected that the interrelationship between NHRC and INSEC will be further consolidated and meaningful in the days to come. Probably due to its contribution to a decade long armed conflict in the country and also to People's Movement II that INSEC has gained special publicity. It has emerged as a human rights organization with strong financial and organizational bases. It has left its influence not only within Nepal but also on the human rights

networks of Asia Pacific. To run programs in all 75 districts of the country in coordination with a total of 42 partner organizations of Nepal and to possess district representatives in each district is laudable.

The working modality, organization, the dutifulness and spiritedness of the office bearers and the staff members of INSEC have equally contributed to the progress of the organization.



Speaker Subash Chadra Nembang Releasing Monitoring Report of People's Movement, 2006



Human Rights Movement Got Further Expanded and Advanced, not Divided

Rishikesh Shah is the first name in the field of human rights movement in Nepal. Many of us were working for human rights and also for the prisoner of conscience by being affiliated to *Manabdhikar Samrakshan Manch (MASAM)*. Many politicians were also involved in the organization. It was at that very time that *Manabdhikar Sangathan* was also established. Some also viewed the formation of the *Sangathan* as a division of human rights. However, to me, it was an expansion not a division. As a part of this very expansion that late Prakash Kaphle and Sushil Pyakurel had established INSEC.

Preparations were being made for people's movement for democracy when INSEC was established. Human rights organizations were necessary in such a situation. However, it was not possible to register any organizations that would work for human rights. INSEC, initially, was registered at the Department of Cottage and Small Industries and had started to work for cart pushers and potters in the city of Kathmandu. However, once the country entered into a liberal democratic system following 1990, the organization was formally registered at the District Administration Office to work for human rights. It turned into an established organization by working for Kamaiyas, bonded labors, equal

wages of the agricultural labors and also for the rights of the Dalits.

The publication of Nepal Human Rights Yearbook by INSEC as the documentation of human rights abuse and violations has provided a clear picture of human rights situation of Nepal. This publication has publicized the incidents committed by the government such as human rights abuses and the torture inside jails and it has also raised voice on behalf of the disappeared persons. INSEC has saved many lives besides rescuing many people from the abducted situation. Similarly, it has also prevented many others from being involuntarily disappeared. The organization has reached every village in the country and has worked there even during difficult and warring situation whereas going out of the capital city at that time was insecure. Because of this contribution that all the political parties, organizations and the international community as well have accepted INSEC as a leading human rights organization of Nepal.

Since the democratic movement of 1990 and thereafter, INSEC has been continuously raising voice on the issues of women, the Dalits and also on torture, arbitrary arrest as well as enforced disappearances. Similarly, the contribution of INSEC to political freedom and the freedom of speech in

Since the democratic movement of 1990 and thereafter, INSEC has been continuously raising voice on the issues of women, the Dalits and also on torture, arbitrary arrest as well as enforced disappearances. Similarly, the contribution of INSEC to political freedom and the freedom of speech in Nepal is remarkable.

Nepal is remarkable.

INSEC has been publicizing facts after carrying out field investigations on extra-judicial and inhumane incidents of killings committed during armed conflict. It has singly commissioned investigations on many of the incidents committed during armed conflict and has made the findings public. It has also led joint investigation teams in many other occasions besides disseminating the situation of human rights at the international level. This has pressed the government as well as the Maoists to follow the international humanitarian laws.

The organization has also been publishing other quarterly reports on human rights. These publications contain data on the incidents of human rights violations and present clear image of rights situation in the country. INSEC used to expose the rights situation of the country despite the fact that the autocratic ruling system at that time would not allow to do so. I am aware of the fact that INSEC, its partner organizations and the staff members have been involving for the cause of human rights even at the time of crisis and risk. INSEC is known nationally and internationally as a leading human rights organization due to this contribution.

Initially, we were affiliated to the organizations such as *MASAM*, *HURON* and *Nepal Manabadhikar Sangathan* for human rights. Afterwards, INSEC was established and we continued to be active for the human rights movement. To me, the inception of INSEC was an expansion and advancement of

human rights movement of Nepal rather than a division. During the period many institutions were established. All of them worked on human rights one way or another. However, INSEC has worked in the field besides initiating documentation of human rights issues. Impartially, INSEC is known as an organization that archives the incidents and data on human rights safely in a single basket.

INSEC had its presence during armed conflict even in the areas where government was not present. It has collected information on human rights from all 75 districts of the country through its district representatives and has documented the collected information systematically. Therefore, it has been developing itself as a center for those national and international personalities who want to study the history of human rights movement in Nepal.

It had respectful presence and contribution during People's Movement II in 2006. Its committed team members were present in blue jackets to protest police oppressions committed against the people rallying for

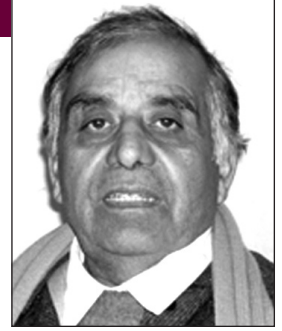
loktantra. Their presence would pressure the security personnel to lessen the degree of oppression besides further invigorating and encouraging the rallying people for their cause. INSEC would release daily reports on the treatment, assistance, the whereabouts of the disappeared persons and also on the details of the development of the movement. This, naturally, would exert international pressure on the government.

It is natural that allegations and oppositions come by in the course of work. Being a political being, man possesses and develops political conscience while living in society. However, such the conscience should not affect the works of the organization which one is affiliated to. Bias should not be manifested. The opposing voices will automatically die away if the works that are seen, occurred and done are impartially documented.

In sum, INSEC's contribution to democracy is unforgettable. Hopefully, it will be further advanced and will continue its works in future as well. Congratulations for formally completing 20 years for human rights movement of Nepal!



Cart Pushers of Kathmandu. As INSEC was established to work for them, a man pushing his cart was designed as the Logo of INSEC



What Requires is the Development of Human Rights Culture

INSEC has been working on human rights and social justice since its establishment. Human rights organizations of Nepal are dedicated to incorporate the universal norms, values and culture of human rights into democracy. We have been advancing the human rights movement in the country being together. The consciousness level of people on human rights movement is increasing. This situation has to be consolidated and changed into stable democracy by new generation.

It is time to assess the human rights movement of Nepal now. Establishing the culture of human rights is also equally important. Until and unless the government becomes accountable to people, civil rights cannot be ensured. Therefore, the groups such as human rights activists, intellectuals, professionals, NGOs and overall civil society have to play more proactive role in order to create a culture in which government is accountable to people.

The human rights activist affiliated to INSEC incessantly involved for the protection and promotion of people's human rights during armed conflict, emergency, the autocratic period of the king and also during People's Movement II. It monitored and observed the rights situation during the periods and emerged as an established institution. Its role on the documentation of human rights

situation is quite obvious. The Human Rights Yearbook published by INSEC reflects the human rights situation in the country. Similarly, INSEC has worked on a range of issues. Its initiation for liberating the Kamaiyas, fixing of minimum wage of the agricultural laborers, women's rights, child rights, untouchability are to name some.

The then youth duo Prakash Kaphle and Sushil Pyakurel had established INSEC by institutionalizing their youth enterprise and energy. Over time, their initiative has been established as the leading organization on human rights movement. The youths affiliated to the organization now are seen further committed for the cause of human rights. This predicts an encouraging future of the organization. The youths have to be further encouraged by senior and leading rights activists. It is equally important to commemorate the figures who contributed to the human rights movement in the country. Similarly, new generation has to learn lessons from their seniors and be dedicated and capable in tune with changing situation of the country. Hopefully, state won't repeat its tendency to be unfriendly towards human rights.

The NHRC is already a constitutional body. However, the act of curtailing its jurisprudence, does not matter which parties were in rule, has continued. This is not forward looking

The human rights activist affiliated to INSEC incessantly involved for the protection and promotion of people's human rights during armed conflict, emergency, the autocratic period of the king and also during People's Movement II. It monitored and observed the rights situation during the periods and emerged as an established institution.

thinking and is not consistent with democracy at the same time. We want such the tendency be ended.

No provisions are in place toward restitution to the conflict victims and government is reluctant to punish perpetrators. Similarly, the truth and reconciliation commission and commission on disappearances have not been formed. There lacks seriousness on the part of the so called big parties towards these issues. These situations indicate at the domineering attempts for impunity through evasion of the universal norms and values on human rights. Dilly-dallying, in one or another pretext, in establishing permanent peace despite the acknowledgement that peace is essential is an act that might fall under the crime against humanitarian law. Until and unless the conflict victims are provided with justice, human rights cannot be ensured. Only observing and monitoring the incidents of human

rights abuse and violations, as we did between 1990 and 2006, is not sufficient now. Ensuring restitution and relief packages for the victims of human rights violation and prosecuting those involved in violations is an emerging issue of human rights movement. This responsibility has to be borne and accomplished collectively. Or else, questions might be raised against us too.

With the aim to motivate the local human rights activists toward their leadership development and also for encouraging them, INSEC has established Prakash Human Rights Award after Late Prakash Kaphle's name. The award has encouraged the human rights activists to do better in their field. Similarly, it has respected the contribution made by Prakash Kaphle to the human rights movement. May INSEC prevail and expand in all aspects of human rights movement being a model of success in future too!

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INSEC Founders and Activists at the Office Located Initially at Kalimati, Kathmandu



Role of INSEC

Until 1970s, political parties and their sisterly organizations were active and involving in movements for democracy and socialism. Humanitarianism was discussed in the field of literature and amongst intellectuals. Caste system, untouchability, the blinds, disabled, orphans, widows and oppressed people were perceived as a part of socio-cultural movement or as humanity based problem. Philosophically, such the problems would fall under humanitarianism, which was understood as a conscience or political consciousness. It was also taken as reformism of Buddha, Gandhi and the like.

Comparatively, some of the countries had been raising the issue of human rights a bit earlier. The UN had issued the Universal Declaration on Human Rights on December 10, 1948. However, the intellectuals in Nepal had understood the Declaration as an issue of humanitarian sensitivity under idealism. Communists, initially, had perceived the issue as a capitalistic idealism so there existed a negative attitude toward human rights.

MASAM was established in August in 1984 and "Prajatantrik Rastriya Ekata Manch" was established after six months. The personalities such as Prakash Kaphle, Sushil Pyakurel, Pandav Raj Ghimire and Badri Khatiwada were active in the forum. Their involvement in the forum had shown a kind of uncertainty

and surprise at that time. Some even alleged that "communists started to embrace capitalistic path". The scope of communist consciousness at that time was influenced by single-party feeling whereby the issues other than class, class struggle and class interest were thought as an idealistic and imaginary. That was why Pushpa Lal, who had been expressing his view that "democracy should be restored by forming a joint front of the Nepali Congress and Communists", was tagged by some communists as "opportunist" and "Gaddar" (traitor). There was a bitter relationship between communist groups.

Whenever the MASAM started to demand for the release of the prisoners of conscience and oppose the then political repression and killings; and also, whenever the *Prajatantrik Ekata Manch* started to demand the prohibition imposed upon party politics be lifted and the party-less Panchayati system be dismissed, there started to be seen changes on the Nepali Congress and on some communist groups which were with parochial thoughts. Given the new situation, the Panchayati autocracy and attitude of repression increased more. As called on and requested by the MASAM and *Prajatantrik Ekata Samaj*, international communities started to know about the repressed situation of Nepal through Amnesty International.

Once some of the left groups started to request the Nepali Congress for forming fronts and unity for the

The scope of communist consciousness at that time was influenced by single-party feeling whereby the issues other than class, class struggle and class interest were thought as an idealistic and imaginary.

purpose of ensuring security and release of the prisoners of conscience and also for the improvement on the condition of jails; communist too started to be attracted toward human rights. This also consolidated views of the Nepali Congress as well to work collaboratively for the dissolution of the party-less Panchayati polity and restoration of multiparty system. *MASAM and Prajatantrik Rastriya Ekata Manch* had played role in establishing multiparty system and dissolution of the Panchayati system in 1990.

Role of INSEC

MASAM and Prajatantrik Rastriya Ekata Manch had been doing their best in setting background for the movement of 1990. However, both the institutions were involved more for the political cause than for broader human rights issues. Later, *Prajatantrik Rastriya Ekata Manch* became inactive gradually. The then environment was also responsible for that. Also, *MASAM* too could not be active as expected given the powerfully expanding human rights movement worldwide. In such a situation, Prakash Kaphle and Shushil Pyakurel, who were aware of increasing role of human rights, became active to work on the human rights related problems in the country. With the aim to work on human rights, they registered an organization titled "Informal Sector Research Center, in 1989. They had tried a lot through a circuitous way even to register the organization.

As even a general party based democracy was banned at that time, political leaders had not paid required attention towards the multi-dimensional field of

human rights. They were with an abstract view that rights of all field and groups would be automatically established once the ongoing ban against the political parties was lifted. Some of the leaders from some parties were even of the view that it would be all right for them if simple reforms took place within the party-less Panchayati system. So, it seemed at that time that lifting the ban imposed against political parties was also an insurmountable problem. We had a long and huge effort to bring the Nepali Congress and the communist leaders into consensus for joint movement. Ultimately, there started people's movement which restored democracy in 1990.

By the time we were about to write constitution after the ban on political parties was lifted, there appeared an unhealthy competition between political parties. Such the situation was explicit during general election in 1991. Use of force and money was also reported. Given that the advocates of democracy themselves were breaching the ethics of election and had started to repress the opposition parties; it was uncertain how multi-dimensional human rights movement would flourish in the country. Premonition of future danger was perceived from the beginning.

Some thoughts and persons started to be active in the field by keeping the possible danger in mind. Among them, Prakash Kaphle and Shushil Pyakurel were the ones who decided to work on human rights as full-fledged activists. However, they established an organization - "Informal Sector Service Center (INSEC) in 1991 in such a way that the name of

the organization would not seem true to its actual mission. The very organization is actively engaged in various aspects of human rights in Nepal now.

INSEC and Human Rights

The scope of human rights is very widespread. Almost all the countries in the world are with human rights problems. Some of the problems are common to all and some others are country specific. For example, India and Nepal suffer from caste system and color discrimination is a common problem of the United States of America and South Africa.

It seems that INSEC has been playing role continuously in determining and analyzing the human rights problems of Nepal and also in creating awareness among people for their resolution. So far as I know, it has contributed significantly to increasing awareness on human rights.

INSEC and *MASAM* had applied various means and tactics including direct dialogue and discussions to bring the political parties together for the joint people's movement of 1990. I am fully aware of the fact that *MASAM* contributed a lot in introducing and spreading the notion of human rights within the then CPN (ML). I am also familiar that INSEC had been contacting the prisoners of conscience and providing them with newspapers besides raising voice for their treatment and legal assistance as far as possible. Apart from this, INSEC had been engaged on informal education campaigns for elderly and children, women's literacy promotion, liberation of Kamaiyas and had also had its institutional attempt

in providing justice to women. The other attempts include organization of women conference, attempts for child rights and campaigns against untouchability and caste discrimination.

I think the engagement of INSEC on various issues such as sensitization, the intensive study and dissemination on human rights issues, the organization of various national level programs, and voice for the rights of labors and establishment of award for human rights defenders are really important. It is the INSEC that has been publishing Nepal Human Rights Yearbook since 1992 with the aim to inform the international

communities about the human rights situation of Nepal and to archive the historical incidents of human rights violations safely so that successive generations could be aware of their country's human rights situation in the past.

Although political organizations and struggles started in Nepal since 1930's continuously, the issues such as child rights, rights of the prisoners, allegation of witchcraft, women's freedom were still shadowed until half a century since then. INSEC has documented thousands of incidents on the economic exploitation, abduction, ransom, killings, retaliatory violence, the

attacks against people's religious beliefs, provocation of ethnic and communal feelings and torching national industrial buildings, all committed during so called armed revolution. This task keeps significance in terms of human rights, human dignity and national sensitization.

INSEC, now, has become like an encyclopedia in terms of its works on investigation, collection, analysis of various aspects of human rights violations in Nepal. I think, there is no other organization in Nepal like INSEC that works across the country with a nationwide network by mobilizing a large number of manpower.



Women Taking Part in a Rally for the Liberation of Kamiyas



Memoir on INSEC

My mobile phone rings. An unknown number appears on the mobile screen. Being an unknown number, I think of not receiving the call. However, I instantly change my mind. Upon receiving the call I come to know that the caller was Yogish from INSEC. I was not in contact with him for long time. His unexpected call makes me curious to some extent. He talks forthrightly and reminds me of the letter sent to me some days ago that requested for an article. I had received a letter from INSEC requesting for an article some days ago. As I was of the view that there were no particular issues to write about as mentioned in the letter, I was not in mood to write. Given that I am not a good article writer and also that I have been losing interest to write for some years, I had not started writing the article. However, following the phone call from INSEC reminding me of the letter, I recalled the moments spent at INSEC cursorily.

I started to recollect the time spent with Sushil Pyakurel and Prakash Kaphle, the founders of INSEC. I remembered the period spent with Sushilji in Rajbiraj. I had started to live in Kathmandu since 1984 and Mr. Pyakurel also came here shortly after that. I reminisced the struggling days spent by us in Kathmandu at that time. Therefore, I made up my mind that my article has to discuss the role played by Sushilji and Prakashji. Probably because Sushilji and Prakashji and, I were in different roles by profession, we had

different ways of life. As I had more responsibility under my profession, it was compulsory for me to live a submissive life while Sushilji and Prakashji moved ahead as the activists. I was a legal professional. For I was also a university teacher, I was restricted to a large extent whereas they were free. Except the constraints arising from their moral aspect and the work they were involved in, they were free from external constraints.

Although we were involved in different profession, we had intimate and congenial relationship. We used to be in frequent contact at that time. Later on, I was in contact with the committee formed for the Panchayati policy study as well. Panchayati polity could be opposed, however, opposing the king was not allowed. Sushilji and Prakashji were working in the field of human rights also for ending the then party-less Panchayati regime and restoration of multi-party democracy. I could not work on a par with them towards this end. However, they had known my intention that the Panchayati rule had to go. At that time, various personalities (leaders, professors, law professionals, journalists, social workers) were sent to different districts to attend the programs organized to celebrate December 16 as well as king's birthday. I used to deny attending the program organized on December 16 pretending to be busy or with similar other pretexts. So, I had to face reproach from the concerned that

Later on, I was in contact with the committee formed for the Panchayati policy study as well. Panchayati polity could be opposed, however, opposing the king was not allowed.

not attending the program was against the Panchayati regime. Due to these and similar other reasons, I was unable to be assimilated with Sushilji and Prakashji's group.

Now, people's movement 1990 started. Sushilji and Prakashji went underground. However, Sushilji used to make phone calls frequently even at that time briefing the development of the movement. As I was not known what was happening, I could not say anything about the movement. Those who were under the Panchayati regime and having belief in democracy were lobbying for the restoration of multi-party democracy. The king was in Pokhara at that time. I was also a person who was taking initiation that the king had to be requested for declaring multi-party democratic polity in the country. We even had made decision on it in a meeting attended by Bipin Koirala, Shiva Bahadur Khadka, among others, at Surendra Bahadur Basnet's house located in Jawalakhel and had requested the king accordingly by going to Pokhara. However, no reaction came from the king over the request. Later on, the movement concluded and democracy restored in the country.

It seems now that I am going off the point. However, it is necessary to give this background before explaining about my entry into INSEC. Sushilji, while he was living an underground life, used to urge me that I had to work in collaboration with them. Sushilji and Prakashji had initiated programs on providing service to the cart pushers (INSEC's logo reflects its work) after registering an organization titled "Informal Sector Research Center". Following the restoration of democracy, it was decided that the Center had to be run institutionally. Sushilji and

Prakashji had almost reached an agreement on what type of form to give to the organization and how. Now, they requested me to work jointly. I had nothing to disagree. So, I was given the responsibility to prepare and register the statute of the organization.

Although I was fully involved in the task of registering the organization as one of the founder members, I was unable to involve in INSEC activities dedicatedly due to my profession. Besides attending the meetings, I used to do only the assigned works. Spreading awareness on human rights was the main work of INSEC at that time. The initial days of INSEC were full of struggles. Its office was located at Kalimati and it was shifted to Syuchatar several years later. I think, INSEC reached the present situation mainly due to the fact that it always completed the works it initiated. It was natural for INSEC to continue its works on human rights once getting registered legally. As a democratic election was going to be held in the country for the first time following the end of the Panchayati regime and the election was a new experience for the country, it was necessary for civil society (working for human rights) to remain especially active. The election was taking place in a different context after 30 years. The National Election Observation Committee was formed due to tireless effort of Sushilji. The Committee was also meant to institutionalize democracy and election process. We felt that a book written on election was necessary for the election observation. I was assigned the role to prepare the book. Accordingly, I prepared a

book titled "*Nepal in its Electoral System: An Introduction*". I also involved in the election observation process at that time and have been involving in such the works since then.

The issue of the Kamaiyas is one of the works accomplished by INSEC. This work has helped the organization to be known nationally and internationally. Many people were of the view that the Kamaiyas were the "bonded" people. I had also heard of this. I was informed through the civil service personnel having worked in the Dang, Banke, Bardiya, Kailali and Kanchnapur districts that the Kamaiyas tended to go to their landlords taking the frame of their doors (as the Kamaiyas did not possess more than door frames as their property) and that they were sold and bought on the *Maghi* day. I came to know later that Prakashji and Sushilji had managed some amount from the donors and made decision to carry out study on and raise the Kamaiyas' issue. They requested me to involve in the study. I was enthusiastic; however, as it was necessary to make field visits in the districts for several months for the study, it was not possible for me. I had my regular profession. Later on, they managed in such a way that I did not need to go to field visits. Engineer Sunil Pokhrel, Pramod Kaphle, among others, were decided to be sent to the field work and I was supposed to analyze the data collected by them and prepare report. Questionnaire was prepared. Although we were known about the situation of the Kamaiyas, we held interaction on the issue. The interaction provided other reference materials. Then, field work was started. We held a seminar at the Hotel Orchid. Probably, the seminar was the first of its kind on the issues of the Kamaiyas. A

paper written even with the help of the Tharu Kalyankari Sabha was presented in the seminar. I was one of the participants of the seminar, which helped me a lot to further understand the issues of the Kamaiyas. However, real picture of the Kamaiyas was not reflected in the paper. It was found out later following the analysis of the data that bonded labor existed under the Kamaiya system. It was possible for us to take for granted that bonded labor was there. Once our report established the existence of bonded labor under the Kamaiya system as a fact, it was disseminated nationally and internationally. Before the publication of the report by INSEC, the government had prepared a report on the issue; however, it was a nominal kind. Following INSEC's report, some other organizations too carried out their studies on the topic and published reports. The government too conducted study again. All the reports published on the issue further established and attested INSEC's report.

Afterwards, INSEC speeded up its efforts for the liberation of the Kamaiyas. Active movements began nationally and internationally. I traveled to Banke, Bardiya, Kailali and Kanchanpur and held many interactions there. Organizations were formed within the Kamaiyas for their liberation. INSEC was campaigning with the view that the bonded labor system should be ended through the formulation of law, the Kamaiyas should be rehabilitated on the basis of humane treatment and the terms and conditions of their service in agriculture work should be fixed. There were no laws on the rights and benefits and security of the laborers. INSEC had been raising voice for such the rules and regulations. After a decade

of active movement of INSEC, the government not only enacted law on them but also declared, at midnight, the Kamaiya system to have been ended, but without any proper plan of rehabilitation. Bonded labor exists under many other employment and profession. There should have existed separate provisions for the bonded and other laborers who are liberated but being exploited. However, the declaration did not take these issues into consideration. Therefore, the declaration did not provide with an appropriate solution because of which the Kamaiyas had to face big problems. Probably, their problem, now, was harsher than the one they faced while living as the bonded laborers. There were immense problems in terms of their accommodations, food and sustenance. Such the situation drove them rebellious. Many of the freed Kamaiyas involved in the Maoist-waged war for granted. As the government tried to resolve the Kamaiya system in a wrong way, the problem could not be addressed appropriately and justly. Rather, we all realized that the Kamaiya system emerged as a national problem differently.

Prakash Kaphle died in an aircraft crash before the Kamaiyas liberation movement succeeded. His death was an irreparable loss and shock for the INSEC campaign. However, as Sushilji was running the campaign efficiently, the organization speeded up more rapidly and with broader programs. The publication of Human Rights Yearbook is another asset of INSEC, which has provided it with poise, credibility and efficiency. I was also a member of the committee formed for the publication of the book. I even helped the publication by contributing articles. I am

happy that the Yearbook has been regularly published so far. May this tradition continue forever! While at INSEC, I also worked on the problems of the Bhutanese refugees. Besides this, I collected and edited the human rights related documents. The collected documents have been even published as "Manabadhikar Sangalo" (Compilation of human rights documents).

Once Sushilji was due to be appointed as the commissioner of the NHRC, a question emerged as to who would handle INSEC. I was also taken as one of the possible persons for the purpose. However, given the background, system and outlook of INSEC's establishment, I was unfit to lead the organization. Subodhji quit his active CPN-UML politics in Biratnagar and started to lead INSEC. As he was already an executive member of the organization and had been assisting Sushilji, he did not face problems in running the organization.

(The writer is Prof. and senior advocate. He is also a founding executive member of INSEC)



**Former Chairperson of INSEC
Sushil Pyakurel with Binaya Kumar
Kasajoo, the First Person to Receive
Prakash Human Rights Award**



INSEC: As I Know

I am affiliated to INSEC not only because of my familiarity and political proximity with Sushil Pyakurel and Late Prakash Kaphle. I think, it is not as per its initial plan that INSEC has emerged as a leading human rights organization in the country. Sushil Pyakurel was the General Secretary of the newly established organization - the Forum for Democracy and National Unity (*FODENU*) and Prakash Kaphle was affiliated to *MASAM*. Although they were working for separate organizations, they resembled twins. It was known later that they, even while working for separate organizations, had reached a conclusion to form a separate organization. Upon deciding to form an organization entitled "Informal Sector Research Center", they came to see me, as I was involved in graphic design as well, for having the logo of the organization designed.

I asked them about the work of INSEC. I was aware of the works of the *FODENU* and *MASAM* that they were related with politics and human rights respectively. They told me that the new organization was for the laborers especially for the rights of the porters and cart pushers in the city of Kathmandu. Therefore, a laborer pushing cart was designed as the logo of INSEC. I, now, affiliated to INSEC because I designed the logo of the organization.

Multi-party polity was restored in Nepal after a year of INSEC's establishment. However, we had

accomplished several works under the banner of INSEC before the restoration of democracy. A book on how May Day is celebrated was published. INSEC had started its work from a small room located at Kalimati, Kathmandu. Following its establishment, it involved in laborers' rights. However, following the restoration of multi-party system in the country, the scope of INSEC became wider. Although its priority was on laborers, it started to work in such a way that its works would assist the trade unions without overlapping with the functions of the latter. The second work of INSEC was on the Kamaiyas.

It had not started to publish Human Rights Yearbook at that time. Sushil Pyakurel and Prakash Kaphle were working for *MASAM*, which was the main organization working on human rights at that time. Sushil Pyakurel was active in politics as well. When he came up with an idea of working on bonded labor in Nepal, I had reacted at that time that he tended to involve in a non-issue of Nepal and tried to be a copier. However, I was wrong and Mr Pyakurel proved right later on.

INSEC published a book titled "*Nepalma Kamaiya Pratha*" (Kamaiya System of Nepal) with an analysis on how bonded labor existed in Nepal and what its eco-politics was. This helped INSEC a lot to be well-established at that time although it is established now as a human rights organization. Its base, however, is the work accomplished by it on bonded labor. Once the book was released, we all had the realization that

Multi-party polity was restored in Nepal after a year of INSEC's establishment. However, we had accomplished several works under the banner of INSEC before the restoration of democracy.

we had to work for the rights of the agricultural laborers of the western part of Nepal especially against the bonded labor prevalent in the region. Then, we had started to work in collaboration with INSEC.

Trade Union was also in a situation of transition at that time. So, we divided works between us thinking that it would be good to work jointly. INSEC was allocated the responsibility to work on informal education by doing research and developing materials in order to sensitize the laborers for movement. Similarly, trade union was allocated the responsibility to mobilize people for the movement. The coordinating responsibility, however, was with the trade union. Similarly, INSEC was given responsibility to coordinate educational and environmental sectors. I still remember, Dilli Chaudhary and others, who were affiliated to the organization that became famous later as *BASE*, were not for “activism” at that time. When INSEC was of the view that Kamaiyas should be liberated by mobilizing themselves, Dilli Chaudhary and others were insisting that problems of the Kamaiyas could be resolved through pig and vegetable farming and other means of income generating skills. I still remember that some of the organizations that appeared later on for the cause of Kamaiyas’ liberation had started to put forth their airy views on “Kamaiya liberation”. They were with the rhetoric that all the Kamaiyas would be freed, that they would be settled in a particular place, that all of them would obtain land and house, that they would be provided with quarters with a school aside and playground at the center of the quarters and that they would engage in off-seasonal vegetable farms located aside their

quarters also by running bicycle workshops there.

INSEC cleared the misconception on Kamaiya liberation. We also changed our perception. What we asserted initially as- “no problem exists” was proved later with fact that “there exists problem”. This helped in understanding that liberating Kamaiyas was neither the activities meant for increasing income nor a romantic utopia. Hence, we derived a conclusion – Kamaiya liberation was only a process of “changing a slave into poor person” and making a nominal number of Kamaiyas rich was not any worthwhile. We realized that once they are freed, the Kamaiyas would get position like that of other poor people and their problems also could be solved through the common programs launched in the country for the eradication of poverty. Then we fixed a slogan for the Kamaiyas’ freedom demanding for waiver on *Saunki*¹ and the maintenance of *Bukura* as well as reasonable daily wage. The slogan coined by us remained until declaring the Kamaiyas free.

GEFONT publishes *Shramik Khabar*. Its 100th issue is going to be published now. We had sought for help from INSEC for the first issue of the publication. We had wanted loan, not grant. We requested Sushil Pyakurel and Prakash Kaphle to lend us NPR worth 10,000 either institutionally or in the personal capacity. They inquired about our plan. Just as we had disbelieved initially that there existed bonded labor in Nepal, they too probably did not believe initially that *Shramik Khabar* could be published. As Prakash Kaphle himself was a journalist, he knew well how much efforts were required for the publication

of the newspaper. They probably felt that we trade unionists were just talking whimsically. However, they ultimately believed in us and lent Rs. 5000 and also committed to provide the rest amount later on. *Shramik Khabar* started to be published. With the Rs. 5000, we managed everything required for the publication and it was not necessary to borrow additional amount now. However, they called us later and provided with the committed amount and converted the loan amount into grant. We also transformed the amount into the tariff of the *Shramik khabar*. Our relation with INSEC was expanded in this way.

INSEC’s initial identity has changed over time. Viewing in terms of human rights protection, promotion and analysis, INSEC has developed now as a leading organization. It has its nationwide network now. The organization formed aiming to work for the decent daily wage and health of the cart pushers has reached the position to keep an eye on the violation of human rights of the Nepali people living in any part of the country. This is a big achievement of INSEC. I think the beginning point of INSEC’s journey was the analysis of the Kamaiyas and its present height has been maintained by and visible through Human Rights Yearbook.

It has contributed not only to the publication and documentation of human rights issues but also to street movements launched for human rights. Be that a democratic movement, the election observation, violence hit regions or extra-judicial killings and enforced disappearances; INSEC has established itself as a voice of the victims. INSEC is the first organization in Nepal to air

1. *Saunki* refers to the cash and other goods borrowed by a Kamaiya from the landlord as loan.

human rights program on radio. The program was a milestone for human rights education. I have always been giving examples of two organizations – CWIN and INSEC while exemplifying the effective organizations. The former is established in the country on child protection and the latter is synonymous to human rights movement in Nepal. However, so many organizations with equal resources are in existence now-a-days. To be equipped with resources and personnel is one thing and contributing to the cause is quite another.

Like that of INSEC, the position of the friends working at INSEC is also high. Sushil Pyakurel became the founding commissioner of the NHRC and also received an international award for human rights. There lies his hard work behind this success. I often ponder upon the possible and suitable areas of work for INSEC in the upcoming days. I think, it has to continue to publish Human Rights Yearbook. It should be continued in digital format of the book if it is not possible to print and distribute.

It is not predictable who commits human rights violations and how. Violations occur in many ways as the state turns gradually autocratic. INSEC now has to drive human rights movement by relating economic, social and cultural rights with human rights. Its advocacy for just and equitable society should be continued. Who will speak against the widening gap between haves and have-nots if INSEC does not speak about this problem on behalf of the NGOs? Hence, INSEC too can become a voice for one hundred and seventeen thousand laborers who are actively working at present. It can speak for their reasonable wages and decent employment being together with trade union.

I think, our collaboration with INSEC will be possible in future.

We are living in the 'digital age' now. The materials designed for the protection of human rights can be continued even through radio and televisions. Of course, giving continuity through these means is expensive. However, INSEC can utilize the human resources developed by it for the purpose. This will ease in running programs online and via radio and televisions. Given the availability of mobile phone and ipads, breaking news and information can be disseminated easily. What I mean to say in general here is that it is urgent to utilize possible all the mediums of information dissemination for the protection and promotion of human rights.

Questions are raised sometimes whether the nature of INSEC is political or apolitical. Like trade unions, INSEC too probably has faced such the questions. To me, INSEC should not be apolitical at any cost. Trade unions are also political. The organizations that finish up their long periods of works on political issues cannot be apolitical. Therefore, trade unionism itself is "politics" and, INSEC and other similar organizations are political in nature. Democratic rights itself is a political issue. Having been embedded with democracy, human rights cannot be apolitical. However, it is important here to understand that human rights does not discriminate people on the basis of their party and ideological tilt. Human rights should not "*masticate, swallow and retch*" a particular party's ideology. INSEC has not done and will not do this. INSEC has to be non-partisan in the matter of human rights. It has to speak against the violators of human rights, perversion and evils, does not matter which party these

persons and issues are related with. Therefore, sometimes human rights organizations seem to belonging to all and they reach the situation sometimes as if they belong to none. Based on the works accomplished by INSEC so far, I don't think it has worked one-sidedly.

Most of the organizations are run being based on donors. They work if they are given projects and no project means they go workless. Some organizations emerge in this field to be a 'celebrity'. As the 'celebrities' have access far and wide, donors favor them. INSEC started to work with small scale budget and also worked at large scale. INSEC has capacity to handle even large scale projects. Similarly, it has continued its work and campaign even while not receiving big projects. Therefore, there is difference between INSEC and other similar organizations. Questions might be raised regarding the institutional sustainability of many of the organizations. However, INSEC has its own infrastructures for sustainability.

I think, it will be more effective if various programs on social justice are run from a single basket in the days to come. INSEC's works have various dimensions. The experiences in the past suggest that research is its main aspect. It sounds now as though INSEC is less involved in doing research. It also sounds as though no researchable issues remain for INSEC. Research has multiple facets; there are many things to know. So, it has to pay due attention to newer research questions now.

Congratulations for completing 20 years since establishment! My best wishes for further progress!



Dr. Rajesh Gautam

Human Rights Movement, INSEC and My Role

INSEC, of course, has played significant role for the human rights movement in Nepal. The personalities affiliated to INSEC have contributed to human rights movement ever since the People's Movement 1990. Following the restoration of democracy, they established human rights organization; took initiation and played role in stabilizing the human rights movement and situation in the country. Although there are many non-governmental organizations in Nepal, most of them seemed to be taking personal advantage from the organizations rather than advancing human rights movement and well establishing the rights of general people.

INSEC has been working on human rights movement differently than these organizations. However, INSEC is also not free from such the accusations. Blames were there against INSEC even while I was involved in the organization. At one time or another, INSEC used to be accused either of being a "dollar farmer" or to have been affiliated to political party. INSEC did not heed the accusations and continued its struggle for human rights in the country. As a result, the struggle has remained and will continue to remain as an important work in the human rights history of Nepal. The role of INSEC has not changed. However, it has already emerged as an institution now whereas it was a movement in the past. People would understand human

rights as the movement in the past rather than as an institution. *Nepal Manabadhikar Sangathan*, INSEC and *MASAM* were the main visible human rights organizations in the past in Nepal.

So far as the political blame against INSEC is concerned, it has to work in the future as a pure human rights organization, does not matter which political party the personalities working for INSEC are affiliated to. Freeing itself from dual role will gradually free INSEC from such the accusations.

As INSEC has played significant role for the human rights movement in the country, the organization has to continue playing role further significantly. Citizenry across the country are with a kind of discontent, political parties are suppressing people's rights, spirit, thought and interests. The organization like INSEC has to move ahead by keeping the popular rights, spirit, thought and interests in mind and respecting them. Moving ahead only with the notion that democracy has to be established and consolidated in isolation might blunt human rights movement. Therefore, it is necessary to keep the spirit of human rights movement alive. Therefore, the organization like INSEC has to give more importance to social form of movement than to political aspects of democracy. It has to play role in strengthening the social structure of people.

As INSEC has played significant role for the human rights movement in the country, the organization has to continue playing role further significantly. Citizenry across the country are with a kind of discontent, political parties are suppressing people's rights, spirit, thought and interests.

I have involved in the human rights movement of Nepal since the latter half of 1980's. My affiliation to the Amnesty International however was since early 1980s. Before working for INSEC, I was affiliated to the *Nepal Manabadhikar Sangathan* as the General Secretary of the organization. Prakash Kaphle had a plan to publish human rights yearbook. Accordingly, he requested me to help in the plan. Although I was affiliated to the *Nepal Manabadhikar Sangathan*, I started to work for the publication of the yearbook as permitted by Rishikesh Shah- the chairperson of the organization. The publication of Human Rights Yearbook started in 1992 but Prakash Kaphle was already demised by then. We started to publish the human rights year book in a very difficult situation, it has a different story. Subodhji and I discussed the plan, in a small room, on publishing the yearbook. There is a separate episode on how and why we deployed the human rights activists to the districts. Hence, I was affiliated to INSEC in the course of publishing human rights yearbook. Later on, my tenure as the General Secretary of the *Nepal Manabadhikar Sangathan* was over. Then, I started to work for INSEC fully. I was concerned only with human rights yearbook. However, I also worked as the adviser to INSEC for sometimes. Afterwards, I worked at INSEC as the General Secretary for five to six years.

We were always worried on how to advance the ongoing human rights movement. However, human rights have been emerging now as an organization rather than a movement. "Organization", might even be denoted as a form of aberration besides representing positive aspects. As INSEC is moving ahead positively, it has not been deviated. Compared with the human rights situation in the past, the role of human rights at present seems to have been established differently. Human rights in

the past was perceived as a movement and there were very few people in this movement. However, there are many people for the cause of human rights now. Those who are working for human rights are affiliated to their corresponding organizations in the form of NGOs. They have been receiving various forms of donations. INSEC is different in this matter as well. It has been making its annual financial report public.

The NHRC was not established when INSEC started its work. We started to lobby for the establishment of the Commission right after the success of people's movement 1990. We exerted pressure against the government for the purpose in various ways. Sushilji and I, among others, raised our voice from the street for the establishment of the commission. I was arrested several times for demanding the establishment of the Commission. Our struggle for it was succeeded later on. However, I don't think the Commission has worked now as we expected. The Commission has not been able to represent the feelings of the human rights activists in the country. This is regrettable. I and INSEC did not miss any moves, discussions and meetings organized for the establishment of the NHRC. We called on the concerned and exerted pressure in black and white on many occasions for the purpose.

The CPN-Maoists started armed conflict in the country soon after INSEC started to publish Human Rights Yearbook. Initially, the conflict was not so violent. However, we had indicated the genesis of the Maoists-waged armed conflict in the country through the Human Rights Yearbook. We even had made the government aware of the problem at that time besides providing the causes of armed conflict and the ways of addressing it. However, the then government arrested and then imprisoned the cadres of the

As INSEC is moving ahead positively, it has not been deviated. Compared with the human rights situation in the past, the role of human rights at present seems to have been established differently. Human rights in the past was perceived as a movement and there were very few people in this movement but there are many people for the cause of human rights now.

People's Front in every district with the aim to terminate the existence of the party. We made this fact public and even warned the government against its deed through the Yearbook. However, the government did not pay attention toward these issues. Two years after the armed conflict started, I, Rishikesh Shah and Padma Ratna Tuladhar even met with Dr. Baburam Bhattarai once. He was seen positive for the dialogue. The then PM Sher Bahadur Deuba was not ready to write letter calling on the Maoist for dialogue. It was our abortive effort for peace. The series of Human Rights Yearbook published since 1992 shows a complete history on Nepal's armed conflict waged by the CPN-Maoist, including its genesis, violent escalation and the peace negotiation. We even published Dr. Baburam Bhattarai's view on the armed conflict in the Yearbook. INSEC has played role one way

or another in ending armed conflict. Such the role has been documented in the Yearbooks.

The monarchist did not have their clear views on the democratic set up established following 1990. So, they would formulate laws occasionally intending to disintegrate democracy. We took to street against such the laws. Some bills like that of the Panchayati era were tabled in the parliament at that time. We protested the bills. The monarch too was not so positive although views were expressed at that time that king Birendra was a democrat. So, we were continuously opposing the anti-democratic activities, which were increasing over time. INSEC played important role even after the takeover by the king Gyanendra. Similarly, the role of INSEC during People's Movement 2006 was significant. Such the role of INSEC reminds me of the period following

1990 when we would monitor the shutdown strikes called on by different groups at day time and would prepare report on the monitoring in the evening. We used to also caution the government on the situation of the country. We engaged in such the works for long following 1990. The role played by INSEC during the movement of 2006 further heightened the monitoring role of INSEC. The human rights activists affiliated to INSEC were present in the streets even while teargas and bullets were being fired. They took the wounded people to hospitals and managed the other safety measures for the wounded people. The organization had also role in internationalizing the developments of the movement. INSEC, now, has to play important role keeping the changing political situation in the country into mind.

(Dr. Gautam is the former General Secretary of INSEC)



Police Interferes with the Rally Organized in Kathmandu Demanding for the Formation of National Human Rights Commission



My Perception on INSEC

Complete two decades has already elapsed since INSEC, leading human rights organization in Nepal, was established. As its contribution to Nepali society is obvious, it is not necessary to explain the work of INSEC on sensitization, protection and promotion of human rights. People who are concerned about human rights know its contribution well. Its efficient presence and networks in all 75 districts and its active engagement at the local areas indicate at the fact that INSEC is a symbol of credibility. INSEC has been publishing Human Rights Yearbook annually by compiling probably almost all the incidents of human rights violations. So far as I know, the details included in the yearbook have not been refuted by anyone due to impartiality and confidence of INSEC.

The first human rights organization *MASAM* was already active before the establishment of INSEC. Prakash Kaphle, who was energetic and intrepid at that time, was the founding General Secretary of *MASAM*. Jointly with Sushil Pyakurel, who was also the General Secretary of *FODENU*, Late Kaphle established another organization named INSEC whereas *MASAM* was well functioning. I felt at that time as though they were giving birth to *MASAM*'s rival organization. However, I realized later on that a committed and dedicated group of like-minded people is necessary to run an organization having its specific objectives. The case

of *MASAM* proves this fact. *MASAM*, which had a very liberal policy and had accommodated people from different ideology and beliefs, is almost defunct now. Many of the founders of the organization have established their own human rights organizations.

Involvement in the Kamaiyas' issues and problems is the most appreciable and unforgettable work accomplished by INSEC after its establishment. The voice of the organization on Kamaiyas' problems was not limited as only a voice per se; it was translated into a lively movement. By then, the Kamaiya system was in practice especially in the Far Western Tarai in Nepal. The practice was continuing unexposed and covertly as a replica of 18th century's slavery. The governments formed even under the democratic polity and also the organizations established with the aim to work for people were not paying any attention toward this problem. INSEC sensitized the helpless Kamaiyas, organized them for their freedom by providing a strong base for movement and exposed the problems faced by the Kamaiyas. As a result, the Kamaiyas have been freed now and the state has also declared the practice as an illegal and punishable act.

However, the Kamaiyas did not possess anything except the secondhand clothes provided by their landlords. It was not possible for them to sustain life only on public land under the open sky. They had to be provided

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with and paid attention about the alternative and sustainable ways of living. However, that could not happen. Just as the slaves who were emancipated by Chandra Shumsher without proper provision for livelihood had to return to their landlords' and masters' being unable to find alternative ways of sustenance, most of the freed Kamaiyas were compelled to return to their landlords'. Therefore, the Kamaiyas were seemingly free but it was not so in essence. Having said this, I am not implying that INSEC is responsible for the failure. It was not a sole stakeholder of the movement as well. What I mean to say is that the movements launched by the social organizations have to be made a success in essence by learning from the experience from the past.

The masters of the Kamaiyas were middle and big level landlords. The Kamaiyas had to look into all the works, including domestic chores of the landlords. They had to look after cattle and involve in the agricultural works. As a result, the Kamaiyas were full-fledged bonded labor and domestic and agricultural laborers at the same time. I am not an expert on laws; however, what I believe is that if the Kamaiyas were given the position as that of tenants, they could claim some shares of the landlords' lands. This could provide them a reliable source of living. As it could not happen so at that time, the landlords were freed from the Kamaiyas but not vice versa. Moreover, the freed Kamaiyas have turned into new landless squatters now. They have been misused as vote banks and also as the persons for hurling stones at the time of strikes and so called

movements. They have also been misused as a group to seize land and encroach upon forest areas as directed by the political parties. This is a tragic and unsuccessful aspect of the Kamaiya movement.

State used to be the main violator of human rights some two decades ago. Besides this, socio-cultural traditions in Nepal also used to be the cause of violation of human rights. This is not the situation now. Rather than experiencing improvement in human rights situation, individuals are emerging as the violators. *Badi* tradition and untouchability have been illegalized and declared to have been eradicated, however, these continue in tact in practice. Criminal attitude is on the rise in the country due to the increasing beliefs of the political circle that state power can be usurped through the barrel of gun. The situation of statelessness and increasing impunity is also adding to the criminal mind set. Illegal small weapons are easily availed. The incidents of armed dacoity and killings are on the rise. Professional ruffians are being used to kill family members even over

minor familial disputes. Similarly, having the neighbors abducted over minor disputes for ransom is becoming common. Political parties and leaders are doing their best to defend their cadres, doesn't matter how felonious the latter are. This tendency is orienting Nepali society toward criminalization. It sounds as though the government and political parties are run as directed by criminal gangs. The conscious citizens in the country are worried that such the situation might lead to a more horrible situation. With this extreme situation, the issue of defending human rights is getting knottier, more challenging and a matter of worry. However, escapist attitude and silent culture is not the solution. Such the situation has to be overcome at any cost. The voice for the protection of human rights should be made further vociferous. For this, INSEC, which has turned into an adult, has to come up with its appropriate strategies to address the possible unwanted situation of the country. Hopefully, it will be successful towards this end.



Dalits and Non-Dalits Dining Together to Eliminate Caste-Discrimination, Lahan



Voice of the Voiceless

Nepali people were fully able to enjoy their individual freedoms along with other civil rights following the restoration of democracy in 1990. INSEC contributed institutionally to implement the universally acknowledged basic norms and values of human rights into practice. In the changed context, promoting awareness among people about human rights and the democratic issues was required. However, sensitizing people to be a part of the campaign launched for their inherent rights was not free from challenges.

Autocratic rule was in place for long in the country and people were not given their freedom of speech. INSEC, which was established in this backdrop as a non-government organization, has established strong foundation for the guarantee of people's rights and justice within two decades of its establishment. INSEC's attempts have also been laudable in the sense that these have worked toward protecting self-esteem and the constitutionally guaranteed fundamental rights of people. The organization has also created an environment for people to involve themselves in the institutional development of democratic polity. Primarily there was the lack of education. The programs on civilian sensitization were null and awareness level of people on human rights awareness was almost zero. Similarly, establishing an organized institution

on behalf of citizenry was also not easy. People were in the dark in terms of acquiring minimum knowledge on human rights norms. In this context, INSEC involved in domesticating the international standards and in implementing them in practice through national legislations.

Given that democratic movements are becoming a facet of human rights movement, INSEC deserves the foremost position in the collective efforts to establish human rights. The organization was established two decades ago only on the personal commitment and without basic infrastructures. It is admirable that INSEC has extended its networks across the country and produced thousands of human rights defenders. INSEC was established at an appropriate time on translating the issues of human rights and fundamental freedom into practice. INSEC is involved in promoting awareness down to every village in the country through human rights education, in documenting the incidents of human rights violations and publishing Human Rights Yearbook exactly on the scheduled day by compiling these incidents. Similarly, it was involved in providing legal remedy and awareness program on Kamaiya liberation, in the institutional development of election observation, protection of people's lives during armed conflict and rehabilitation of the internally displaced people.

INSEC was established at an appropriate time on translating the issues of human rights and fundamental freedom into practice. INSEC is involved in promoting awareness down to every village in the country through human rights education, in documenting the incidents of human rights violations and publishing Human Rights Yearbook exactly on the scheduled day by compiling these incidents.

Advocacy for social justice and the rights of the child, children as zone of peace campaign, creating just environment for conflict victims and the local level facilitation for the reconciliation of the conflicting parties of the past are some other areas of INSEC's involvement. Moreover, it has worked for the development of human rights culture, ending impunity, the creation of just society, management of transitional period, establishing base for the sustainable peace and enabling security and rule of law. These works of INSEC will be always remembered. Be that through sensitization campaigns, awareness programs on radio, radio listeners' club or through child rights awareness groups; INSEC has contributed to the country greatly. Its advocacy for translating the basic norms of human rights into practice among citizenry and the role in spreading awareness about human rights is notable.

I have been working with INSEC for 18 years. I started to work with INSEC collaboratively since the human rights movement in Nepal started to advance in an organized way. Therefore, I assume that it is my responsibility to comment on the role played by INSEC for social change. I have to remember the strong will power, relentless struggle and commitment toward human rights of INSEC founder duos - Late Prakash Kaphle and Sushil Pyakurel. Their attempts heightened the human rights movement of Nepal into an organized one and also played important role in the establishment of a national human rights institution - the NHRC as such. I did not get opportunity to

be acquainted with Late Prakash Kaple. However, as I have got opportunity to work collaboratively with Sushil Pyakurel and have even learnt from him a lot on human rights issues, I am thankful to him. Their contribution to the institutionalization of human rights movement is unparalleled. I have received firsthand information on the history of human rights movement in Nepal through him. The human rights movement in Nepal is embedded with the establishment of INSEC as well. I would like to admire Sushil Pyakurel's indefatigable personality, far-reaching vision, the capacity to institutionalize human rights movement and the liberal attitude that encourages the youths to be involved for the cause of human rights. I fully respect the contribution, commitment and efficiency of the present and former leadership of INSEC, its executive committee and staff members.

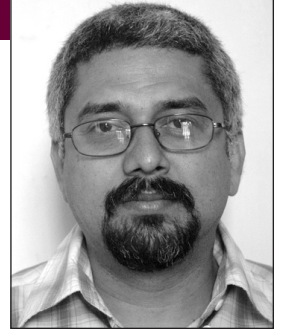
INSEC has contributed importantly to establish human rights movement as a way of life of

the general Nepalis. Lately, I have been working in collaboration with INSEC on security related issues of the citizenry, rule of law and also on enabling the law implementing bodies of the state especially Nepal Police. This has been an encouraging experience. Overall, INSEC has been able to translate the principle of neutrality into practice and establish itself as a reliable organization among people. The tasks such as making human rights movement trustworthy and protecting the works of INSEC campaign should be the concern of all the human rights communities and the proponents of democracy. All the concerned should take initiation toward creating an environment in which the works on human rights and social justice initiated and accomplished by INSEC will be acknowledged as an important aspect of Nepali society.

(Mr. Budbathoki is Human Rights activist and, Conflict and Security Analyst. He also works as the National Advisor to United States Institute of Peace (Nepal) established by the American Congress)



Chairman of UCPN Maoist Pushpa Kamal Dahal Signing on the Commitment Paper Prepared by Civil Society, Biratnagar, 2010



The Dynamic Twenty Years of INSEC

When I first heard about INSEC, it was located in a small room at Kalimati, Kathmandu. Although INSEC was established before 1990, it started to work more intensively only following the success of the democratic movement in 1990. Before the movement, the prime movers of the organization- Sushil Pyakurel and Prakash Kaphle were actively working for *Prajatantrik Rastriya Ekata Manch* and *MASAM* respectively.

Following the success of the people's movement, they had informed me about their plan to publish Human Rights Yearbook. We had a brief discussion about the possible role I could play on it. In the meantime, Prakash Kaphle left for Sri Lanka saying that he would discuss the issue following his return to the country. However, he passed away in an aircraft crash while returning to Nepal. I traveled over the hillocks around Palung in a rainy night along with the army in their helicopter in search of the crashed plane. We came to know the next day that the plane was crashed in the Nuwakot district. I even reached deep down the precipice, where the plane was crashed, in the army's helicopter.

The accident of the Thai Airways bereaved our family, which was introduced to Prakash Kaphle as Sushil Pyakurel's friend. They were so intimate. As I grew up, I realized that Prakash Kaphle was not our own maternal uncle. While roaming over the hillocks at Palung and Ghopte bhir

in search of the crashed plane, I recalled the moments he teased and rebuked me and also the moments he reminded me of my duty while I was a child. Whenever the radio would air the song titled "*Eh Dosti...*" (Hey friend...), our mother used to say that it was the song on Sushil Pyakurel and Prakash Kaphle. This context is etched into my mind in such a way that I almost burst into tears nowadays whenever television broadcasts the song. Time heals even the deep wounds. However, whenever the issues of the death of Prakash Kaphle and Madan Bhandari are discussed, I still feel discomfort. These leading figures of the country used to always hold discussion about advancing the efforts for social transformation. Both of them had a good coordination in their works. However, both of them passed away tragically and untimely.

Comrade Madan Bhandari was impressed by the activeness of Prakash Kaphle, especially by the initiation taken by the latter by traveling to different countries in Europe in order to garner the international support against the Panchayati regime. In the first general election held after 1990, the Chair of the Nepali Congress Krishna Prasad Bhattarai and the then General Secretary of the CPN (UML) Madan Bhandari ran election in the constituency no. 1 in the Kathmandu district. Many people were worried that one of them would certainly lose the election run whereas both of them were required to represent in the parliament.

When I first heard about INSEC, it was located in a small room at Kalimati, Kathmandu. Although INSEC was established before 1990, it started to work more intensively only following the success of the democratic movement in 1990.

People were with the view that they should not have run the election from the same constituency. Prakash Kaphle, in the presence of both the leaders, tried to bring them to an agreement on not to compete for the election from the same constituency. Comrade Madan Bhandari had clearly stated at that time that he would not run election from the Kathmandu constituency no. 1 if Bhattarai revoked the candidacy of the person who was running on election against CPN (UML) Man Mohan Adhikari. However, Krishna Prasad Bhattarai could not bring his party leaders into consensus even on such the liberal proposal of Comrade Bhandari, who won election run in both the election constituencies in the Kathmandu district.

It was a tragic coincidence that Comrade Bhandari and Prakash Kaphle died in similar accidents within some years' gap. It was informed initially that Thai Airways was missing. Later on, the debris of the crashed aeroplane and the remnant of the dead bodies were found. Similarly, there spread the news after one year that the jeep on which Comrade Bhandari and Ashrit were traveling disappeared after plunging into the Trishuli River. His dead body was found at some distance away from Dasdhunga, the accident spot.

Before Prakash Kaphle left for Srilanka, I was assigned to publish the INSEC bulletin. I was preparing for the publication after receiving suggestion from them. At that time, I had just quit my post, after working for about two and half years, from *Chhalphal Weekly* to which I was the executive editor. INSEC family was taken aback by the untimely demise of Prakash Kaphle. Especially, Sushil Pyakurel was weakened badly due to the blow.

As I was given the responsibility to publish the INSEC's bulletin, I proposed that the bulletin be given the name *Prachi*, whose only one issue was edited by Prakash Kaphle with such the

name earlier. I published the first issue dedicating to Prakash Kaphle. When he was alive, I had commented on one of his photos that the photo was worth-printing. The sketch drawn by Rabin Sayami based on the very photo was printed as the cover page of *Prachi*. This was the first issue of *Prachi* published after the magazine was registered at the district administration office.

Due to my tilt toward journalism, I started to work as the editor of *Drishhti Saptahik*. However, Sushil Pyakurel suggested me to remain affiliated to INSEC as its member. I accepted his suggestion. Later on, I became the coordinator of the *Ghatana Ra Bichar* program of Radio Nepal. In due course, Radio Nepal started to air human rights education program produced by INSEC. I now became the coordinator of the program as well as helped by Naranath Luintel and Prekshya Ojha from INSEC. By then, Human Rights Yearbook had already started to be published. I reached Jumla and Humla districts with Dr. Rajesh Gautam carrying Human Rights Yearbooks. We had reached there with the view that the comments on the views and incidents documented in the yearbook should be listened to from the grassroots level.

My so many unforgettable moments are linked with INSEC. I met my better half at INSEC itself. I still remember the moments how the staff members including the chairperson of the organization encouraged me whenever I introduced newer ideas. This makes me happy even today. On one occasion, the national conference of the listeners' clubs of the Beijing Radio was held in the city of Nepalganj. Late Ballav Mani Dahal and the Chinese Ambassador to Nepal were also present there. I had been there to present a paper. Back in Kathmandu, I put forth my view that dissemination of human rights education would be further effective if listeners clubs of the human

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rights education aired by Radio Nepal were formed. Later on, such the clubs were formed and they even held conferences time and again.

The Human Rights Yearbooks published by INSEC evolved as the main identity of INSEC within some years. However, the organization always suffered from the allegation that it was backing a particular political party. The violators were of the view that the objectively and impartially documented instances of the human rights violations could be challenged easily with such the allegations. However, INSEC kept on standing against despotic rule and for democracy. Hence, INSEC was established as the common aide of all those who believed in the multi-party democracy.

King's direct rule remained as the most challenging period in

the history of INSEC. With the aim to end the blankness appeared in the country following the king's takeover, INSEC organized an interaction on the state of emergency and human rights. The Chief District Officer (CDO) of the Kathmandu district did not allow organizing the program. However, such the permission was granted by the CDO of the Lalitpur district as lobbied by me. Accordingly, the program was organized at the Hotel Himalaya. We had to invite Ian Martin at INSEC's central office for releasing the human rights yearbook due to imposition of curfew.

I reached many places in the country during conflict period and prepared field reports on the extra-judicial killings or the human rights abuses committed by the Maoists. I coordinated many field monitoring works on

many incidents. Everyone is aware of the roles played by INSEC for the protection of human rights and for having the warring sides implemented the humanitarian laws during the armed conflict in the country. The role of INSEC for the establishment of loktantra and start of peace process are equally noteworthy.

So many other memories overwhelm me. Time passes by swiftly. It is really difficult to realize. It has been already 20 years since INSEC was established. To my perception, continuous pace is the feature of INSEC. It is due to this very dynamism that INSEC has been able to contribute to the important moments of the national history of Nepal.

(The writer is freelance journalist and Assistant Professor of journalism at the Tribhuvan University. He is also the Executive Committee Member of INSEC)



Security Personnel Taken into Control by CPN Maoists Following Pilli Incident This Photo was First Published at www.inseconline.org



Monitoring Nepal's Compliance with International Laws: Role of INSEC

Introduction

Nepal became a state party to Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide after becoming a member of the UN in 1955. With the restoration of democracy in 1990, Nepal started to be a state party to various important international treaties on human rights and humanitarian laws. It became a state party to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) in 1970 and to the Geneva Conventions in 1954. Nepal is already a state party to 21 human rights law related international treaties, to four international humanitarian laws related treaties and to 11 treaties passed by the ILO. Therefore, it has also expressed its commitment before the international community to abide by the obligations arising from these international laws. Once a state becomes a party to the international treaties, there certainly arise some obligations.

Since its inception, INSEC has been monitoring the implementation status of these treaties. The incidents included in Nepal Human Rights Yearbook, which INSEC has been publishing since 1992 regularly being based on the incidents of human rights violations as reported by its District Representatives, have been analyzed in terms of big six treaties. The organization has also been providing trainings to human rights defenders, the personnel from the security bodies,

the representatives from the judicial bodies, and the groups of victims on human rights laws and the international humanitarian laws. It has also been providing information to the concerned stakeholders on various mechanisms provisioned in the international humanitarian laws. Such the information and knowledge have been provided even at the grassroots level. INSEC had run sensitization and awareness classes informally at the VDC level in its initial days of establishment. Those classes had made the grassroots people aware of the UDHR and their rights and obligations.

INSEC has also been sensitizing people on the conventions and resolutions declared and passed by the UN. On the occasion of the completion of 50 years of the UDHR and 10 years of INSEC, the latter had translated the UDHR and published into 12 languages of the janajati peoples of Nepal. The languages were Limbu, Rai, Tamang, Gurung, Magar, Nepal, Abadhi, Rajbanshi, Bhojpuri, Maithali, Sherpa and Tharu. The declaration was translated into Nepali language as well.

INSEC's Involvement with International Mechanisms

INSEC had established a center for human rights treaty monitoring in 2002. Making the state responsible for abiding by its responsibility arising from being a party to the international treaties was the objective of the center. Similarly, to follow up the implementation status

INSEC has also been sensitizing people on the conventions and resolutions declared and passed by the UN. On the occasion of the completion of 50 years of the UDHR and 10 years of INSEC, the latter had translated the UDHR and published into 12 languages of the janajati peoples of Nepal.

of those treaties and disseminate information on the human rights situation of the country through shadow and alternative reports was another objective of the center. Likewise, the center had aimed at providing training to the human rights defenders and the representatives from different law implementing bodies on human rights and humanitarian laws. Since the establishment of such the center, INSEC has been playing significant role on different issues such as the different mechanisms of the UN, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, on the establishment of human rights mechanism under the SAARC region, and the protection and promotion of the international humanitarian laws.

INSEC, jointly with INTERIGHTS had organized an interaction program on 9-10 February, 2002, among law professionals, justices and the individuals involved in the field of human rights. Such the interaction was held at a time when emergency was imposed in the country by the Sher Bahadur Deuba led government for the first time. The interaction was focused on the issues such as whether or not the General Secretary of the UN was informed about the declaration of emergency as per the obligation arising from the provisions of the ICCPR and the suspension of the provisions of the constitution. The program had also held discussion on how the Supreme Court of Nepal could address the difference between the provisions of the constitution of Nepal and the international provisions.

As a continuation of the workshop, INSEC, jointly with INTERIGHTS, organized another interaction with the law professionals on complaining against human rights violations that

occurred during emergency. The workshop was focused especially on the right to life, right to freedom and impartial hearing as guaranteed by the ICCPR. Also, violence against women and implementation of ESCRs were the talk of the program. Similarly, INSEC held a discussion program with law professionals on complaining the incidents of violations of human rights committed during armed conflict. The program was also concentrated on the issues such as documenting and disseminating the violations of human rights during armed conflict and lobbying for justice of the victims. Hence, INSEC, even during peaceful time, emergency and armed conflict; tried its best to sensitize the concerned stakeholders about the national and international mechanisms, which could be approached for justice at the time of violations of the rights as guaranteed by the international laws.

INSEC has been discussing Nepal's international obligations on Economic, Social and Cultural rights, women's rights, child rights and racial and other forms of discriminations. Similarly, it has been working for the capacity building of the stakeholders on these and similar issues. It has translated the major human rights related international treaties into Nepali language and published them. Similarly, it has prepared so many materials such as fact sheets, brochures, pamphlets, books and training manuals for the capacity enhancement of the concerned.

The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Nepal was established in 2005 as lobbied by the human rights communities after the Agenda Item 19 was passed. The office had been providing with technical support to the government for the protection and promotion of

human rights in the country and had also been helping the NHRC for its capacity enhancement. With the aim to express its solidarity with the international human rights movement, to create public pressure for the achievement and full guarantee of human rights and to make the government responsible for the protection of people's human rights; INSEC has been celebrating various days as declared by the UN. For this, press statements, interactions, rallies, sit-ins, and other pressure creating programs have been used.

Involvement with the Treaty Bodies

The Human Rights Treaty Monitoring Committee (HRTMCC) was established in 2003 as coordinated by INSEC. The committee was established with the aim to monitor the implementation status of the major treaties effectively and in a planned way. Similarly, the HRTMCC had aimed at disseminating information on treaties to the concerned treaty bodies, to bring all the concerned stakeholders together for pressuring the government, to prepare and submit periodic report and implement the provisions of the treaty as well as its suggestions and conclusions effectively. As various organizations used to submit separate reports before the establishment of the HRTMCC, it had also intended to ensure uniformity on the report prepared to be submitted to the UN. Prior to the establishment of the Committee, INSEC, in collaboration with other organizations, had prepared a primary report on ICESCR in 1999 and had also prepared and submitted a shadow report to the concerned treaty bodies against the second and third periodic report of the government on CEDAW.

Following the establishment

of the HRTMCC, INSEC prepared shadow report on the 15th and 16th periodic report on CERD in 2003, on the 2nd periodic report on CAT in 2005 and it also prepared a report for the pre-session working group on ICESCR and the 2nd periodic report of the same covenant in 2006. Similarly, in 2011, a shadow report on the 4th and 5th periodic report on CEDAW was prepared and submitted to the concerned body. Now, the committee is working on drafting shadow reports on the periodic report of CAT, ICCPR, 18th periodic report of CERD and primary report of the optional protocols to CRC.

The committee has been submitting reports to the concerned bodies on the implementation status of the recommendations made by the treaties and their treaty bodies. Apart from this, it has been interacting with the government on the issues such as obligations of the government, the role of judicial bodies in interpreting the international laws judicially and implementing them and also on the need of passing the bills tabled in the parliament by making them consistent with the international laws. The HRTMCC has been continuously exerting pressure on the government. As a result, the government has started to submit periodic reports regularly. There has also developed a culture in which government has been discussing the prepared drafts with the concerned stakeholders including the NHRC and other organizations. The Committee formed in October, 2003 as attempted by 25 organizations at that time has increased its membership over time. Currently, a total of 63 organizations are in the committee and INSEC has been coordinating the committee since the latter's inception. Being based on the

major covenants and conventions, eight thematic sub-committees have been formed under the committee. And, such the thematic committees are coordinated by the human rights organizations, which have been working on the given themes for long. Hence, INSEC has been coordinating the important committee continuously and actively.

On behalf of the HRTMCC, there have been published and disseminated some informative materials and documents by keeping the attempts of the state in implementing the international laws. These materials can be obtained from the website of the committee- www.hrtmcc.org. The website contains books and other documents on the UN and the agenda item 19, the role of the Supreme Court in relation to the human rights treaties, legislative review carried out based on the major human rights treaties, CAT and its implementation status. Other issues covered by the documents are on the imposition of emergency in relation to principle and practice, an analysis on bad culture of impunity in Nepal etc. Likewise, documents on the basic information on the protection of the rights of the persons subjected to enforced disappearances and the rights of the disabled people along with big six treaties can be availed from the website.

The former General Secretary of the UN Kofi Annan, through his book "The Larger Freedom", had pointed out the necessity of reforming the whole UN system along with the treaty body related mechanisms. This triggered discussions among the international communities on the need and way of reformation. There have taken place discussions among the experts from the treaty bodies, the OHCHR and its

Commissioner, the national human rights commissions and civil society groups on the reformation of the treaty bodies. INSEC has also involved in this process. In April, 2011, there took place a discussion about the reformation. The discussion was attended by the experts from the treaty bodies, OHCHR, national human rights commissions and civil society groups. The discussion program was organized by the Korean National Human Rights Commission. INSEC had put forth suggestions there based on its experiences. The suggestions from INSEC were accepted by other organizations saying that those suggestions could be helpful.

Coordination with the Special Rapporteurs

INSEC has been coordinating with the special Rapporteurs on various themes under the special procedures of the UN system. It has coordinated with Working Group on disappearances and the Rapporteurs on torture, arbitrary detention, human rights defenders, extra-judicial killings, freedom of speech and violence against women. Besides, INSEC has also coordinated with the special representatives of the UN General Secretary on internal displacement, extrajudicial killings and the Rapporteurs on torture, arbitrary arrest, arbitrary detention and armed conflict. INSEC has provided information to these Rapporteurs and Special Representatives and has also carried out lobby and advocacy with the government for the implementation of the recommendations provided by them.

INSEC had disseminated information to the Working Group on enforced disappearances, the Rapporteur on the human rights defenders and the Rapporteur

on extra-judicial killing on the abduction and killing incident of the Bara district based journalist Birendra Sah. The complaint had demanded that there started speedy investigation on his killing and his killer be brought to justice. Similarly, the Rapporteur on the rights of the human rights defenders was sent letter on the killing of Prakash Thakuri, journalist from the Mid-Western region, and had urged the government to initiate investigation on the killing. The Rapporteur on the human rights defenders had demanded information from the government on the situation of the journalist Madan Rimal, Uma Singh, Birendra Sah, and Prakash Thakuri. The demand was included in the annual report of the Rapporteur submitted to the Human Rights Council in March 2008. The very concern was raised again in his report submitted to the Council in March, 2011. Similarly, letters were sent demanding that the government of Nepal be drawn attention on the abuses perpetrated by the then Maoists against Nabaraj Pathik and Durga Thapa, district representatives of INSEC.

INSEC has been informing the Rapporteurs about the concerned issues during their both formal and informal visits to Nepal. Accordingly, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women in 2000, the Special Rapporteur on extra-judicial killing in 2001, the Rapporteur against torture in 2004, the Special Representative of the UN General Secretary on internal displacement, the Special Rapporteur on human rights of the indigenous people and their fundamental freedom in 2008 and the Special Representative of the UN General Secretary on armed conflict and children in 2009 had discussed with INSEC and collected information of their concerns from it. INSEC has also

been regularly informing about the rights situation of the country to these Rapporteurs even while meeting with them at national, regional and international forums. Since 2009, it has been regularly attending the human right defenders' forum organized by the Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development and has been informing about the situation of human rights defenders of Nepal. INSEC has also been preparing analytical reports based on the implementation situation of the suggestions and recommendations of the Rapporteurs made following their formal visits to Nepal. This work is believed to be helpful for the government as well as the Rapporteurs. INSEC had prepared a report titled "*Kamjor Jawaphdehita*" (Impaired Accountability) based on the implementation status of the recommendations made by the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances following its visit to Nepal in 2001. Similarly, another analytical report was prepared based on the suggestions given by the Rapporteur on torture after its visit in 2004. The report was submitted to the committee against torture, special rapporteur and also to the government of Nepal.

Besides coordinating and initiating dialogue with the special procedures of the UN system, INSEC has been urging the government to help the Rapporteurs on various themes, to provide them with the information as requested by them and also to implement the recommendations made by them without delay and effectively. INSEC, through press statements and by organizing formal programs on many occasions, has been urging the government to approve the request of those Rapporteurs

who expressed their desires to visit Nepal. Similarly, it has been urging the government to send open invitation to the Rapporteurs under the special procedures of the UN systems.

INSEC's Involvement in the Universal Periodic Review

Nepal was reviewed under the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) for its human rights situation for the first time on January 25, 2011 by the UN Human Rights Council. INSEC had coordinated a network of the NGOs of Nepal for the purpose of the UPR. The network had prepared a report with the help of 235 organizations in Nepal before submitting the report to the UN on July 5. The report that was prepared as coordinated by INSEC had discussed the issues of human rights included in the constitution, other laws of Nepal and their implementation status.

On 24 January 2011, INSEC organized a parallel program in Geneva with the aim to provide information to the UN member countries participating the UPR of Nepal on the real human rights situation of Nepal. The program discussed the issues such as contemporary problems of Nepal, rampant impunity, transitional justice system, inequality and discriminations, the ESC rights and women's rights amongst the member countries and specialized agencies of the UN and, other international NGOs. The program was viewed as an important one by the participants.

INSEC was in a regular contact and dialogue with the government even at the time of formally passing the review report. Therefore, the network for the UPR led by INSEC was succeeded in persuading the government to accept many of

the recommendations, which the government was thinking of deferring the issues and reply later in July. Those recommendations accepted in this way were related mostly with the child rights issues. INSEC and other organizations working in the field of child rights had jointly submitted a memorandum to the government. The network had issued joint statement even while formally passing the review report. The statement had welcomed the move of the government towards formulating an act against racial discrimination and also for declaring school as Zone of Peace. The statement has raised concerns on the existing impunity in the country and the delay in establishing the transitional justice mechanism. The government of Nepal has prepared an action plan to implement the recommendations received from the UPR and it has also given responsibility to the related ministries on the basis of the themes of the recommendations. If INSEC can move ahead in coordination with the government, the NHRC and concerned organizations for the implementation of the recommendations made by the UPR, INSEC's role in the implementation of the international laws will be proved.

Monitoring the Implementation Status of the Humanitarian Laws

Nepal became a state party to the four of the Geneva Conventions in 1954. However, the government of Nepal has not initiated any concrete step towards implementing these conventions. The government did not feel it necessary to implement. These conventions were immensely violated during the armed conflict in the country between 1996 and 2006. INSEC had been actively

monitoring the violations of the humanitarian laws during the period. It had commissioned field visits, had issued press statements on the ongoing violations and had urged the concerned to abide by the norms of the conventions. INSEC had also provided trainings to the warring sides with the aim to provide information on the provisions of the conventions. Similarly, it had prepared awareness creating materials and disseminated among the concerned groups.

INSEC had translated and published the full text of the Geneva Conventions. With the aim to inform the concerned on the Geneva Conventions, it had published a book titled "*Antarik Bisthapan*" (Internal Displacement) and distributed to the concerned authorities. It was believed at that time that the target groups were fully informed on what sorts of rights are active during war. With the aim to remind the warring sides of their ongoing activities and obligations arising from the conventions at the time of war, INSEC had published a chapter on the common article 3 of the Geneva Conventions in the Human Rights Yearbook in 2005.

Campaign for Acceding to the Rome Statute

INSEC has been running campaigns on the accession to the Rome Statute of the International Court (ICC) ever since it was passed by the international community in 1998. However, it had propelled the campaign in a managed way since 2001. INSEC had organized a two-day workshop to discuss the issues of the Statute in November, 2001. The workshop established a national network to work on the issue. The network was supposed to assist in the work of the ICC, carrying out lobby and advocacy to make Nepal a member

of the court, to develop views among citizenry on the necessity of acceding to the Rome Statute and to bring the stakeholders including NGOs, intellectual circle and law professionals together for the ICC.

The ICC itself was not yet functional when INSEC started campaign for it. The court however, started to work since July 1, 2002 after a total of 60 countries were the signatories. INSEC, being affiliated with different international organizations, has been playing an active role in the matters of informing the international communities on the attempts of Nepal in acceding to the Rome Statute of the ICC. It was due to the continuous attempts of INSEC that the restored legislative parliament had passed a proposal and directed the government to promptly accede to the Statute on August 10, 2006. In the same year, a working group was formed at the inter-ministerial level as coordinated by the Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Minister. The group had submitted a report by reviewing the existing laws that were required to be amended following the accession into the Rome Statute. However, the report has not been brought into public discourse so far. INSEC has been working with the members of the parliament and the political parties for the immediate implementation of the directives from the legislature-parliament. It has also drawn attention of the government towards the issue besides urging the international communities to put forth their concerns on the issue.

As a part of the campaign, the then Minister for Foreign Affairs Upendra Yadav had presented a proposal to the Council of Minister to accede to the Rome Statute on February 11, 2009. However, nothing has been developed on it since then. During

the UPR, many countries from across the world had recommended to the government to accede into the Rome Statute and the government of Nepal had informed at that time that prerequisites for towards this end were being established in the country and it would immediately accede to the Statute. This shows that government is not against acceding to it.

Following the formation of the network, INSEC is working continuously in collaboration with the government, political parties, the NHRC, human rights defenders and the international communities for the cause of ICC. Similarly, as coordinated by INSEC, a team of the international network for the ICC including the representative from various organizations in Asia, had, in 2002, 2006 and 2009; met with the Chairman of the legislative parliament, the Prime Minister, political leaders and other stakeholders. The team had tried to garner their commitments on the accession to the Rome Statute. Various political parties had expressed their commitments for the ICC at that time. The network has been organizing interactions, workshops, trainings and studies on the Statute. Similarly, it has also been issuing press statements on it by welcoming not only the progress made by Nepal towards the accession into the Rome Statute but also the progress made on the issue by other countries in Asia.

While the ICC President Sang-Hyun Song was in his visit to Nepal in December, 2009. INSEC, jointly with the Nepal branch of Parliamentarian for Global Action, had informed about the progress made by Nepal on the accession to the Statute and the views of the political parties on it to the President Song. The president, in a meeting with the Maoist Chief

Pushpa Kamal Dahal, had clarified that no case would be prosecuted retrospectively under the ICC.

INSEC has translated and published the full text of the Rome Statute into Nepali language, has produced fact sheet on the Statute and ICC besides publishing a study report titled "*Antararstriya Phaujdar Adalatko Rombidhan Ra Nepalko Bidhyaman Phaujdar Kanun*" (The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and the Existing Criminal Laws of Nepal) by reviewing the criminal laws and the legal system of the country based on the Rome Statute. The report prepared by INSEC jointly with the National Judicial Academy has been prescribed as the reference book by Nepal Law Campus for its students pursuing Criminal Law as their specialization.

On Rights of the Human Rights Defenders

INSEC has been taking initiatives towards implementing the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders since 1998. Such the attempt is meant for the security and protection of the rights of the human rights defenders (HRDs). It has also been holding interactions and trainings with the aim to make the human rights defenders aware of the UN declaration on them. Apart from this, INSEC has coordinated with many groups on the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders and local strategy for implementing it in Nepal. The organization has been conducting training programs on these issues and been disseminating information to the UN Rapporteur on human rights defenders besides holding discussions at different level on how the human rights defenders can utilize the mechanism.

Given that a number of HRDs are attacked and threatened

in Nepal and also that no legal and institutional mechanism is in place in this regard, national and international organizations including the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders, OHCHR-Nepal and the human rights defenders themselves have been demanding for a mechanism on the HRDs. INSEC believes that the NHRC is in place as an effective national protection mechanism for the protection of human rights. INSEC has also been lobbying for provisioning a national rapporteur under the NHRC. As a result, the NHRC has heeded towards including a National Rapporteur under the commission. The rapporteur provisioned in this way is supposed to submit a report by including the situation of the HRDs, the problems faced by them, the existing security mechanism for them along with recommendations for the reformation of their situation.

With the aim to educate the human rights defenders on their rights, INSEC published a book titled "*Manabadhikar Rachhayakko Adhikar Sambandhi Adharbhoot Jaanakari*" (Basic Information on the Rights of the Human Rights Defenders) and disseminated it among the HRDs. Given that HRDs are at risk in the country and that no mechanism is in place there to address such the situation, INSEC, in 2009, drafted a bill in line with the UN Declaration on the Human Rights Defenders and organized discussion on the draft among the stakeholders. If the bill is passed, Nepal will be the only one country having a separate and special law on the HRDs.

International Coordination Committee of the National Institutions

INSEC has also been monitoring the

implementation status of the Paris Principles Relating to the Status and Functioning of National Institutions. INSEC, from the beginning and jointly with other organizations, has been working actively towards making the NHRC autonomous, independent and transparent in line with the Paris Principles. It has been regularly monitoring the activities of the Commission and has submitted report to the International Coordination Committee of the National Institutions. Based on the report sent by INSEC, the Sub-Committee on Accreditation had decided to retain the "A" status of the NHRC in 2008. However, the commission was recommended to provide further information to the Sub-committee in its next meeting on financial autonomy, sufficient budget, selection and appointment of the post holders in the commission, the collaboration of the NHRC with the civil society, other legislative bodies and also on the passage of the bill on the NHRC. Based on the recommendations of the committee, a follow-up report on the NHRC was submitted on August 17, 2009. INSEC had disseminated information on the situation of the recommendations this time as well. Therefore, the NHRC retained its "A" status again. However, the commission was recommended by the committee as before.

As a member of the Asian NGO Network for National Institutions, INSEC, since 2006, has started to prepare annual report on the National Institutions, National Human Rights Commission, Women's Commission and Dalit Commission. The report is distributed among National Human Rights Commissions, NGOs, International Coordination Committee and the specialized agencies of the UN during the

annual meeting of the Asia Pacific Forum. INSEC has been attending the annual meeting of the Asia Pacific Forum every year and providing information to the international community on the activities and effectiveness of the NHRC of Nepal. The monitoring report of INSEC has been perceived by the NHRC positively.

On Transitional Justice and Impunity

INSEC has been advocating against impunity since its establishment. It had initiated its campaign against impunity by placing a slogan – *Oppose Impunity, Uphold Human Dignity* in the letterhead of the organization. With the aim to discourage the increasing impunity in the country, INSEC has been launching pressure-creating programs to effectively implement the obligations of Nepal arising out of the international laws to which Nepal is a party. It had published a book titled "Commitment vs. Reality" by monitoring the very responsibility of the state. Similar type of monitoring report was published by INSEC during the direct rule of the king in 2005 as well. The report was taken by the then UN Human Rights Commission (currently Human Rights Council) as an important document while passing Agenda Item 19 in 2005.

INSEC has been monitoring the ongoing peace process in the country ever since the latter started in 2006 as signed on it by the government and the then Maoist rebels. Commitments have been expressed on ending impunity through the CPA, Common Minimum Program and the current policy of the government. By studying the incidents of human rights violation and abuses committed at different parts in the country by the state and the then

insurgent Maoists during warring period, INSEC had prepared a report titled "*Dandabinata ko Apasanskar*" (The bad culture of impunity). The report has identified arbitrary arrest and detention, involuntary disappearances, the maximum use of force, torture, extra-judicial killing and sexual violence as the areas that have promoted bad culture of impunity in the country. The report had also made recommendations on the steps to be taken for the legal and institutional reformation.

With the aim to inform people about the international experience on transitional justice, INSEC has published a book titled "Impaired Accountability: State of Disappearance in Nepal a Brief Assessment of Implementation of UN WGEID Recommendations". The book contains information on the transitional mechanisms used by different countries in the world that were struggling for ensuring justice on the human rights violations committed in the past. With the aim to make transitional justice mechanism consistent to the international standard and pro-victims, INSEC also recommended for the proposed Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the commission on the disappearances as provisioned in the international laws. Many of the issues raised by INSEC were incorporated by the government in its draft prepared for these commissions. INSEC, jointly with the International Commission of Jurist, International Center for Transitional Justice and other NGOs, had also submitted memorandum to the government and the legislature-parliament.

Similarly, INSEC has collected information as to whether or not the Interim Relief Program introduced by the government for the conflict victims was effective. The information was collected from

across the country based on the categories of relief packages and also by analyzing whether or not the relief program was as per the international standards. Such the recommendations were meant for the effective and equal distribution of reliefs among the conflict victims.

International Exposure of INSEC

Ever since it was established, INSEC has been leading various international forums related with the human rights concerns. It has been raising human rights issues as the executive committee member of the Asian Network for Free Elections and the South Asia Forum for Human Rights. INSEC was involved as an active member of the Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA), which was established for the lobby and advocacy on human rights situation in Asia and also for putting pressure on the governments of the region. Since November in 2006, INSEC Chairperson Subodh Raj Pyakurel has been working as the Chair of FORUM-ASIA. As he was succeeded in raising concerns on the serious human rights problems of the region and also for accomplishing his responsibility actively, he was nominated as the Chair of RORUM-ASIA for the second time as well. Its offices are located in Bangkok and Geneva.

INSEC Chairperson Subodh Raj Pyakurel had visited Sri Lanka on 5-11 May, 2011 leading a field visit team from FORUM-ASIA. The visit was made on the disappearances of a human rights defender from Sri Lanka and executive committee member of FORUM-ASIA. The visit was also for assessing the overall human rights situation of Sri Lanka. Similarly, he was invited by the civil society of Bangladesh

in March, 2010 as the Chief Guest in a program organized just before the country acceded to the Rome Statue of ICC. The Bangladeshi Minister for Law was also present in the program.

INSEC has been expressing its concerns over human rights issues not only in Asia but also in Europe and America. In March, 2006, INSEC had held discussion about the human rights situation of Nepal with the members of the House of Representatives from Germany. The discussion was focused on the possible roles the representatives could play for the human rights situation in Nepal. Similarly, INSEC Chairperson, Subodh Raj Pyakurel along with other prominent human rights defenders from different countries had met with the American President Barack Obama and other high ranking officials of America on February 18, 2010. The team, during the meet, had discussed the possible role America could play for addressing the deteriorating human rights situation in the world. INSEC Chairperson Pyakurel had informed about the human rights situation of South Asia at that time.

INSEC's Coordination with the International Human Rights Organizations

Many organizations have contributed to the emergence of INSEC as a capable human rights organization at national and international level. INSEC has been raising human rights issues also in coordination with the international organizations and networks. Such the relationships are based on reciprocity of help and works. These networks are exerting pressure on the government especially though urgent appeals on the incidents of human rights violations. Amnesty International, OMCT, APT, FIDH are some of

the networks. FORUM-ASIA, the Asian Cultural Forum on Development, the Asian Network for Free Elections, the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, Fredskorpset Norway, Network for International Criminal Court, the network for the International Criminal Court, Asian NGOs Network on National Human Rights Institutions, the SAPA Working Group for the Human Rights Council, the International Commission of Jurist and the Human Rights Defenders Network are the other networks.

The aforesaid networks had helped INSEC as the working partners and other many organizations had assisted with trainings, seminars and also with the capacity development of the INSEC personnel. The organizations such as The May 18 Foundation, Geneva for Human Rights, the International Center for Transitional Justice, Diplomacy Training Program, IH RTP and the Danish Center for Human Rights are the main organizations in this connection. In the course of working collaboratively with the international organizations, INSEC has been receiving interns from the Irish Center for Human Rights, New School University and the Fredskorpset Norway. This has developed cordial relationship between organizations besides helping in the exchange of knowledge.

With the view that democratic norms have to be upheld and fair elections should be held with the guarantee of political rights of all, INSEC has been monitoring the general elections not only in Nepal but also in different countries in Asia. INSEC has monitored general elections in Cambodia, Pakistan and Afghanistan. It has also been

monitoring the elections of Nepal for their fairness. It had invited an international team to monitor the election for the Constituent Assembly held in 2008. A joint team of INSEC and FORUM-ASIA reached different places in the country during the election and prepared an election report after discussing with the political parties and the government bodies.

INSEC has been regularly receiving financial support regularly due to its credibility, the impact of the organization at the national and international level and also due to its specificity in performance and mode of human rights movement. ICCO, EED, Danida, the Norwegian Embassy in Nepal, UNICEF, the National Endowment for Democracy, Fredskorpset Norway are the major financial supporters of INSEC. Recognizing the capacity of INSEC on running campaigns and bringing the human rights organizations in the country together, the German Embassy in Nepal had supported the network formed in Nepal for acceding to the Rome Statute of the ICC. Similarly, the British Embassy had provided help to the Nepal NGO Coalition for the UPR coordinated by INSEC for preparing report on behalf of the NGOs in Nepal for the UPR. As a result, INSEC had been able to bring a total of 235 NGOs together for the cause of the UPR. These agencies have played important role to keep the will power of INSEC high in continuing its work on human rights.

INSEC has also been discussing the human rights agendas of Nepal with the diplomatic agencies and the roles they could play in this regard. It has been playing role in implementing the European Union Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders at

the local level. Similarly, there has been formed a joint working team in which the national organizations for the UPR and the diplomatic agencies for the purpose of the UPR. The team is led by INSEC.

Lobby for the SAARC Sub-Regional Human Rights Mechanism

INSEC has been lobbying collaboratively for the regional mechanism since its inception. With the aim to materialize this, the concept of People's SAARC was put forth for which the founders of INSEC had played a big role. However, it was not an easy task to materialize the concept given the problems and ground realities of the South Asian Countries. With the realization that there requires attempts at the people's level for the eradication of the problems of the South Asian countries, Late Prakash Kaphle had initiated a discussion in New Delhi in 1989 with other organizations. Similarly, in August, 1991 INSEC organized a South Asian level of meeting in which there were 27 participants from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bhutan. Another meeting organized by INSEC in Kathmandu for the South Asian human rights defenders formally established a forum named South Asian Forum for Human Rights in the presence of the former Chief Justice of India, PN Bhagawati. Following its establishment, the organization advanced the formation of People's SAARC as its main task. Accordingly, in May 1994, another South Asian meet titled "Towards People's SAARC" was organized in Kathmandu.

There continued attempts for the people's SAARC. Parallel meets were also held at the time of SAARC summits with the aim to draw the attention of the south

Asian countries on the human rights situation of the region. It is due to the efforts of the south Asian organizations that conventions have been held and agreements have been signed among the SAARC countries on the issues such as terrorism, human trafficking and children's welfare. Apart from this, SAARC Food Bank has also been established.

However, unlike other regions, SAARC doesn't have a separate mechanism on human rights. INSEC has initiated discussion on the formation of regional human rights mechanism in the South Asian region. Various discussions were held in the past in this connection. However, INSEC organized a sub-regional workshop in Kathmandu in 2010 in collaboration with the Asian Human Rights Commission. The workshop had discussed the nature and mandate of the to-be-formed mechanism. INSEC has put forth its concept on the mechanism during the workshop. The workshop was succeeded in receiving commitments from the then Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal and the Home Minister Bhim Rawal that they would lobby for the formation of the mechanism at SAARC level. Similarly, the workshop was utilized as an appropriate forum for preparing action plan for People's SAARC.

As the follow-up of the workshop, a discussion took place in Delhi, India on April 21, 2010 on the progress and challenges of establishing human rights mechanism in South Asia. The discussion had decided to send letters to the head of the government in South Asia requesting them for the establishment of mechanism and also to form a strong network of the civil society groups with the aim to incorporate human

rights issue into the declaration of the SAARC summit. Similarly, another workshop on the need of intergovernmental human rights mechanism in South Asia was organized in collaboration with FORUM-ASIA in Islamabad, Pakistan in November of the same year. Similarly, INSEC and FORUM-ASIA jointly organized training at the South Asian level from January 30 to February 1, 2011. The training was intended to empowering civil societies of the region for human rights and development.

INSEC has been participating in the annual meetings of the government of the Asia Pacific regions for establishing a regional human rights mechanism in the region. It, jointly with other organizations, has been drawing attention of the governments of the region. INSEC had drawn attention of the governments during their annual meeting in Bali, Indonesia on economic, social and cultural rights of the people in Asia Pacific. The organization had also urged those governments which were not parties to ICESCR to be a party to the covenant. Similarly, INSEC and other organizations organized a parallel meeting during the 15th annual meeting of the governments of the Asia Pacific region in April, 2010. The parallel meeting had issued a 10-point action plan in which formation of regional human rights mechanism in the region was the main point.

During the 16th SAARC Summit held in Bhutan from 28-29 April, 2010, the President of the Maldives urged all the participating governments to work collaboratively towards establishing a sub-regional human rights mechanism in South Asia. The statement of the Maldivian

President has to be construed that INSEC and civil societies in the region have succeeded in drawing attention of the governments for the establishment of a sub-regional human rights mechanism.

Conclusion

Ever since it was established, INSEC has come up with fruitful discussion and lobbies on locally implementing the international laws. Be that a peaceful period, armed insurgency or the period of emergency in the country when basic human rights of people were suspended, INSEC remained equally active for the human rights of the citizenry. As implementing the international laws is a complex and really an extensive issue, it was not easy for INSEC to move ahead without the involvement of other organizations in its endeavors. INSEC believes that regular as well as creative coordination and collaboration with the human rights defenders, governmental bodies, national human rights institutions, the UN and its specialized agencies, the diplomatic agencies and other international communities will make INSEC further energetic and effective for the protection and promotion of human rights in the country.

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Contribution of INSEC to Nepal's Kamaiya Liberation Campaign

Background

Complete eleven years has elapsed since the declaration of Kamaiya liberation in Nepal. The Kamaiyas were under the control of landlords due to bonded labor practiced under the Kamaiya tradition. The term "Kamaiya", which was originally referred to as the land based occupational identity of the Tharus started to be known as bonded labour over time primarily because of *Saunki*¹ loan, which could never be paid off. Therefore, the bonded labour and their families were enslaved for generations. Following the revolution of 1950/51 *birta and Jamindari* tradition was eradicated and land reform program was implemented in 1964. Thousands of people were provided with land in the landless squatters' name under the resettlement program in the Tarai region, the southern plain in Nepal. However, the landless farmers and the Kamaiyas could never own land. The landless farmers had been supporting the political slogan *Jasko Jot Usko Pot (Land to the tillers)*. Despite this, the Kamaiya tradition continued as it was. Bonded labors were the result of the feudal culture under which thousands of *bigahas* of land was distributed by the rulers to their family members, relatives and to the people around them. This culture ultimately turned people to bondservant. The remnants of the bonded laborers have not been completely eradicated in Nepal even after seven decades since the declaration by

Chandra Samsher to have ended slavery. The then government of Nepal, in 1985, had done a study on the Kamaiyas and had concluded that bonded situation was prevalent under the Kamaiya tradition. However, the report of the research was not implemented by the government. Surprisingly, the government, rather, started to involve itself in inhumane acts such as setting the houses of the bonded labours on fire and having their houses pulled down using elephants.

The liberal democratic milieu established following the democratic movement of 1990 allowed the Nepalese people to enjoy their freedom. It was on this very foundation that movements were triggered in the country for economic, social and cultural rights. The government led by the CPN-UML and formed following the mid-term poll of 1994 established an office at Bhurigaun in the Bardiya district and started to collect data on the Kamaiyas after nominating Mr. Bal Bahadur Dagaura as the Chair for the purpose. The Kamaiyas from the Dang, Banke, and Bardiya, and Kailali districts formed *Kamaiya Mukti Manch* (forum for the Kamaiyas' liberation) and started to be organized for their liberation movements from that year onwards. The intellectual groups, human rights activists, and national and international organizations too expressed solidarity with the Kamaiyas' movement. As a result, the then government led by Sher Bahadur Deuba declared to have ended the

The liberal democratic milieu established following the democratic movement of 1990 allowed the Nepalese people to enjoy their freedom. It was on this very foundation that movements were triggered in the country for economic, social and cultural rights.

1. *Saunki* refers to the cash and other goods borrowed by a Kamaiya from the landlord as loan. It is because of this very *saunki* that a Kamaiya had to live at the landlord's family and work for them to pay off the loan.

There are many other occasional and unorganized movements in this connection. INSEC had registered a writ at the Supreme Court in 1993 demanding mandamus be issued. However, the court, after five years decided that it was not necessary to issue mandamus as claimed by the writ petitioner. The decision triggered intellectual debates on the Kamaiya's issues.

The Kamaiyas held a conference in Nepalganj and established *Kamaiya Mukti Manch* (forum for Kamaiyas' liberation) in 1995. It was an initiation toward organized move. Once the then Maoists declared war against the state in the same year, thousands of landlords' land and houses were captured and clashes ensued accordingly. Armed conflict had also contributed to the Kamaiyas' movement. Later on, many social organizations started to organize and sensitize the Kamaiyas besides encouraging them for the movements for their rights and freedom. It was in 1996 that social organizations formed *Samyukta Kamaiya Sarokar Samuha* to work collaborately on the Kamaiyas' issues. The initiation of the group had been highly fruitful concerning Kamaiya liberation movement. In 1999 the Kamaiyas submitted application seeking for determination of wage rate at their VDCs. This move was aimed at putting pressure on the state. The revolt initiated by the Kamaiyas from Geta in the Kailali district on April 30, 2000 on the occasion of the International May Day took a national form. Similarly, other groups and coalitions such as *Kamaiya Sarokar Samiti*, *Kamaiya Mukti Andolan Parichalan Samiti*, *Kamaiya Jagaran Samiti* also attempted a lot in these endeavors. As the national and international pressure was being mounted on it, the then Government led by Sher Bahadur Deuba declared liberation of Kamaiya on July 17, 2000.

INSEC and the Kamaiya Liberation Movement

By being affiliated with particular political organizations or otherwise, political parties, intellectual groups and journalist had been fighting against the then autocratic Panchayati regime

even before the mass movement of 1990. Conscious groups of people were struggling for their rights one way or another by evading the then rulers. However, those groups, which were marginalized socially, were not well organized by then. INSEC was established to work for these very groups. Following the restoration of democracy in 1990, INSEC started to lay due emphasis on the economic, social and cultural rights. Accordingly, INSEC had done a research on the Kamaiya tradition in the Banke, Bardiya and Kanchanpur districts. The study had revealed that there existed bonded labor under the tradition, which was also one of the forms of bonded labor. After the study, INSEC ran a series of campaign against this tradition jointly with the Kamaiya people.

The research conducted by INSEC made the intellectual community vibrant. As a result, there developed a conducive environment for the eradication of the Kamaiya tradition gradually. Based on this very study, INSEC published a book titled "Bonded Labour in Nepal under Kamaiya System". The book had revealed that 98.2 per cent Kamaiyas did not possess their land, 73 per cent of them did not possess house and 93.2 per cent Kamaiyas were from the Tharu community. Similarly, 15.5 per cent Kamaiyas were below 20 years and 75.87 per cent of the total Kamaiyas were below 40 years. Likewise, 3.3 per cent Kamaiyas were working as they were for three generations and 28 per cent of them were working for two generations. Revelations were also there that 55.54 per cent of the Kamaiyas wanted to be emancipated and 30.67 per cent were overburdened by *Saunki*. The illiteracy level among the Kamaiyas was very high; 96.3 per cent Kamaiyas were illiterate. The book was proved to be a milestone on the Kamaiyas issues. The book had also provided foundation for the government and other non-government organizations to do further research on the issue.

INSEC, based on its study, had concluded that the Kamaiyas were in dire need to be literate. Therefore, the organization implemented Kamaiya Literary and Sensitization Program between 1993 and 1999. Agriculture

As the national and international pressure was being mounted on it, the then Government led by Sher Bahadur Deuba declared liberation of Kamaiya on July 17, 2000.

based Labor Sensitization program is going on in the Dang, Banke, Bardiya, Kailali and Kanchanpur districts as the major program of INSEC since 2000. Thousands of target groups have been made literate, sensitized and organized due to the program so far. As a result of the program, national conference of the Kamaiyas was organized in the Banke district in 1995. The conference, which was attended by more than 3 hundred Kamaiyas from the districts having high number of Kamaiyas, had passed resolution on their liberation besides fixing their course of action. The very meet had renamed the Kamaiya emancipation movement as the *Kamaiya Mukti Manch*, which now, has turned into *Krishi Majdoor Sangh* and is working as the representative of the agro-based laborers being affiliated with GEFONT.

In order to minimize the situation of child labor, INSEC, as assisted by ILO and UNICEF, has imparted informal education to 4 thousand 9 hundred and 9 children from the Dang, Banke, Bardiya and Kanchanpur districts since 1995. Those children now have been admitted to government schools and are provided with textbooks, school uniform, stationery, bags and admission fees. A total of 4 thousand 5 hundred and 57 children are admitted to 1 hundred and 81 schools. A total of 1 hundred and 81 children who attended the literacy classes run by INSEC and were

above 14 years in age were trained on hair dressing, bicycle repairing and tailoring related professions. They are actively engaged in the professions independently now.

A workshop was organized in September 1996 in the Banke district jointly by INSEC and UNICEF. The program was attended by national and international non-government organizations working on Kamaiyas' issues, the concerned bodies of the government, landlords, law professionals, journalists and other personalities and organizations. The workshop had identified the major issues of the Kamaiyas besides formulating action plan for their emancipation. The workshop had also formed a Kamaiya working group for implementing the action plan and the group was later changed into *Kamaiya Sarokar Samuha* (Group for the Kamaiyas). The group played an influential role on national level policy formulation and conducting regional level program on the Kamaiyas and it also requested the landlords to free Kamaiyas. As a result, a total of 13 Kamaiyas were freed. This campaign was led by GEFONT and helped by all the members of the group. INSEC also raised issue that minimum wage had to be fixed for the agro-based and domestic works. This campaign had aimed at making the the freed Kamaiyas independent. As jointly attempted by GEFONT and INSEC, agro-based labourers' minimum daily wage was fixed for

the first time at Naubasta VDC of the Banke district on June 18, 1999. Afterwards, the campaign was launched across the country. The campaign finally compelled the then government to fix minimum wages of the agro-based laborers on January 14, 2000. The government had fixed NPR 60 as the minimum daily wages of the agro-based laborers. However, the government has fixed NPR 100 as the minimum daily wage on April 30, 2007.

INSEC published another book on Kamaiyas in 1999. After conducting another study on the issue. The study was conducted to prove that Kamaiya system was also prevalent in the districts of Nepal other than Banke, Bardiya, Dang, Kailali and Kanchanpur. The study, which was done in the Nawalparasi, Rupandehi, Kapilvastu, Dang, Banke, Bardiya, Kailali and Kanchanpur districts, had concluded that bonded labor was prevalent in other districts of the Tarai region as well. The study had also assessed the impact of the programs launched in the districts having Kamaiya system.

Similarly, INSEC implemented community empowerment program in the districts highly affected by the Maoist waged armed insurgency. The program was implemented in the Banke, Bardiya, Dang, Pyuthan, Surkhet and Jajarkot districts and a study report was also published on distribution and use of land. Similarly, targeting one Kamaiya camp in the Banke, Bardiya and

Progress Report on the Rehabilitation of the Freed Kamaiyas

Fiscal Year 2065/066 BS

SN	Particular	Dang	Banke	Bardiya	Kailali	Kanchanpur	Total
1	Total families	12275	6846	25846	30463	7945	32509
2	Families not necessary to be rehabilitated (as they already possess their own land)	721	395	2948	787	88	4939
3	Families to be rehabilitated	705	1921	11551	8975	4418	27570
4	Rehabilitated families	705	1921	7100	6526	4150	20402
5	Families due to be rehabilitated	0	0	4451	2449	268	7168

Source: Adapted from www.molm.gov.np

View Point

'INSEC has contributed a lot to the democratic movement in Nepal.'

INSEC has been working in collaboration with many like-minded organizations including government bodies and political parties for human rights. In the course of working for people, it has forged friendly relationship with various organizations and professionals. Given below are the views expressed on INSEC by different personalities from various professional and social fields.



Gauri Pradhan
Commissioner/ Spokesperson,
NHRC

The human rights movement in Nepal is always embedded with democracy, social justice and progress of Nepali people. Various human rights organizations and rights defenders have played important role on spreading awareness and protecting human rights. I would like to especially applaud the role played by INSEC on the protection and promotion of human rights in Nepal. The unrelenting efforts of INSEC for advocacy, awareness and protection of human rights amidst historical ups and downs since its establishment two decades ago are special and remarkable. INSEC has turned 20 years old. I would like to express my gratitude on the occasion for the efforts of its founders, members and also for the hard work of its active staff members. I also wish all the best and success in its future efforts.

Despite the fact that protection and promotion of human rights is an issue connected with all-round development of the state, ending impunity by establishing rights of the victims is its main objective. Given that culture of impunity is on the rise in the country, we have to advance advocacy on human rights based on fact and evidences rather than being swayed by emotion. Also given that state has expressed so many commitments toward the protection, promotion and implementation of human rights and that the commitments have not been translated into practice; human rights defenders have important role to play. May INSEC succeed in this role as well! I express my solidarity with the organization.



Dr. Netra Prasad Timilsina,
President, NGO Federation Nepal

INSEC has become synonymous to the human rights movement of Nepal. Two decades for the human rights movement is a long period of time. Passing through risky situations, facing challenges and also achieving

success, INSEC has turned 20 years old now. Though the organization raised the issues related with civil and political rights prominently during its initial years, it has also been raising the issues on economic, social and cultural rights. The role played by it for the liberation of the Kamaiyas is very remarkable.

The most important contribution of INSEC to human rights is the publication of Nepal Human Rights Yearbook. With the publication of the yearbook annually by documenting and analyzing the incidents of human rights violation and abuses, INSEC has become synonymous to human rights movement in Nepal. Also due to the fact that it has been assessing the incidents in a balanced way and has been presenting before the government and public, INSEC has become a matter of pride for other like-minded organizations. INSEC's campaign against impunity is the next important step, which is quite laudable.

INSEC has played important role in monitoring the incidents of human rights violations committed during the movements launched in Nepal for the political rights. To be specific, its role as a human rights defending organization during the People's Movement II in 2006 is noteworthy. Similarly, INSEC is a leading organization on investigating and drawing

attention of the concerned stakeholders in the cases of human rights violations and creating pressure for the justice of the victims. Also, in the capacity of one of the members of the NGO Federation Nepal, INSEC has contributed to the members of the federation and also to other human rights organizations and networks in their efforts of capacity enhancement. As INSEC has its networks across the country, it has been taking active participation in the programs organized by the NGO Federation in different districts.

As the President of the NGO Federation Nepal, I would like to commend the role played by INSEC on human rights movement in Nepal. The NGO Federation family is proud of INSEC for excelling in the field of human rights as a member of the Federation. May INSEC accomplish further excellence and effectiveness in future!



Dr. Gaurishankar Lal Das
Former Commissioner, NHRC

INSEC's full form gives an impression as though it is a benevolent and service providing center. However, during 20 years since its inception, it has been established as the best, biggest and most widespread organization in the field of human rights. Its attribute is beyond imagination and contribution in the field is incomparable.

It has its representatives/district offices in each district and they report information on human rights violations and abuses regularly. The information collected in this way get resonant every year in the form of Human Rights Yearbook. Positively and surprisingly, the Yearbook is published every year exactly on scheduled date. The Yearbooks have become reference materials and measuring rods. If any person, organization and newspapers have to quote the situation of human rights in the country, it is the very Yearbook that they have to consult.

I had an opportunity to visit and inspect the Resource Center of INSEC, which is full of unique collection of reference materials including books, magazines and journals on human rights. People cannot help being influenced by the resource materials. Similarly, INSEC's team and volunteers are fully dedicated to the cause of human rights. It is due to their commitment and activeness that INSEC has established itself as an avant-garde organization. It investigates and then makes public the incidents of human rights violations in the country before raising voice for the justice of the victims. No one can suppress its voice; it continues its humanitarian responsibility unflinchingly and undauntedly.

So far as I know, INSEC gives more priority to civil and political rights than to economic, social and cultural rights. I expect that it will be more interested in the latter rights once the ongoing peace process concludes. Similarly, the rights of the senior citizens are remaining as one of the disregarded and unobserved issues. It is apparent that this problem in Nepal has not been prioritized by the international community as well. The rights of women and children but of the senior citizens are ensured. Hopefully, INSEC will include the rights of the senior citizens in its

programs and campaigns adding another element to its initiations and will move ahead speedily for the cause of the rights of the voiceless people.



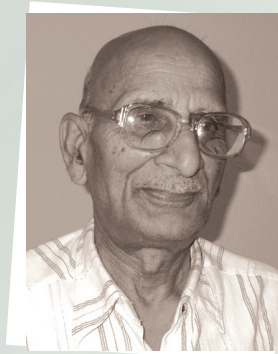
Dr. Hem Raj Pant
Professor

It is a known fact that INSEC has been contributing remarkably to human rights and social justice for 20 years. The incidents of human rights violation have occurred even after the restoration of democracy. Both the state and rebellion gravely violated human rights during a decade long armed conflict in the country. Admirably, even during the situation of lawlessness and dreadfulness, INSEC had commissioned field visits and prepared reports before publicizing their findings. The state has to overvalue INSEC's contribution. Its data on human rights situation in the country are accepted as official one nationally as well as internationally.

The Human Rights Yearbook published by INSEC annually has become a standard publication. Upon reading its past issues, one can clearly understand the post-Panchayat era in Nepal in terms of the manner and actors of human rights violations. Undoubtedly, the Yearbooks will be an important reference material for the national as well as international researchers desiring to do studies on human rights and

social justice situation of Nepal.

With its factual reporting and the leading role in raising voice for the justice of victims, INSEC has become synonymous to human rights advocacy. It has added new facet to human rights and social justice in Nepal. I wish further success of the organization.



Prof. Birendra Mishra
Former Member, Election
Commission

Once I was acquainted with Subodh Pyakurel I knew about the role of INSEC. I gradually became more intimate with INSEC and started to be influenced by the issues raised by INSEC besides taking part in various programs organized by the organization. Hence, I became more and more knowledgeable about the organization. I am not affiliated to and organized within any organization. I had forged relation with INSEC as an independent person. I, now, perceive INSEC as a lively human rights organization having its nationwide presence. It has contributed a lot to the democratic movement in Nepal.

Information flow, which keeps great importance in the 21st century, is another strong aspect of INSEC. I know that the organization has carried out in-depth studies about and contributed to the information flow on the Maoist waged

armed conflict in the country. The information received from INSEC has helped me a lot in my writing and studies. Documenting all the incidents of human rights violations occurred in all parts of the country is the beauty of INSEC. It has encompassed all the regions such as the capital city, regions, zones, districts, VDCs, cities, villages, Tarai, hills and mountains. More importantly, it has been publishing Human Rights Yearbook annually by compiling and analyzing the data on the incidents of rights violations.

I was not introduced to Late Prakash Kaphle; however, I was really encouraged to work as a part of monitoring committee formed following people's movement. Sushil Pyakurel and Subodh Pyakurel had helped a lot in this connection and it was because of them that the committee was a success in its mission. I must give them credit for the success. INSEC had contributed to the People's Movement in 2006 as well. I think, INSEC is still to be assessed. If not assessed by giving credit where credit is due, Subodh Pyakurel and others will be recognized by history. When human rights organizations are accused of political affiliation, their work, credibility and images will also be marred. As our country is still in need of civil society and its movement, I think, the personalities such as Subodh Pyakurel, among others; has to keep himself away from political parties and should contribute to the whole country or civil society. Civil society should play neutral role, which is lacking in Nepal. Political parties have been unable to forge consensus among them due to lack of pressure from civil society. It seems that civil society is not putting pressure on the parties as required. As a result, a situation of uncertainty has ruled over us, peace process has been uncertain.

INSEC struggles against the Panchayati regime, the autocratic

rule of the king and human rights abuses of the Maoists for human rights. It did succeed in these endeavors. It is required that INSEC has to contribute to sustainable peace now. During its twenty years, INSEC has spread knowledge and information on human rights through its activities and researches. It has also documented the incidents of rights violations with analysis. This should be acknowledged as a big contribution to the country. INSEC should keep on contributing to. It has to involve actively and efficiently for the consolidation of democracy in the country.



Nawadatta Dhungana
Human Rights Activist and Law
Professional

Although various bodies of people's representatives were in place under the Panchayati regime, all of them had to work remaining under the umbrella of the autocratic monarchy. As the king was placed above constitution, there was lack of democracy completely. Therefore, the particular elements of democracy such as freedom of speech and the freedom to organize political parties were not allowed. The polity was known as Panchayati democracy but there were no basics of democracy. As the king had active leadership in governance, people were deprived from their prime rights. The

king's edict had to be accepted by all whereas Nepal had already become a member of the UN and had signed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948. With this context, a group of individuals which was conscious and worried about human rights situation in the country established an organization tilted *MASAM* in 1984. Late Prakash Kaphle was the General Secretary of the organization at that time. I am entering into this issue just to indicate that there was similarity between INSEC and *MASAM*.

MASAM had been accomplishing various works on human rights. However, with the aim to move the human rights movement in the country further effectively, Prakash Kaphle and others established another organization named Informal Sector Research Center in 1989. Later, the Center changed into INSEC by name. Because INSEC was established by using the experience of and encouragement from *MASAM* and by the persons affiliated with the latter, there was similarity between these two organizations. The Kaski branch of *MASAM* was established in 1991 after some years the Western Regional Office was established. I still remember, Kul Raj Ghimire was there as the coordinator of the office, which was located nearby my house. As the office was not provided its own telephone, he used my own telephone for sometimes. I started to participate, as requested by Kul Raj Ghimire, in the programs organized by INSEC especially in the Parbat and Tanahun districts. I would not miss any programs organized in the Kaski district. This is how I was affiliated with INSEC. Once I became the president of the Kaski chapter of *MASAM*, we even started to organize programs on human

rights jointly. Because we worked being complementary to each other, I was in close contact with INSEC personally and institutionally.

So far as the human rights movement in Nepal is concerned, no organizations were in the field until 1988. Awareness on the issue was limited only on some scholars, politicians and diplomats. The Nepali people in general were not known about the issue. We find that organization on the issue started to be seen since 1988. The human rights activists who believed that human rights and democracy are complementary to each other contributed more to end the party-less Panchayati system. However, human rights movement was not flourishing on its own. Once the Panchayati system came to an end and democracy was restored in 1990, various organizations started to advance the human rights movement in their own ways. Other organizations too started to appear in the field following the restoration of multi-party democracy in the country. However, INSEC was a sole organization to take the human rights movement ahead systematically. Although the other organizations have also laid emphasis on the issue since then, they are working more as volunteer organizations. INSEC has been taking the movement to further height systematically and with economic soundness.

The incidents of human rights violations continued even after the restoration of democracy. Very few organizations were working against those violations. The organizations would only release statements reacting to the violations. Once the Maoists declared armed conflict against the state in 1996, the incidents such as killing and abduction enforced disappearances increased every day. Thousands were killed, hundreds were disappeared involuntarily and many were

injured. As the atrocities from both the warring sides reached height, there was a realization that the warring sides needed to be pressured for peace. Accordingly, the joint effort of INSEC, *MASAM*, *Rastriya Sampada and Janadhikar Nagarik Samiti* and *Manabadhikar Sangathan*, among others, established Civil Society Network for Peace in Kaski with the aim to bring all the concerned in the district together for peace. The network was led by Som Raj Thapa, INSEC Coordinator in the region. Later on, more than fifty organizations became members of the network and started to work for peace. Such the efforts had minimized the atrocities of both the warring sides noticeably. We had been able to protect the lives of many people. INSEC had contributed a lot to this work and it is contributing even today to peace building efforts. Following Som Raj Thapa, the network was headed by the individuals from other organizations and INSEC is the General Secretary of the network now. The secretariat of the network is at INSEC at present.

INSEC has been organizing various trainings, seminars and interactions for its activists and other people. These programs have increased the level of sensitization on human rights. It has been instantly releasing statements on the incidents of violations and abuses condemning them and by drawing attention of the concerned stakeholders on the incidents in question. INSEC has been publishing various analytical books, situation reports and documents with data. May INSEC reach the summit in terms of its progress! I would like to thank the organization for the knowledge, cooperation and courtesy that I have received from it.

Kamaiya tradition on July 17, 2000. The government had also declared *Saunki* waiver and guarantee of the freed Kamaiyas' settlement. However, the freed Kamaiyas are still compelled to struggle for their resettlement even in this loktantrik era. Bitter truth is present before us that the resettlement of the Kamaiyas has not been a prioritized agenda. The ensuing sections of this article aim at discussing the historical background of the Kamaiya liberation movement, INSEC's role in the movement and the problems of the freed Kamaiyas before reaching conclusion.

National and International Provisions against Slavery

Slavery Convention 1926 has defined slavery as the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised. Similarly, article 4 of the UDHR states that no one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms. Article 8 of ICCPR also reiterates the article 4 of the UDHR and adds up that no one shall be held in servitude and no one shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labor. Likewise, article 29 of the Interim Constitution of Nepal 2007, under its fundamental rights, mentions that every person shall have the right against exploitation, no person shall be exploited in the name of custom, tradition and practice, or in any other way, no person shall be subjected to human trafficking, slavery or bonded labor and no person shall be subject to forced labor. Similarly, the Bonded Labor (Prohibition) Act 2058 had legally prohibited the Kamaiya tradition.

Tharu Community and Kamaiya Tradition

In Tharu language, the term *Kamaiya* refers to a person who generates income by working in the

field, canals and similar irrigation related works. Those who lead a family are called *Gadburya* or *Kisan* (farmer). So those working under them as per their orders and suggestions are known as Kamaiyas. The *Kisan* of a family can be changed every year in the *Maghi* festival. Those who work by receiving *Panchakur* goods were also known as Kamaiyas. However, over time, once the Ranas and their courtiers or family members started to receive *Mauja Birta* from the ruling Ranas, they started to cunningly use the Tharu people, who were struggling against Malaria and other hostile climate, to cultivate land. Gradually, the high caste people became dominant over land ownership whereas the Tharu people gradually turned into the Kamaiyas. Those Tharus who did not own land and access to power turned into Kamaiyas. Hence *Saunki* bounded them as Kamaiyas. The Kamaiya's whole family had to work for the landlord for low wage, which could never pay back the loan. Therefore, generations of the Kamaiyas had to work for their landlords. This situation gradually enslaved them. If a Kamaiya did not like to live with the landlord family with whom they were living, they could be bought by another landlord but the latter had to pay off the loan borrowed by the Kamaiyas from the first landlord. This practice consolidated gradually.

The Tharu community is embedded with the Kamaiya tradition. According to INSEC's study report, 92.2 per cent Kamaiyas were from the Tharu community. According to the data provided by National Labour Academy (Nepal), among the Kamaiyas from the Bardiya and Kailali districts, 99 per cent of them were from the Tharu community and their per cent in the Dang district was 84.2 and such the per cent was 91.9 in the Banke district. These are the districts where Tharu people's settlement is dense. More than 90 per cent

Kamaiyas were with the *Mauja* landlords and with the non-Tharu landlords who were migrated to the region following the eradication of Malaria. Christian McDonough's research report on the Kamaiyas in the Dang district states that most of the land tax payers were the Tharus in 1912. However, by the time it was 1960, most of the land owners in the region were from hill community people. By then, 80 per cent Tharus had already turned into tenant farmers who either had nominal amount of land or no land at all. Hence, it seems that most of the families of the Tharu community were compelled to turn into Kamaiya and landless squatters due to oppression from the ruling class.

The History of Kamaiya Liberation

In 1951, there had taken place a barn gherao movement at ward no. 9 of the Manpur Tapara VDC in the Bardiya district. The Kamaiyas and tenant farmers had gheraoed the granary there for a week. Koili Devi Tharu was shot dead as manipulated by local administration during the move. Similarly, Gumara Tharu was shot dead by a landlord in the course of farmers' movement in 1960 which is known as Belawa Bajari incident. Mohan Tharu, a youth from Ghaghabar was shot dead by a landlord in 1982 while the former was attempting to capture the barn of Deudakala Thumani in the Bardiya district. Likewise, the Kamaiyas from the Kanchanpur district were spontaneously stirred for their rights and liberation in 1991. The Kandara movement of 1991 in the Bardiya district in 1991 is known as the biggest movement in which hundreds of thousands of Kamaiyas had participated. This movement had surfaced the problems of Kamaiyas and landless squatters. Runche Tharu, a Kamaiya, got martyrdom in the movement.

Dang districts each, a two-year sensitization, institutional and skill development and livelihood related programs was implemented. Based on the very program, INSEC had published a book titled "Livelihood at Risk". The book had concluded that land has to be justly redistributed and Kamaiyas had to be empowered economically for the rehabilitation and livelihood sustenance of the Kamaiyas.

Banke, Bardiya, Kailali and Kanchanpur were mostly affected by armed insurgency. Of these districts, a total of 2 hundred and 25 people were subjected to enforced disappearances from the Bardiya district alone. Comparatively, this is the highest number of disappearances. It seems that most of the Kamaiyas were involved in the armed conflict being hopeful that they would be provided with their landlords' land.

Challenges of Rehabilitation

Poverty begets various problems in society. Seeking ways to get rid of deprivation is the fundamental rights of the poor. Real emancipation from such the situation is not possible until and unless victimized people's participation at the governance level is ensured. This applies in the case of the Kamaiyas as well. The Kamaiyas who were freed from the control of their landlords without any provisions for livelihood in a rainy season are still compelled to live a destitute life under the open sky. They have signed various agreements with the government; however, the agreements have not been implemented. Therefore, they have not realized that they are already freed. They were supposed to be provided with NPR 10 thousand and 35 cubic foot of timber for constructing houses. However, they are maintaining their sustenance by using public land and depending on slash and burning farming or as daily-wage earners. The Kamaiyas

had revolted initially demanding for maintenance of *Bukura*, waiver of Saunki and 10 *katttha* of land. The government, however, agreed to provide with 5 *Katttha* of land and saunki waiver, and declared to have freed the Kamaiyas. They were disconnected with their *Bukur*as, where they had been living for long and now they did not have any thing for sustenance. They could be legally made tenant and provided with the some share of land, which they had been tilling. But, they missed this opportunity. The slogan - *land to the tillers* could not be materialized. They missed the opportunity to the just redistribution of land. Nothing could be more deceitful than this. Government had tried to resolve the problems of Kamaiyas without any loss of landlords' land but it was impossible to resolve the problem in this way. Ultimately, the Kamaiyas were compelled to capture public lands and forest areas. The landlords had to lose not even a single inch of land but those Kamaiyas who were trying their best for the livelihood were termed as encroachers. Present situation reminds us of a Tharu saying - *Bam Bhagak Pusta Sanwarna* or pleading for resolution once all the ways out are closed. The problems of the ex-Kamaiyas could not be settled well, rather, their problems are increasing. This is also because the government prioritized only the economic package relating to resolving the Kamaiya problem. Problems are being added up due to government's heedlessness towards social and cultural impacts of rehabilitation. As the Kamaiyas were rehabilitated separately in terms of geography, problems have appeared between social groups on the use of forest, tracks, canals, public places as well as schools. As most of the rehabilitated people were from the Tharu community, the models of houses provided to them had to be consistent with the Tharu culture. However, this factor was not taken into account. As a

result, the rehabilitated ex-Kamaiyas had to either modify or rebuilt their houses. This added to their expenses.

Conclusion

The Kamaiya tradition is directly embedded with land. The Tharu community, which had been working hard and safeguarding communities in the Southern plain of Nepal, was tagged as the Kamaiyas by the time Nepal, as a whole, took a form a nation state. Even the peaceful or armed struggle of six decades for democracy and sustainability could not genuinely resolve Kamaiys' problems and issues. The Nepali Congress which had put forth a slogan - *Jagga Kasko Jotneko Ghar Kasko Potneko* (Land to the tillers, house to the scrubbers) has been now alleged as being the party of the landlords. The CPN-UML, which had emerged through a campaign to eliminate 'class enemy' has been exhausted now. Similarly, the CPN-Maoists party, which had declared a long-term war against the state, has also been blamed that it has returned the land captured by people to the landlords. Those settling aside public places and on the banks of rivers or lakes are assumed as encroachers by the state. The state is likely to continue such the mentality. State has to have clarity that land-victims can be justly dealt only by giving them land. Therefore, state has to take step towards solving the ex-Kamaiyas' problems seriously. Dilly-dallying for meaningful freedom of the ex-Kamaiyas, at a time when debates are ongoing as to providing ethnic and identity based state to the ethnic groups having more than just one per cent population, won't be just.

(The writer is Senior Officer at INSEC)

(Various books published by INSEC, Sahashrabdi Publication, Martin Chautari and Backward Society Education (Base) were consulted while writing this article)



Role of INSEC in Managing Nepal's Armed Conflict

Background

The Mass Movement of 1990 ended the 30-year old Panchayati Regime. The constitution of Nepal 1990, which was the result of the movement, had guaranteed civil and political rights. However, it was not able to address and encompass all the economic and cultural rights related structural discriminations. INSEC had raised voice relating to this reality immediately following the promulgation of the constitution.

The United People's Front, which had won a total of nine seats in the parliament in the election held in 1991, had already started to increase detestation among people against parliamentary system saying that there was difference between rhetoric and reality of the system. They had been claiming to have used the parliament as a political strategy. As people were getting more pessimistic on the contemporary political developments, a group of the Joint People's Front led by Dr. Baburam Bhattarai submitted 40-point demand to the then Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba on January 30, 1996. The Prime Minister left for Delhi visit disregarding the demand whereas it was stated in the memorandum submitted by Bhattarai that the Front would go for armed insurgency if their demands were not fulfilled within February 17, 1996. PM Deuba had assured that he would discuss

the demands put forth by the Front following his return to Nepal. However, the party declared to have started armed insurgency in the country three days before meeting the deadline on February 14, 1996 as CPN Maoists and attacked police posts located in the Rukum, Rolpa, Salyan and Sindhuli districts simultaneously.

The then government too attempted to respond the insurgency through the use of force. The *Kilo Sierra Two* operation launched by the government for quelling the Maoist insurgency further escalated the Maoist movement. The government had repressed the cadres of the People's Front in the Rolpa district before armed insurgency was declared. The act of the government was protested by human rights communities and demanded the perpetrators be taken action.

Initially, the Maoist insurgency was centered in the Mid-Western region but it spread across the country over time. The Maoists, who had been attacking small police posts for accumulating weapons, attacked the District Police Office in Dunai, the headquarters of the Dolpa district on September 26, 1989. A total of 14 police personnel were killed in the incident. The then government had thought of mobilizing army against the insurgency following the attack. However, it could not be materialized due to dispute over the issue. Therefore,

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government formed an armed police force in 2001 and mobilized it against the insurgency.

The then government led by Sher Bahadur Deuba tried to resolve the ongoing armed conflict through dialogue in 2002. The cease fire called on by the government unilaterally could not continue following the three rounds of peace talks, which ended without any result due to fundamental differences between them on the issues. Immediately after the failure of peace talk, the Maoists attacked the barrack located at Ghorahi in the Dang district on November 23, 2001. A total of 14 army personnel were killed in the incident and all the weapons stored at the barrack were looted by the Maoist. The army, which was remaining as bystander by that time, was now ready to be mobilized against the Maoists principally. After two days of the attack, the then government made decision to mobilize army against the insurgency and then imposed emergency in the country.

Following the imposition of emergency, six people, on average, were killed every day. The unfolding military operation would give an impression as though army were free to kill people during emergency. Accordingly, many people who were not affiliated to the ongoing armed conflict in the country in any way were also killed and subjected to enforced disappearances. The Maoists too started to kill innocent people tagging them either as spy, feudal or in the similar pretexts. Ordinary people, teachers, students, health workers, journalists and the political leaders working at various levels were killed, disappeared and inflicted torture.

Periodic elections could not be held during the warring situation. Political activities which were almost city-centric due to Maoist waged armed conflict gradually, it seemed, started to be restricted in the cities as well during the then king Gyanendra's regime. The king, on February 2, 2003 took over power and restricted political

activities implicitly. Political leaders were now either arrested or kept in house arrests. In the pretext of responding to the Maoists armed insurgency, more severe armed operations were launched. Press freedom was curbed and telephone services were either tapped or interrupted. People's fundamental rights were suspended. Ultimately, the Maoists and other seven parties agreed to oust the king Gyanendra thorough peaceful movement. Accordingly, they reached a 12-point agreement on November 22, 2005 in New Delhi in India based on which democracy was restored. The CPN-Maoists declared cease fire after the restoration of democracy. The CPA signed between the government and CPN-Maoists formally ended decade long armed conflict.

INSEC, which was actively engaged for the cause of human rights since its inception, was equally active during the armed insurgency as well for the protection of human rights. In terms of priority, there were varieties of human rights issues in Nepal at different times. Immediately following the restoration of democracy in 1990, INSEC had raised various human rights issues related with civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights. It had advocated for the emancipation of Kamaiya tradition and bonded labor, which were in practice in the western part of Nepal. It had also organized the bonded laborers for their rights and basic needs fulfillment. INSEC had worked on the issues of Nepali society which were not the agendas even for the political parties at that time. These issues had drawn national and international attention. INSEC's works on bonded labor, rights of women and the indigenous people and on organizing the Dalits for their rights are to the knowledge of those who keep general knowledge on human rights movement of Nepal.

INSEC continuously raised voice for the rights of the aforementioned

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In terms of priority, there were varieties of human rights issues in Nepal at different times.

groups. It had even forecasted especially towards the mid 1990's that reluctance of the state in resolving their issues could lead the country into violent conflict. The organization had questioned the rationale of the Constitution of Nepal 1990. Proofs on these matters can be obtained from the publications of INSEC published at that time. As a human rights organization having a broader scope, INSEC had played its role very well during armed insurgency in the country. This article will basically discuss the roles played by INSEC during a decade long armed conflict in the country.

INSEC and Conflict Management

INSEC had launched campaigns on human rights and human rights education since 1990. The armed conflict that started in 1996 against nascent democracy was a big challenge from the point of view of civilian freedom and human rights. Keeping this reality into consideration, INSEC started to publish Nepal Human Rights Yearbook since 1992 and continued publishing even during difficult periods of armed conflict. These Yearbooks have been achieved safely as the proofs of armed conflict. Their importance will be felt equally in the future as well.

As the armed conflict was changing political situation of the country, INSEC shifted priorities of its works. Both the warring sides were involved in killing, abducting, disappearing innocent people who had not any connection with the war. In this context, INSEC launched campaign with the aim to remind the warring sides about the rules of war. Through its publications and radio programs,

INSEC disseminated materials on the Geneva Conventions, international humanitarian laws, the international human rights norms and the limitations of war, among others. It documented and disseminated all forms of human rights violation and abuses with the aim to making the warring sides responsible. The organization launched peace campaign at rural areas at a time when armed conflict was going on. As the Maoists were a high contracting party of the Geneva Conventions, INSEC had been putting pressure on the rebels to abide by the Conventions. Similarly, the government was also urged to deal with the Maoist rebels accordingly. It was based on these very attempts that INSEC was able to release many people from the control of the warring sides. More than 125 security personnel and other civil personnel were released by the Maoists in the presence of INSEC. Similarly, thousands of people imprisoned illegally were released as attempted by it.

Jointly with other organizations and singly as well, INSEC implemented many programs on human rights education and on the UDHR 1948 and propagated them widely through trainings as well as workshops. INSEC was of the view at that time that only the organized voice could make the warring sides responsible. As the war related crimes and atrocities increased dramatically over time, INSEC felt that it now had additional responsibility and roles on protecting people's human rights. As a result, INSEC reached people's areas for making them aware of their human rights situation.

Acknowledging the saying of former Secretary General of the UN Kofi Annan that both peace and development are impossible without human rights, INSEC had urged the warring sides to abide by the universal norms of human rights. It had prioritized collaboration and coordination among the concerned stakeholders for the establishment of human rights culture. Working during armed conflict for human rights was not free from challenges. However, INSEC activists worked during the period with honesty, professional clarity but without fear.

INSEC, over time, started to be known as a friend for those who were led into difficulty due to war. The organization not only advocated for the conflict affected citizenry but also worked towards saving the lives of those who were directly involved in war. INSEC offices started to be the place for the conflict victims to relieve themselves from their pains. The number of people visiting INSEC's offices seeking for latter's role for the protection of human rights increased rapidly. It continued to document the incidents of human rights violation and abuses in a micro level. Singly or jointly with other human rights organizations, INSEC organized press meets in order to inform about the human rights situation of Nepal to the international community. Such the meets were aimed at putting pressure on the warring sides to be accountable for human rights. Hence, INSEC implemented its programs at the rural areas with the belief that until and unless human rights programs reach rural areas, the people cannot feel assured of their rights.

Eighty Eight Days under the Maoist Control

I was transferred to Rolpa district and working there for two months. I was in a group of 76 police personnel, which was hiding in the jungle area at Holeri in Rolpa on July 11, 2001. For our strength was comparatively weak, discussion was taking place to integrate us into another police posts. Although we were informed that the Maoist rebels had cordoned us, we did not possess any strength to fight against them due to their massive number. The night passed by. As it was 5:00 am, our team led by inspector Madan Gurung was returning to bazaar area. However, we realized that the Maoists had already captured the area. Once we reached there, they started gunfire so we started flee the area. One of our members was killed and one more was injured in their firing. The Maoists, now, captured all of us and kept at a Service Center nearby the Bazaar.

They received permission from their high command and then took us towards Nuwagaun in the Rolpa district. While we were at Nuwagaun, a Puma helicopter landed across the village. Then the Maoists made us walk along the bank of a stream but we were not informed where we were being taken to. The helicopter started to drop grenade from above. So, the Maoists started to hide us sometimes in a maize field and along the stream bank next. We were hopeless about the safety of our life. After a while the area was totally covered by fog so we were now were happy that we were safe. On the third day following our capture, they divided us into three groups. We did not even know where others were taken to. I missed my parents, wife and five children a lot. We were not allowed to inform about our situation to our families. We used to walk whole night and sleep at day time.

The Maoists had treated us as war prisoners. They even used to hold interactions with us. Being infuriated with my presentation during an interaction, they even threatened of killing us. However, they had been saying that we did not commit any mistake but were taken into control as a bargaining strategy. After some days, the commander who had been looking into us was changed and the new commander allowed us writing letters to our families. He even told us that he would have our letters posted. Then we were met with Japanese journalists. We were informed two months after our abduction that some of the personnel taken into control along with us were released. However, we used to be worried over our release. They did never compel us to adopt the Maoist ideology but asked our views on their political movement. We used to reply them that our affiliation to police force was basically for the management of our family. After 75 days under their control, they informed us that we were being released soon. They slaughtered a nanny goat to celebrate our release but we were not released even after the feast. Finally, were were released, in the presence of INSEC's regional coordinator Bhola Mahat, International Red Cross and other human rights activists, from a place called Rakam Jamune in the Surkhet district after 88 days

Experience of the former ASI of police force Puna Ram Tharu

international armed conflict. The other objectives of the campaign were to establish culture of peace and to increase belief among people as well as the warring sides that problems could be resolved through peaceful means. People from all class and communities were badly affected by the armed conflict. However, the people from rural areas were more affected. So, INSEC had attempted to organize all categories of people for sensitizing them on their rights.

2. INSEC and Internally Displaced People

The Maoists-waged armed conflict compelled many people to flee their permanent homes. This displaced them internally. The Maoists had launched "one family one organization" campaign and had also put forth the slogan that one had to be booted and be ready for the war by holding gun or else they were not allowed to live at village. Similarly, those who were with the contrary views than that of the Maoists were beaten up; their land and houses were captured and they were even killed. Similarly, the state too started to arrest, kill and torture ordinary people besides torturing the families and relatives of those Maoists who were directly involved in the war. These factors became the main cause of displacement. Many people were displaced from their villages.

Hence INSEC helped in returning people to their in-situ habitat. For this, it held dialogues directly and indirectly. Similarly, internally displaced people were sent back to their original places in different districts as attempted by INSEC. Under the program on rehabilitation of the internally displaced people, a total of 5 thousand 9 hundred

1. INSEC and Peace Campaign

INSEC started campaign for peace when conflict was going on in the country. The main objective of this program was to save innocent people from the

negative impact of armed conflict and to make the concerned stakeholders accountable for the common article no. 3 of the international humanitarian laws, which would be attracted during

and 91 displaced people from 9 hundred and 81 families were sent back to their original places by INSEC jointly with other various organizations. Similarly, a total of 1 thousand and 37 persons from 1 hundred and 72 families were given financial support in collaboration with Save the Children, NRC and Nepal Red Cross. As internally displaced people are also important stakeholders of conflict management, INSEC's such initiative had helped for peace and conflict management.

3. INSEC during King's Direct Rule

The then king Gyanendra Shah had declared emergency in the country after taking over state authority on February 1, 2005. Once the emergency was imposed, people's fundamental rights guaranteed by the constitution were suspended. This negatively affected political and social life across the country. Political leaders, journalists, human rights defenders and social engineers were put into custody. Some of them fled to India to escape possible arrest and imprisonment. Many of the media based at district level were closed and centrally located media houses were also censored. Social organizations postponed their pre-planned activities due to insecurity. Even the fundamental human rights and their enjoyment were prohibited due to uncontrolled use of power by the then Royal Nepalese Army. More than 3 hundred and 50 people were arrested within three months of emergency in the Mid-Western Region alone. More than 136 people were killed during the royal regime and more than 21 were subjected to enforced disappearances.

Both the Warring Sides Affect People

A total of 125 families from Nausahara village of Narainapur VDC located in the Baghauda area across the Rapti River were staying at different villages of India bordering Nepal. They were displaced in November, 2003 due to the abuse of the Maoists and security forces. Many villages of the area were empty due to indecent acts perpetrated against women and arrests by security forces.

With such the situation going on, INSEC jointly with UNDP and SPDI, launched a campaign for peace and development in the area. In the course of implementing program in the villages, INSEC formed different groups among the villagers and held discussions on their problems. Both the warring sides were involved in the discussions. INSEC held several rounds of discussions with Lieutenant Subash Khadka, chief of the joint security forces based at Sonbarsha and Inspector Yadav Bahadur Gharti on the problems. Similarly, talks were held with the Maoists as well over the issues. Ultimately both the warring sides reached an understanding that they would stop leading the villagers into difficulty. Following this understanding, the villagers who were living a displaced life in the Indian villages were contacted and informed about the understanding reached between the warring sides. Accordingly, they returned to their villages. The intermediary role played by INSEC in this connection was praised by the villagers. Once the villagers started to return to their village, the villagers from Kalaphanta and Rataiha, the neighboring VDCs of Narainapur, also started to return to their villages.

INSEC was continuously engaged for the protection of people's human rights with the strong belief that human rights should be guaranteed even during the most difficult political situation. As people's belief in the security bodies of the state was gradually decreasing, INSEC was fully aware of the fact that such the situation could add to the ongoing security challenges faced by the country. Hence, INSEC played role in forging relation between security bodies, citizenry and social engineers. It organized workshops across the country on human rights and humanitarian laws among the officers from the then Royal Nepal Army, Armed Police Force, and Nepal Police keeping the unfolding security situation of the country into consideration.

4. INSEC and People's Movement

Seven political parties in

the country led mass movement on April 6, 2006 against the then king who had assumed himself as the sole authority of state power. The movement had continued for 19 days. The then rebelling Maoists had fully supported the movement. The 12-point agreement signed between mainstream political parties and the Maoists proved to be a milestone relating to succeeding the 19-day peaceful movement. INSEC seriously monitored the movement besides documenting the major incidents that occurred during the 19 days. Similarly, INSEC also monitored the movements launched by Madhesi and Tharuhat people.

INSEC played very important role during people's movement in 2006. Monitoring the incidents that occurred during the movement, recording the injured and disappeared people, rescuing the wounded people and publishing the daily report on the development of

the movement were some of the works INSEC had accomplished during the period. So much so that INSEC had taken the wounded people to hospital even while curfew was on. It is quite apparent that INSEC had played very important role in having the agenda item 19 implemented. Moreover, the meeting of the executive committee of INSEC held on July 20, 2005 had strongly urged the government to implement agenda item 19.

5. Challenges

Naturally, the programs launched by INSEC for conflict management, peace and development were full of challenges. To talk of human rights, humanitarian laws and peace was not digestible for the warring sides at that time as the political groups were trying their best to move ahead by eliminating the existence of each other. Similarly, society was engulfed by silent culture and disbelief. Many did not believe in the assertion of INSEC that even the warring and opposite sides could be brought together if a situation was created in which the opponents could understand each other's views positively. Human rights activists had to face many risks, threats, hatred and abuses for putting forth such views.

Most of the years of INSEC were full of challenges for the INSEC activists. They had to undergo various difficulties while working during conflict era. INSEC lost its active activists such as Bam Dev Pokhrel from Rolpa, Hem Raj KC from Salyan and Chet Prakash Khatri from Banke districts during the war period. However, INSEC kept on working resolutely. The royal government formed following

the power takeover by the then king started to keep its eye on the INSEC activities. The government interfered with the human rights radio program that INSEC had been broadcasting via Radio Nepal since January 21, 1995. We had been discussing the suspended rights of people through the radio programs even while the country was under emergency declared by democratic government. We had criticized the government for curbing people's rights. However, we had to self-sensor the issues to be broadcasted via the radio program especially following the royal takeover. On the occasion of World Press Freedom Day on May 7, 2005, we had prepared a program on government's restriction on press freedom. The program was against the governmental interference with free press. An officer at Radio Nepal who was looking into the program was believed to have suggested the radio technician to delete some of the parts of the program. However, the program was later aired as it was. We, later, were informed informally that the ministry for communication had the CD containing the aired program brought and one of the officers at Radio Nepal was interrogated.

Similarly, we had prepared a program on the code of conduct imposed by the government for non-government organizations. The program was supposed to be broadcasted on November 12, 2005. Upon listening to the program before broadcasted, officers from Radio Nepal replied us that they were unable to broadcast the program and suggested us to prepare another one. We protested the reply of the Radio Nepal as we were not in mood to prepare

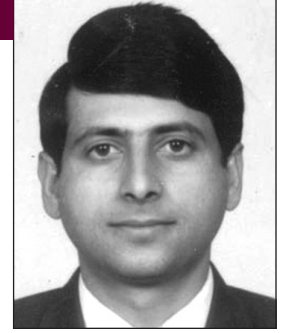
another one as suggested by them. It was because censorship on media had already crossed the limit. So, we aired the previously aired program on that day.

Right to information is inherent right of people. Such the rights cannot be curtailed at any cost. Article 19 of the UDHR has guaranteed this right. Similarly, there are several national and international provisions on right to information and press freedom. However, Nepalese people were not allowed to enjoy their rights on information and press freedom as well freedom of expression during the royal regime. Therefore, we had informed the concerned authority of Radio Nepal that INSEC was unable to prepare programs on human rights for certain time.

6. Learning

INSEC has learnt that common issues can be made resonant through collaboration and coordination and, continuous engagement ultimately leads to success. Similarly, it has been learnt that community based organizations have to be accepted as the leading organization for the less risky and sustainable achievement. It is learnt that headway could be made on conflict management provided human rights oriented concept is adopted by making human rights education as its entry point. We have also learnt that coordination is possible between political parties, government, civil society and other cooperating agencies if we work through networks and coalitions and if capacity enhancement of community is prioritized.

(The writer is Mid-Western Regional Coordinator of INSEC)



Indispensability of Human Rights Education

Everyone has the right to education...education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

Article 26, the UDHR

The quote mentioned above affirms that education is the best medium for asserting one's own rights and also for respecting the rights of the others if education is directed to the full development of the human personality and towards strengthening of respect of human rights. This has also laid emphasis on understanding tolerance and friendship among people. Human rights education refers to a regular and certain learning process. It is a process which promotes knowledge and skill on people besides developing positive attitude towards the respect of human rights. It orients people towards acknowledgement of the norms and values of human rights. Under human rights education one has to undergo three phases. First, one has to be acquainted with human rights issues. Second, the knowledge on human rights has to ensure changes on attitude and finally the attitude developed in this way has to be put into practice. This only will make the learning complete. As a result, people tend to be active for the establishment of an advanced society based on social justice and human dignity.

Human rights education aims at sensitizing people on human rights issues. If only one is sensitized on human rights issues they will be interested in their rights ensured in the human rights instruments as well as on their duties. INSEC, since its inception, has been working on human rights issues by acknowledging the fact that protection and promotion of human rights is possible if only people are aware of their rights.

It will be relevant to analyze the involvement of INSEC on human rights education as follows:

1. From 1990 to 1993

A) Program for Cart Pushers

INSEC has been implementing human rights education as campaign since its establishment. Its campaign on this type of education has already completed 20 years. Despite its ups and downs, INSEC has been established as the synonym with human rights even at the village level. This organization was actively involved in sensitizing the backward people especially during its beginning years. Education and health concern of the cart pushers were the

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main agenda of INSEC during its early years. Democracy was restored in Nepal following the establishment of INSEC. Therefore, it had worked by keeping the importance of conscious people in the nation building process at the center of its activities. Similarly, with the aim to nationalize democracy, it had incorporated all the mechanisms of the state including the ordinary citizens, civil society and also other social organizations in its campaign on human rights education.

B) Sensitization Program for Voters

With the belief that periodic elections in the country are the main process of establishing the ruling system of any country, INSEC had cordially accepted the general election of 1991, which was held following the success of people's movement 1990. It has prioritized the concept that enabling the election processes and making them free and fair is consolidating democratic process. It was always of the view that the future course of a country is determined on the basis of the type of individuals and parties elected through elections. Accordingly, INSEC had conducted voters' education program keeping the election into consideration. The program had sensitized the voters on the issues such as the notion of election, utilization of the right to vote, the importance of voting under the democratic process and also on the right and wrong types of candidates. The program was run in the 20 districts targeting the backward communities and the people having low educational level and political consciousness. A reading material on the rights and duties of rural voters and other materials such as pamphlets with pictures and booklets were also published. Similarly, a workshop at the national level on the prerequisites of fair and free election was organized.

C. Role of INSEC in the Establishment of NEOC

INSEC had an active role in establishing National Election Observation Committee (NEOC). The workshop organized at the national level on the prerequisites of fair and free election had set stage for the establishment of the committee. As a result, NEOC was established in 1991. Senior legal expert Basu Dev Dhungana was the chair and Late Prakash Kaphle was the general secretary of the Committee. Sushil Pyakurel, Bharat Upreti, Nobel Kishor Rai, Dwarika Shrestha, Sundar Mani Dixit, among others, were the members of the committee. The committee had played important role by drawing attention of the concerned authorities on possible irregularities besides observing election. It had even invited some international observers and mobilized them across the country. NEOC continued its works even in the elections after 1991.

D. Human Rights Education and Sensitization Program

Between 1990 and 1993, INSEC had clear stand that a society based on social justice could not be established until and unless citizenry were sensitized on their human rights. Human rights education was accepted as the medium for empowering people. Therefore, INSEC has been conducting human rights education with due primacy. This type of education aims at sensitizing people on their rights.

INSEC had supported in establishing a total of 25 human rights organizations, five organizations from five development regions each, in 1993. The organizations established in the districts had started working even at the remote places of the districts. The organizations had laid emphasis in spreading awareness on human rights related issues among the backward communities.

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E. Human Rights Day (December 10)

INSEC, as actively helped by 25 human rights organizations that were established in their corresponding districts, started to celebrate Human Rights Day on December 10 at the district level. The celebration was meant for sensitizing people about human rights and making the district level government bodies committed to the issue.

2. From 1994 to 2000

A. Human Rights Education Radio Program

Given the geographical remoteness of the country, radio can be the effective, popular and cheap means of sensitizing people on their rights in Nepal. INSEC started human rights education radio program formally since January 21, 1995. Initially, the contents of such the program were prepared in coordination with the organizations such as *INSEC*, *NEMADHISANGH*, *INHURED*, *MASAM* and *CVICT*. However, this program has been given continuity by INSEC since December, 1995. The human rights education radio program has been aired even via local FM stations since 2007.

With the continuity of the human rights education program, INSEC also put forth the concept of organizing the listeners of the program. It encouraged the spontaneously formed human rights education listeners' clubs to implement human rights related activities. As a result, the clubs started to work on human rights education at the rural level through quiz, poetry, debate competitions and through occasional seminars on human rights issues. Similarly, Human Rights Education Radio Listeners Clubs were formed at the district level and they started to run various programs on human rights.

Human rights education listeners' clubs were formed even among the prisoners living inside 46 jails. This initiative was propelled by the belief

that human rights should be the concern of all. INSEC has been distributing human rights related materials among the prisoners even today. A national level conference of the human rights education radio listeners' clubs was held on July 12-13, 1995 for further strengthening the clubs. This probably was the first conference of its kind. About 200 youths from across the country had participated in the conference. Since then, the clubs have been organizing their conventions every 3 years as assisted by INSEC. A total of 1 thousand and 3 hundred listeners' clubs have been formed so far and about 14 thousand youths are the members of these clubs.

B. National Human Rights Conference

As initiated by INSEC, National Human Rights Conference was held from 5-9 April, 1997 for the first time in Nepal. The conference was held with the aim to discuss the bad practices emerging in Nepal on human rights, to explore the newer issues on human rights with national importance and also with the aim to create a conducive environment for the enjoyment of human rights in the country. The conference, which was attended by a total of 300 human rights activists from 63 districts, had recommended for celebrating April 6 and 8 as special days commemorating the people's movement of 1990. Similarly, the conference had passed resolutions on the issues such as political interference, corruption, Kamaiya practice, determination of minimum wages of the labors involved in agricultural works, the existing discriminatory provisions in the then constitution and property rights of women.

Likewise, the end of racial and gender discrimination; resolving Bhutanese refugee problem, introduction of effective laws for ending criminalization of politics; the attempts for ending armed conflict of the country; improvement in jails; protection of children, senior citizens and the persons

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with disabilities; protection of human rights defenders; the establishment child, women and family courts; the rehabilitation of child laborers and finding the whereabouts of the people disappeared involuntarily were the other issues raised during the conference.

C. Program against Terrorist and Destructive Activities Related Ordinance

INSEC has been playing role in sensitizing people against the activities that are against human rights and also been putting pressure on the concerned authorities. This has been highly prioritized by INSEC since its inception. INSEC was succeeded in foiling the Terrorist and Destructive Activities (Control and Punishment) Ordinance 2054, which was about to be tabled by the then government in the parliament. INSEC had opposed the bill saying that it was against the inherent norms of the constitution of Nepal 1990 and the provisions on human rights included in the part 3 of the constitution. The then government was compelled to recoil its move on the ordinance following the nationwide pressure created by INSEC through its various programs. A big mass rally was organized in Kathmandu as initiated by INSEC on August 12, 1997 in which people from various walks of life were present. The rally had urged the people as well to disprove the ordinance.

3. From 2001 to 2010

A. Human Rights Leadership Development Program

The human rights education program that had been conducted by INSEC from its inception with the help of 48 organizations continued even during the period

between 2001 and 2003. However, the pattern of the program was changed since 2003 up to 2006 due to adverse political situation in the country. The program was run as the leadership development program. The political cadres from the non-Maoist parties were getting displaced at that time and there were no elected representatives at the VDCs due to Maoist-waged armed conflict. The leadership development program was implemented in the districts with the aim to produce active human rights activists for raising issues on the violation of human rights and sensitizing people on the situation of their rights. It was also supposed to raise voice against the perpetrators of the incidents of human rights violations. The program was implemented in 10 districts from where a total of 20 persons were provided with training on trainers. Similarly, a total of 720 people were mobilized at the ward level as the local human rights activists.

B. Human Rights School

With the major objective of ensuring the presence of active human rights activists at the local level and raising the human rights issues there, INSEC had started a three-month human rights school in December, 2006. The school was attended by 24 human rights activists from the same number of districts.

The participants of the school were trained on the fundamental issues such as human rights, the UN System, international humanitarian law, the international criminal court, world political system in terms of human rights, constitution and human rights, peace and development. The other focus of the school was

on globalization, the initiation of human rights movement and development in Nepal, human rights monitoring and documentation and institutional and project management. Similarly, the participants were sent to various districts in the country for field visits for a month. The school was formally completed after organizing a program in which Lena Sundh -head of OHCHR-Nepal had handed over certificates to the participants of the school.

C. Human Rights Education Program

It is desirable that Nepal expanded human rights movement as an integrated and regular process. Various programs run by INSEC in the past on human rights education have established foundation for this purpose. Provided that the people in the rural areas are mobilized extensively, progress can be made toward ensuring their rights. Keeping this fact into consideration, INSEC had established Human Rights Education Department under its central office and then had taken steps towards advancing human rights education program holistically.

The program had following objectives:

- Increasing rural people's awareness on human rights
- Raising the human rights related issues with high priority at the district level policy making process
- Motivating the Radio Listeners' Clubs formed at the district level for the purpose of sensitizing people locally

Major Achievements of the program:

- Human rights education was

conducted in 10 districts of five development regions. Similarly, human rights education radio programs were aired via Radio Nepal as well as 12 FM stations across the country. The radio programs were conducted by dividing them into three categories.

Human Rights Education for the Citizenry

This program was implemented for increasing awareness and among the communities victimized by lack of education, development and awareness and socially, economically and politically backward communities. The program was successful in enabling the community based organizations formed locally for human rights. The groups were trained on basic human rights related issues. It was also fruitful for the target groups in developing feelings that they themselves had to be sensitized for their rights. The program was also succeeded in raising burning problems such as ill-practices, discrimination, among others, prevailing at the target localities. The campaign against racial discrimination, *Chhaupadi* tradition, minimum wage for the agriculture based laborers, were also the part of the program.

Human Rights Education for Professional Groups

Various professional groups are concerned with the human rights issues of the local people. The service provided and behaves shown by the former indicate at the local level human rights situation. This is primarily because ordinary citizens have to reach government organizations and other institutions for having their

works carried out. This program was implemented targeting the elected representatives at the local government bodies, social workers and leaders, teachers, health workers, etc keeping in mind that these groups are more influential for spreading human rights issues among the locals.

The representatives of these professional groups were provided with trainings and were also invited at various programs, workshops and interaction so that they could translate their responsibilities into practice.

Human Rights Education Program for Law Implementing Bodies

Law enforcing bodies especially security forces have to be highly sensitive towards human rights issues. Given that the incidents of killing of innocent people, arbitrary arrest, abduction, enforced disappearances and torture increased during the then royal regime while fighting against the then CPN-Maoist, INSEC had implemented a program targeting the law implementing bodies. Security forces were especially trained on human rights and international laws. A total of 500 security personnel were trained in the programs, which were organized in 12 places across the country.

D. Program on Strengthening Partner Organization

INSEC had been working in collaboration with various partner organizations for long for increasing awareness on human rights. With the aim to further strengthening the local partner organizations, this program was implemented in 30 districts between 2007 and

2010. The program had helped the representatives of the partner organizations in developing leadership on human rights. Similarly, partner organizations also gained skills on the aspects such as organizational management, mobilization of local resources that are required for institutional development and sustainability. The program had the following objectives:

- Enhancing the capacity of the partner organizations for their institutional development
- Developing human rights related human resources among the partner organizations

Achievements

- The representatives of the partner organizations were enabled in establishing effective organizational structures and implementing them
- Institutional supports were provided them for human rights monitoring
- Partner organizations were mobilized being based on local resources
- Expertise and participation increased in the human rights field
- Capacity of the representatives of the partner organizations was enhanced on project planning, monitoring and assessment

4. From Twenty to Thousands of People

INSEC had started to work for a total of 20 cart pushers in the city of Kathmandu. Its programs were focused more on increasing awareness on the health issue of the cart pushers. Over time, the number of people to benefit from human rights education reached more than two hundred and thirteen thousand people who

benefitted from human rights education by 2010. The activities under human rights education were focused more on women, rural people, the Dalits and minorities. Of the total participants in the program implemented areas, more than 60 per cent participants were women. Similarly, representatives from the political parties, policy makers, and the representatives of civil society were the main participants in the programs, interactions and campaigns that were organized at district headquarters.

The data on the number of participants in the programs, workshops, interactions, campaigns and training on human rights education under the human rights education program conducted by INSEC is presented as below:

5. Conclusion

Education is more than imparting new information. Translating knowledge into practice is equally important. Hence, to be informed about human rights is to raise voice against rights deprivation and involve actively for the cause of human rights as well.

Between 1990 and 1993, INSEC was fully aware of the fact that people have to be empowered for peace and justice. Human rights education could be the best means of empowering rural people. Therefore, INSEC implemented human rights education targeting them. It had implemented an informal

education for sensitizing cart pushers in Kathmandu in 1990. Going beyond the traditional perception of human rights, it had raised consciousness on the health issues of the cart pushers besides providing them free health checkups. Similarly, INSEC had organized programs on sensitizing the voters from backward and minority communities living at rural areas. They were trained on election, election system and voters' rights especially by keeping the general election of 1990 into consideration. It had developed and used various books, pamphlets and pictorial presentations and had provided training for the aforementioned programs.

Between 1990 and 2000, INSEC was actively involved in sensitizing rural people through human rights literacy program, which was perceived by the organization as an entry point for imparting human rights education. Since 2000, INSEC started producing human rights defenders and mobilizing them across the country. It has been implementing human rights education holistically since 2007. It is especially concerned on mobilizing local human rights defenders through local resources and enabling them for defending their rights. Human rights education has been implemented by taking it as a rights-based approach since then.

(The writer is former Senior Officer of INSEC)

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Number of Participants under Human Rights Education Program of INSEC (1990-2010)			
Year	Female	Male	Total
1990-2000	15494	6505	22000
2000-2001	6685	9257	15942
2001-2002	6308	8989	15297
2002-2003	10215	16452	26667
2003-2004	7307	5455	12762
2004-2005	7368	7405	14773
2005-2006	7989	10728	18717
2006-2007	5732	4936	10668
2007-2008	12607	9444	22051
2008-2009	13550	12600	26150
2009-2010	18270	10504	28774
Total	111525	102276	213801



Measles Immunization Campaign and INSEC

Measles was a cause of death in about five thousand children in Nepal in 2003. Armed conflict was going on at that time in the country. As a result, killings, extortion, disappearances, displacement, among others, were increasing as problems. People were facing acute shortage of basic needs such as health and education service and water. There was the lack of health workers and basic medicines at the local health offices.

In this context, INSEC had run a campaign for measles vaccination jointly with national and international organizations by keeping the measles-caused deaths in children into consideration. The campaign was started on September 21, 2004 jointly by WHO, UNICEF, the then His Majesty's Government and INSEC. The campaign was completed after its third phase. The first phase of the program was kicked off on September 21, 2004 in 35 districts of the Eastern and Mid-regions. The second phase started on January 4, 2005 in 34 districts of the Western, Mid-Western and Far-Western regions and the third phase of the campaign was started since April, 2005 in the six districts in the mountainous region such as Humla, Jumla, Mugu, Dolpa, Manang and Mustang. Each phase of the program was completed within three weeks.

The planned work of measles immunization was obstructed due to

ongoing armed conflict in the country whereas preparations for immunization were already completed. Therefore, the concerned collaborators of the immunizations such as WHO, UNICEF and the government had collaborated with the National Human Rights Commission and INSEC to accomplish the work.

The immunization program was launched across the country as a national campaign with the belief that receiving measles vaccination was the inherent rights of the children. The campaign had intended to minimize measles caused deaths in the country.

A working team was formed at the central level under the leadership of the National Human Rights Commission. The team comprised of UNICEF, WHO, Ministry for Health, INSEC, Nepal Bar Association, Federation of Nepalese Journalists, among others. The team had requested the entire concerned groups not to obstruct the campaign. The appeal issued by the NHRC had especially urged the warring parties- the CPN-Maoist and the Security Forces to adopt self-restraint and to allow the transportation of immunization related logistics. Similarly, they were told to allow free movement of the immunization personnel for their work. Political parties, social workers and volunteer groups, civil society, teachers, students, government and non-government organizations

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were requested to play role in taking the children aged between nine months and 15 years to the immunization centers.

INSEC's Involvement in Social Mobilization

With the aim to succeed the immunization campaign, INSEC had put forth the concept of social mobilization. The campaign was a great success because of the concept. Although, social mobilization was not easy at that time, INSEC had intended to spread awareness down to the grassroots people on the immunization program.

For the purpose, INSEC had adopted two types of social mobilization models. The first one was reaching directly the local people in coordination with the NGO networks and the service delivery agencies of the government. Second, it had mobilized mass media especially radio and newspapers effectively. Most of the activities of the social mobilization were focused at the local level. INSEC had accomplished the task of social mobilization by forming networks in all the districts with the help of its partner organizations and the district representatives. The networks had played crucial roles in resolving the problems seen in the course of implementing the immunization campaign. They had played role through facilitation, dialogues and propagation. It was reported from many districts that even the then warring party-the CPN-Maoist was involved in the campaign. The party, through pamphlets and posters, had urged people to make the campaign a success.

Role of INSEC for the Success of the Campaign

The campaign was launched at a time when the Maoists were fighting against the state and the then king was endeavoring to turn into a sole authority of the state power. Therefore, succeeding the campaign in that context was challenging as well as equally necessary.

As the campaign was related with the health of the children, INSEC had tried its best for making the program a great success. It had carried out activities for the purpose at the central and regional level.

1. Central Level Programs

A. Central Level Orientation

A central level orientation program was held on the role and strategies of INSEC for the measles immunization campaign among the regional coordinators, directors and project chiefs of INSEC. The orientation was attended even by the executive members of the organization. The strategic meeting of INSEC had decided to postpone its regular programs and mobilize its human resources as per the need for the success of the campaign.

B. Central Level Workshop on the Campaign

A workshop was held on the role of human rights defenders and contribution of INSEC in making the measles immunization campaign a success. The workshop was attended by centrally based journalists, human rights activists, the representatives of the government offices and agencies, human rights commission, UNICEF, WHO, among others.

C. Radio Program on the Immunization

INSEC had propagated the immunization campaign intensively through its radio program before and during the campaign.

D. Publication and Dissemination of Poster and Pamphlets on the Campaign

Various pamphlets and posters were published and disseminated on the need and importance of the measles immunization program. Such the materials were disseminated across the country.

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E. Production and Broadcast of Radio Advertisement on the Campaign

With the aim to sensitize people on the need and importance of measles immunization for their children, INSEC had produced and broadcasted information through radios. The informative advertisements were produced in various local languages and broadcasted via local FM stations.

F. Participation at the Central Level Network Formed for Monitoring

INSEC was one of the participants of the central level network formed for monitoring the conduction of the campaign. The network, which was active for monitoring the efficacy of the program, coordinating the difficulties appeared at various places and resolving them even through field visits, was led by the NHRC.

2. Regional Level Programs:

A. Regional Level Workshop on the Campaign

A regional level workshop on the role of human rights defenders and coordination of the concerned was organized. The workshop had even prepared a district level action plan on the immunization. The workshop was attended by the heads of the district health offices from every district, the INSEC district representatives, the representatives from INSEC's partner organizations, Federation of Nepalese Journalist, lawyers, regional health workers, human rights defenders, among others.

B. Formation of Regional Network and its Mobilization

Under the leadership of INSEC, a regional network for the campaign was formed and mobilized during the campaign. The network comprised the representatives from various regional human rights organizations, Federation of Nepalese Journalists, Bar Association and teachers' organizations. The network had played its role in resolving the difficulties faced during the campaign

through facilitation. Especially, the problems created by the then rebels were resolved through dialogues.

3. District Level Programs:

A. Formation of District Level Network

District level networks were established in every district for the effectiveness of the campaign. The network comprised district level social organizations, federation of Nepalese journalists, teachers, students, mother groups and other stakeholders.

B. District Level Orientation Program

An orientation program on the campaign was organized for the members of the district level networks. The program had prepared an action plan on administering the immunization campaign in the districts and also on its propagation.

C. Propagation

Local means of communication were utilized before and during the campaign for informing people and drawing attention of the warring parties. The campaign was propagated locally through local newspapers, pamphlets, press statements, posters etc. The campaign was accomplished as coordinated by the district level networks and the District Health Offices.

D. Network Meeting

It was mandatory that the networks had to hold meetings at least twice during the campaign. The networks were in close contact and coordination with the district health office, the security forces, the then rebelling Maoists and other stakeholders.

E. Program Review Meeting

Following the completion of the campaign, a joint review meeting was held between the networks of health offices and the networks of human rights defenders. The meeting had reviewed the overall aspects of the measles immunization program.

With the aim to sensitize people on the need and importance of measles immunization for their children, INSEC had produced and broadcasted information through radios. The informative advertisements were produced in various local languages and broadcasted via local FM stations.

F. Monitoring and Extension of Direct Relation

The district level networks had carried out joint monitoring during the immunization campaign so as to resolving the problems appeared during immunization. The networks were in close contact with the regional offices of INSEC.

Some Noteworthy Works and Incidents of the Immunization Campaign

During First Phase

1. In the course of the immunization campaign, the then rebelling Maoists had prepared pamphlets and distributed among the local people requesting the villagers to have their children, aged between nine months and 15 years, immunized compulsorily. In this way, even the Maoists had showed solidarity with the campaign by keeping the inherent rights of the children into consideration.
2. During the first phase of the immunization, the then CPN-Maoist had called on a nationwide shutdown strike on September 27-28, 2004. Given the context, the national level network for the immunization had issued press statement urging the Maoists not to obstruct the immunization process even during the strike. Accordingly, the Maoists had allowed free movements of the vehicles carrying health personnel and other monitoring teams involved in the immunization.
3. Information was received in the course of immunization in August 2004 that a total of 35 porters who were heading towards the Okhaldhunga district from the Udayapur district carrying logistics and vaccine

were taken into control by the Maoist cadres at Manebhanjyang in the Okhaldhunga district. Upon receiving the information, the NHRC and INSEC issued a joint press statement on the issue. Due to the impact of the statement, the Maoist cadres had released the porters immediately besides giving the seized vaccine shots back.

During the Second Phase

As the second phase of immunization was due to be kicked off, the CPN-Maoists called on shutdown strike again on November 30, 2004 in protest of the death of Hari Singh- a Maoist cadre inside the Kanchanpur district jail. A truck laden with immunization shots and heading towards Dhangadhi from Nepalganj was sent back to Nepalganj, after the truck reached Sukkhad Musaria area of the Mahendra Highway, by the Maoist cadres. The truck was sent back saying that it was plying defying their strike. As immunization was an important issue from the point of view of children's health, it was urgent to transport the materials carried by the truck to the destination at any cost. Therefore, INSEC Nepalganj and other stakeholders sent the truck again to Dhangadhi, with INSEC representatives in the truck this time. On the way, the Maoists interrogated about the truck and the materials it carried. However, later, after being convinced by the reply of the INSEC representative, they allowed the truck to go ahead. Similarly, frequent inquiries and checking were carried out by the security forces on the way.

Impression

INSEC, which has been working for human rights and

social justice, had collaborated in accomplishing the immunization campaign by taking immunization as the right of the child. Working for the nationwide immunization at a time when armed conflict was at its climax was not an easy task. However, INSEC accomplished it jointly with other organizations. In the course of the campaign, INSEC had forged contact with the Maoists ranging from central to local level and had urged them not to hinder the immunization campaign. Similarly, it had appealed security forces to cooperate in the campaign. INSEC central, regional and district teams worked collaboratively, coordinated effectively and involved in propagation intensively. Its works had created a situation in which the health personnel involved in the campaign were able to work being assured of their security. INSEC had worked wholeheartedly for the campaign with the belief that children should not be deprived from their health rights even at the difficult political situation of the country.

INSEC's social mobilization policy had played important role in making the immunization campaign a success. Under the policy, grassroots people were informed about the importance of immunization and its schedule through mobilization of media and human rights defenders. INSEC believes that the campaign achieved cent per cent success.

Based on the experiences of the immunization campaign, INSEC has even published a book titled "An Untold Story".

(The writer is Senior Officer at INSEC)



INSEC and Women Rights Movement in Nepal

Initially, INSEC had worked on right to life and right to equal pay for the same work. Over time, it also started to work for the rights of the oppressed people and the laborers with due attention to dignity of life. INSEC was established at a time when basic rights such as rights to expression and assembly and establishing organizations were not allowed. People were severely oppressed by the Panchayati regime at that time. The founders of INSEC were trying their best to garner national and international solidarity against the violation and abuses of human rights taking place in the country. Following the restoration of democracy in 1990, a relaxed situation was created for the establishment of various social organizations and people were able to work fearlessly.

The leading human rights activists of Nepal Late Prakash Kaphle and the former Commissioner of the National Human Rights Commission of Nepal and founder Chairperson of INSEC Sushil Pyakurel have mainly contributed to the formation of INSEC and also to the achievement made by the organization so far. Women too had contributed to the formation of INSEC. Santosh Pyakurel had role in its establishment. Similarly, Kabita Aryal and Sisham Mishra are the INSEC activists who worked for INSEC as volunteers during its beginning years.

INSEC expanded its scope

following the restoration of democracy in 1990. As most of the areas of Nepal lie in rural setting, INSEC reached rural areas with the firm determination that people living in the areas have to be sensitized on human rights issues. Its activists spread awareness on the equality of human and human dignity there. Similarly, it raised awareness on election system, on choosing the right candidate while casting vote and the importance of participating in elections. These works, which are believed to be very important even today, were accomplished by targeting the general election of 1991.

Some Works of INSEC on Women's Rights

1. Establishment of Women Section

INSEC had established a separate section at its central office in 2049. The section was meant to run program on women. INSEC, which had been encouraging oppressed, unjustly dealt and discriminated women for their rights, had established the section by acknowledging its responsibility to work for socially discriminated women.

It was since that very year that INSEC started to raise voice on the social problems related with women, launched campaigns on increasing the number of women at policy making level and also on sensitizing the elected women representative. Similarly, the organization launched various discussions and advocacy campaigns in order to sensitize

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people that women's problems are social problems. Likewise, it also conducted surveys on the social situation of women besides launching programs as to encouraging the appreciable works accomplished by women.

2. Oppressed Women's Meet 1991

As the first program on women, INSEC organized a meet of women, which was attended by women from various walks of life. The assembly was joined by women from Jhapa to Jumla districts. The women working at carpet and cement factories, victimized by domestic violence, *Badi*, *Deuki* and *Jari* traditions and the widows of Martyrs, among others, were brought together to acquaint them about the social, cultural and familial violence faced by women.

Real victims were selected by reaching their homes before inviting them to participate in the program, which was a great success in terms of publicizing victim women's problems and drawing attention of the government toward the former's problems. It was through this very program that too many types of problems being faced by women such as social discriminations, domestic violence, political oppression, exploitation at work were highlighted through media. The program was also able to draw the attention of the non-government and international non-government organizations established for the cause of women's rights and assistance.

3. Politics-Victimised Women's Meet 1995

January 31-February 3, 1995, INSEC had organized a gathering of the women victimized by politics. The gathering, which was organized in the Dhankuta

district, was attended by a total of 1 hundred and 11 women. The women who had faced problems due to their involvement in politics, tortured by family and husband for involving in politics and the mothers and wives of those who had lost their life or were subjected to enforced disappearances during democratic movements were the participants. Of the total participants, 26 women were from the martyrs' families, four were from the families of the disappeared people and 20 participants were the women actively involved in politics. The meet had appealed the concerned to find out the families of martyrs' families immediately and provide them due respect. Similarly, it had also urged the government to provide their family members with employment, to clearly define the term "Martyr" and immediately find out the whereabouts of those subjected to enforced disappearances during mass movements.

4. National Conference of Women 1996 and the Pasang Lhamu Resolution

In April 1996, National Conference of Women was held as attended by more than 2 hundred and 50 women. The meeting had passed "Pasang Lhamu Resolution" besides fixing the action based strategies of INSEC's program on women. The women from martyr's and disappeared people's families, the women actively engaged in politics and those women who were achieving success in their professional life had participated in the program. Women from 62 districts had showed up in the program. Acknowledging the fact that women's movement is a part of social and national movement and that achieving

rights by women is not curtailing the rights being enjoyed by men, a resolutions titled Pasang Lhamu Resolution was passed, which had underscored the need of a national campaign against educational backwardness of women. Similarly, the resolution had laid emphasis on eliminating the social mal-practices that were standing as a hindrance against women's political participation. Likewise it had passed an action plan for launching a national campaign on national level social sensitization. Another action plan was also passed on launching activities for increasing interest of women in politics. Present development in women's participation in various sectors can be attributed to the resolution, which had aimed at increasing women's participation. Therefore, the present provision of 33 per cent women's participation in every field can be attributed to the resolution.

The resolution had raised voice on:

- the management of respectful livelihood of the martyr's families by the state
- amendment of the constitutional and legal provisions that are unequal by gender perspective
- ensuring at least women's 25 per cent compulsory representation ranging from local bodies so as to increase women's participation in politics and consolidate democracy
- ensuring at least 25 per cent women were nominated and elected in the National Assembly.
- ensuring at least 25 per cent women's participation in all level of all political parties
- having provision of a separate and secret hearing opportunity

for the women and establishing women's court

- ensuring a constitutional provision of a sovereign, powerful and independent women's commission and
- ensuring that women working in the government and non-government fields too receive obsequies leave on a par with the males.

The Pasang Lhamu Resolution had fixed the plan of action of INSEC clearly. The resolution was a clear perspective of INSEC on women's rights. This had publicized the organization's view on women and their rights. Most of the issues raised by the resolution have been materialized over time by now. 33 per cent reservation has been provisioned for women and National Women's Commission has been established.

5.Meets on Various Sectors and Issues

INSEC had been organizing various meets and workshops on various issues on different occasions. The issues of discriminations and oppressions against women, women empowerment, rights of women on parental properties, the trafficking in girls and women, rape, domestic violence, social mal-practices and the discriminatory laws were some of the issues of the interactions and workshops that were organized at regional level. These programs were highly successful in bringing the women from different walks of life together in their corresponding regions for conceptual clarity on women's issues. Similarly, the programs were important for women from the point of view of enhancing their professional capacities and increasing linkage

with the women working in the field of human rights and women's rights. These meets were focused on holding interactions with the concerned stakeholders on eliminating violence against women.

6. National Meet of the Women Representatives 2005

INSEC has been organizing various meets in order to enhance the capacities of the leading women of all sectors. Following the ordinance on local bodies of 1997, almost 40 thousand women were directly involved at local level after being elected. With this involvement of women at the local bodies, INSEC had organized a national meet of women representatives in 1998. The program, which was attended by a total of 150 elected women representatives from across the country, had played important role on clarifying the importance and role of elected women representatives and had helped a lot in advancing women's participation strongly.

7. National Workshop on Increasing the Role of Elected Women Representatives 2001

INSEC had organized a national level workshop on increasing the role of elected women representatives on March 28-29, 2001. The workshop, which was meant for formulating strategies on enhancing the role and capacity of elected women representatives, had passed the strategies to be adopted by the women at familial, social, regional and national level. The participants of the workshop had demanded 30 per cent compulsory and meaningful participation of women

be ensured. Similarly, the workshop had urged all the concerned stakeholders towards increasing qualitative participation of women.

8. Program on Sensitizing Women Representatives

INSEC, which had been raising voice for the increment of women participation at local level through the Pasang Lhamu Resolution, was really encouraged by the provisions to have at least 20 per cent women representation. Following the election, a total of 35 thousand 4 hundred and 45 women at Ward Committee, 3 thousand 9 hundred and 12 at Village Development Committee and 1 hundred and 50 women at District Development Committee Council were elected¹. INSEC had realized that those women elected unprecedentedly had to be sensitized on various issues. Accordingly, the elected women from a total of 11 VDCs of 11 model districts were selected and trained. The representatives were trained on leadership development, capacity enhancement, among other aspects. Later on, this program was implemented at all 104 VDCs of the Morang and Sunsari districts. The program was believed to have succeeded in enhancing capacity of the elected representatives.

9. Programs on People's Advocacy and Consolidation of Government Accountability

INSEC had implemented people's advocacy program in the Siraha, Saptari, Dhanusha and Sarlahi districts between 2001 and 2003. The program had aimed at promoting people's advocacy for good governance. Women groups were sensitized in order to facilitate them in the matter of demanding

1. CEDAW Status Review, 2000, FWLD)

for facilities from the local government bodies, which have direct connection and concerns with people. Under the program, a total of 15 women's groups, each in the aforementioned four districts, were formed as model groups and mobilized. The groups had played their roles by looking into the activities of the groups working for the rights of women. They had also made the government alert on having people's problems and demands solved responsibly.

It was through this very program that the participating women had initiated developmental program in their villages. The groups of women formed under this program were also engaged in construction of roads, anti-alcohol and anti-dowry campaign for sensitizing women for the latter's rights.

10. Women's Leadership Development Program

With the aim to empowering women for the establishment of equality based society, INSEC had launched a three-year program on women's leadership development in 2003. The program, which covered five districts viz. Sunsari, Nuwakot, Sindhupalchok, Gorkha and Kaski, was launched by keeping the urgency of ensuring political leadership and participation of women in all sectors of social life into mind.

11. Peace Campaign

INSEC had implemented peace campaign in various districts of the Far-Western and Mid-Western Regions from 2003 to 2009. The campaign had aimed at organizing conflict-affected women for minimizing the

ongoing conflict in the country. The women affected by conflict and harmed by both the warring sides were organized into groups and provided with psychosocial counseling besides helping them for income generation. The groups had tried themselves to be relieved from the pains inflicted on them by armed conflict, had exchanged their problems so as to minimize and manage their retaliatory feelings and to live a normal life.

12. Women's Voice for Peace

Given that armed conflict started in the country in 1996 and that dialogues for peace were going on following the cease fire declared on January 29, 2003, INSEC realized that it was necessary to collect people's concerns for peace and inform about the issues to the dialoguing parties. Accordingly, INSEC initiated program on people's peace concerns in 49 districts across the country. It was under this very program that interactions and public hearings were conducted at the districts on the effects of armed conflict on women. The interactions and hearings were organized as attended by the women victimized by armed conflict. The suggestions received from the interactions were again discussed at national level interaction organized for the representatives of human rights organizations on March 13, 2003. The program had identified the major effects of armed conflict on women and the role of women for permanent peace. A report was prepared based on the program and submitted to Narayan Singh Pun, the then Minister for Physical Planning. He was facilitating peace talks on behalf of the then government at that time.

13. Solidarity for the Common Issues of Women

Weak position of women ultimately weakens society. Women are compelled to live as the second class people under patriarchy. Efforts of an individual or an organization do not suffice regarding to sensitizing women and society at large on such the issues. Collective efforts and initiations of the like-minded organizations are essential. Keeping this fact into consideration, INSEC has been working as one of the collaborators in these efforts.

INSEC has been working as a member of Alliance against Trafficking in Women and Children in Nepal (AATWIN) since the latter's establishment in 1997. From 2003 and 2004, INSEC was the coordinator of the group and is the treasurer of the organization at present. Similarly, INSEC has been working as an executive committee member of Beyond Beijing Committee since 2001. It has also been organized with Women Security Pressure Group to work together. Likewise, the organization has been actively engaged in the campaigns launched on violence against women, in implementing the Beijing Declaration in the Nepalese context and in many other issues. INSEC is a core committee member of *SHANTIMALIKA*, a network of human rights organizations and the organizations working for women's rights in Nepal.

14. Construction of Woman-Martyrs Memorial Park

As Nepali society is based on patriarchy, not to have a system of taking the important works accomplished by women into account is not unusual. Nepalese women have been taking part

directly or indirectly for the political changes in the country for long. However, no efforts have been made towards recording and publically displaying the contrubutions made by women to the country. Taking this reality into mind, INSEC has initiated an appreciable work. It has constructed Woman-Martyrs Memorial Park, in which the statues of the women contributing to the democratic movement and change in the country are placed. INSEC has constructed such the park at Jadukuha in the Dhanusha district in memory of Janaki Devi, Sonawati Devi and Muneshwori Devi who were shot dead during democratic movement of 1990. Also, the park area is protected.

15. Treaty Monitoring

INSEC is also engaged in monitoring the situation of human rights in Nepal based on the international treaties to which it is a party. It has been raising voice on the obligations to be fulfilled by the state as arising from those treaties. The organization has been working, in collaboration with other organizations, on the treaties related with women, the provisions included in the treaties and their implementation status.

16. Women's Issues through Nepal Human Rights Yearbook and INSECOnline

Nepal Human Rights Yearbook annually published by INSEC has been reflecting the situation of women's rights through a separate chapter on women's rights included in the book. Similarly, the yearbooks also provide with data on the violations and abuses of women and girl's rights. The yearbooks of 2011 and 2012 had included chapters on rape

and domestic violence respectively so as to draw the attention of the concerned stakeholders. Similarly, INSECOnline, which was established as a news portal on human rights of Nepal, has been disseminating the rights issues of women with due emphasis.

17. INSEC's Publication on Women's Issues

INSEC has published a number of books on women. With the aim to disseminating human rights issues down to grassroots people, INSEC has published *MANABADHIKAR SACHETANAMALA* (book on sensitizing ordinary people about human rights), *RAJNITIK MAHILA PARICHAYA* (Introduction to the women of Nepal involved in politics). There are several other books on women published by INSEC. These books have opened up avenues for research and studies.

18. Documentation of Publications on Women Rights

INSEC's library, which archives human rights related books and documents, has been collecting various reading and audio-video materials published and prepared on women's rights. These materials are either prepared and published by INSEC or collected from various sources. They include books, reports, brochures and pamphlets as well as online issues and digital materials.

Karagar bhitra Karagar (Prison within a Prison) is a research report on women. Similarly, *Sushanka Lagi Mahila Sababaghita* (Women's Participation for Good-Governance) is another book on women's participation in social life. The book is quite comprehensible and simple in terms of grasping

issues on good governance and women's participation. The book titled *Janawakalat Talim Nirdeshika* (Training Manual on People's Advocacy) has been proved to have been quite helpful for conducting training on the concerned issues. Similarly, INSEC has published various reports on the issues such as women's rights as human rights, the report of the national meet of the elected women representatives and the report of the meet of the oppressed women. These books also illustrate the issues of women in Nepal. Similarly, INSEC has been spreading awareness on women's issues through poster and pamphlets.

19. Human Rights Award

INSEC had established Prakash Human Rights Award in 1994 in memory of Late Prakash Kaphle who was with unflinching belief that protection and development of human rights is possible only through sensitized awakening of people. Three women activists viz. Sonam Chhanjung from Mugu, Ramrati Devi Ram from Siraha and Basanti Devi Jha from Mahottari have been felicitated with the award thus far.

20. Research and Studies

INSEC has been annually publishing reports on rape based on the information and data available on INSECOnline. This attempt is intended to draw attention of the concerned toward formulating a reliable mechanism relating to punishing perpetrators. Similarly, the organization had conducted a study as to find out consistency of the Domestic Violence Act 2066 enacted by the government with human rights and criminal laws. The study was done with the help of National Judicial Academy

by keeping the large number of women victimized by domestic violence into consideration.

21. Campaigns

INSEC has been launching various campaigns on various issues. The campaigns on equal wage for male and female for the same job, the campaign against dowry and many other campaigns related with rights of women are to name some. The organization had also pressured the concerned to annul the laws in the country that are discriminatory and unequal in terms of women's perspectives. Similarly, it has been launching campaigns in order to put pressure on the government to properly implement the international treaties that protect the rights of women and are signed by Nepal.

22. Data Collection

INSEC has also been

collecting data on the major incidents of violation and abuses of women's rights. This attempt has been helpful to draw attention of the concerned and to put pressure on them towards punishing perpetrators. The incidents of torture committed against women by alleging them to have been a so called witch, rape and similar other incidents are included in the database. These data have also been analyzed and made public occasionally.

Conclusion

INSEC had been raising women's issues since its inception. Those issues raised by INSEC at that time have become the mission of many organizations of Nepal working on women's issues now. INSEC's campaigns and programs launched on women's issues have become highly successful. The increment of women at the policy

making level and the amendment of unequal and discriminatory laws on citizenship and parental property can be the examples of success in this connection. However, the state as well as other concerned organizations has not paid proper attention towards ensuring meaningful participation of women. Similarly, the incidents of violence against women have not abated and discriminatory and unequal laws have not been amended completely. Given the situation, INSEC has to launch campaigns on women's leadership development. Similarly, launching various awareness-creating programs and campaigns on minimizing the violence against women is a matter of urgency now.

(The writer is senior officer at INSEC)



Women Participants of People's Movement 2006



Contribution of INSEC Eastern Regional Office to Peace

Ending monarchy was not the only one agenda of the historical people's movement 2006. The movement had made the economic and social transformation of the country including the end of centralized state mechanism and establishment of inclusive state resonant. Moreover, permanent peace was the other prominent issue raised during the movement. People were highly optimistic that the movement would end the Maoists-waged armed conflict and the king-led military regime in the country. The massive participation of people ultimately made the movement a success. Following the success of the movement CPA was signed, which added to the hope that the country would move ahead towards permanent peace.

The election for the CA even optimized the hope among people that peace process and the facets of political changes would be institutionalized gradually. However, peace process is facing multifarious challenges now. Given that the CA has expired without providing with new constitution to the people, the signatories of the CPA themselves have been raising questions on the utility and relevance of the CPA. The term of the CA was extended time and again with the aim to write new.

Although peace process is a credible concept, it has not been able to encompass many facets of the transitional justice system. Commissions on the Truth and Reconciliation and

on the Disappearances, among others, could not be formed. So, it cannot be assumed that permanent peace will be materialized. Political parties and even the stakeholders of the coalition government are full of differences on the fundamental issues of peace process. So, it is not wrong to state that almost nothing has been achieved towards permanent peace so far.

Transition in the country is increasing due to these uncertainties. This has provided fertile ground to impunity and the state has failed to provide peace and security to the people. Be that through politicization of crimes or criminalization of politics, state has been affected badly so much so that even the police administration seems almost helpless. The proponents of the caste-based state restructuring have been threatening of using weapons for "ensuring" ethnicity-based state mechanism. Similarly, the armed groups in the Tarai region have continued killings, abduction and plunder. A group is attempting its best and getting organized against republicanism, federalism and secularism with the aim to result in anarchy. Youth wings of various political parties are still clashing violently. They have continued such the acts for government and non-government resources. The state and political parties are not serious towards investigating and prosecuting the incidents of serious crimes and towards ending prevalent impunity.

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Therefore, the flourishing impunity and increasing uncertainty of the ongoing peace process have indicated at the uncertain future of Nepal. However, it is not wise to be totally pessimistic. Provided that political stakeholders pay due attention towards the deteriorating situation of the country sensitively, situation can be changed positively. For this to happen, civil society groups have to come to the front again actively. People were and are demanding for the role of civil society at this difficult point of time.

INSEC did play role even during this difficult transitional period. INSEC Eastern Regional Office organized various mass gathering and peace rallies in Biratnagar in the Morang district, Inaruwa in Sunsari, Rajbiraj in Saptari, in Lahan in the Siraha districts between last week of September and first week of October in 2007. The programs were attended by thousands of people and prominent artists and comedians had presented their arts for peace. The rallies and assemblies were attended and addressed by central level prominent human rights activists and the leaders of the professional groups. They had urged people to be united for sustainable peace. These programs were noteworthy. People in general in the Eastern region often talk of and remember these programs even today.

Similarly, another comprehensive program was organized in Biratnagar on challenges and resolution of peace process and timely constitution writing as initiated and led by INSEC's Eastern Regional office on January 8, 2010. The program had aimed at putting pressure on the concerned stakeholders and bringing them together for ending

impunity and forging consensus among political parties on the promotion of human rights. The program was attended by the senior most leaders of political parties and the members of civil society such as the CPN-Maoist chief Pushpa Kamal Dahal (Prachanda), CPN-UML Chairperson Jhala Nath Khanal, vice-president of Nepali Congress Ram Chandra Paudel; Madhesi Janadhikar Forum Chief Upendra Yadav. Similarly, human rights leaders Daman Nath Dhungana, Subodh Raj Pyakurel Sapana Pradhan Malla, Durga Sob, and Krishna Pahadi, among others, were also present in the program.

In the program, local leaders and the leading personalities of professional groups had discussed the increasing interest of the leaders in power-politics and doubted that constitution could be written within the given time. Human rights leaders had also doubted that constitution could be written in time. They criticized leadership for not abiding by the constitution writing schedule and for not producing full draft of the new constitution. They also pointed out increasing instability as the main cause of the uncertainty appeared before the country in regard to constitution writing. They had urged the leadership to adopt ways for making consensus and collaboration among the political parties possible. Following the program, the senior most leaders of the political parties had signed on a three-point commitment paper for constitution writing.

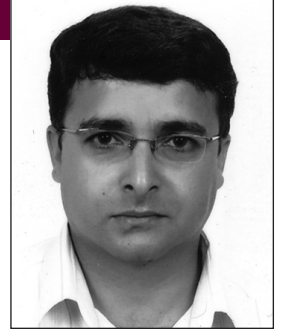
Regrettably, constitution could not be written despite their commitment. The term of the CA was extended by one year. INSEC again organized another program in Biratnagar on March 11, 2012 with the aim to exert pressure for constitution writing. Dr. Baburam

Bhattarai of the UCPN-Maoist party, KP Oli of CPN-UML, Dr. Ram Sharan Mahat of Nepali Congress, Bijaya Kumar Gachhadar of the Madhesi Janadhikar Forum, social worker and chairperson of Maiti Nepal -Anuradha Koirala and human rights leader Subodh Raj Pyakurel, among others, had participated in the program.

Following the election for the Constituent Assembly, leaders had committed to come up with the new constitution as per the schedule, which they had reached agreement on. The term of the CA was extended by one year due to its failure to complete its mandate within the given time. In this context, it was necessary to organize such the program at least in order to sensitize the leaders relating to writing constitution within the extended tenure of the CA. However, constitution could not be written even within the extended period. As a result people have feared possible gloomy future of Nepal. As it has become almost a trend that Nepali leaders converge on the issues and reach decision at the last possible moment, we still have space to be optimistic that political parties will mend the already bad situation before it turns worse.

Keeping the words expressed by them before citizenry is the supreme duty of the leaders. Leaders have to be able to converge on the crucial issues despite their difference over many issues. The leaders are required to be committed to revive the sense of collective feeling now for the purpose of taking peace process to positive conclusion. Failing to do so, of course, will lead Nepal into difficulty.

(The writer is Eastern Regional Coordinator of INSEC)



INSEC's Campaign against Racial and Caste-Based Discriminations

INSEC, since its establishment has launched campaigns against racial and caste based discriminations with high priority. The campaigns launched by INSEC against the caste based discrimination that exists in the pretext of so called high and low caste-birth have proliferated nationwide by many other organizations. Therefore, there are a number of organizations to raise voice for Dalits now. However, as Dalits still lack access to and presence at the policy making level, caste based discrimination continues in Nepal even today. A large section of people has not been able to enter into Nepal's socio-political main stream due to being tagged as Dalits.

Racial discrimination is illegal in Nepal. However, such the practice exists here due to orthodox tradition, religion, culture etc. Thousands of people have been victimized by such the inhumane practice. Nepal's national laws and the international legal instruments signed by Nepal have already illegalized racial discriminations. The governments in Nepal formed following the establishment of democracy have declared caste based discriminations as illegal. There lacks historical proofs on when the practice started exactly. This discriminatory practice has afflicted thousands of people badly. Although such the practice is decreasing over

time, the degree of its effects on Dalits is remaining unchanged. This practice has devalued humanity.

INSEC, through workshops, awareness classes, assemblies and various publications, has been spreading awareness against caste discrimination since its establishment. Similarly, it has done research and studies on the issue besides attempting other ways for eradicating it. INSEC's efforts have continued even today. INSEC has been raising the issues of Dalits and their rights violation through Human Rights Yearbooks since 1992. The issue has been raised as one of the most important facets of human rights violations in the country.

Similarly, a chapter highlighting the racial and caste based discrimination was published in the Human Rights Yearbook in 1993. The chapter had vividly discussed the prevalence of caste discrimination and its negative impacts. The chapter was believed to have increased awareness on the issue. As actively participated by of oppressed groups, INSEC had conducted a survey in 2050 BS. It was based on the observation and the data collected during the survey that the chapter included in the Yearbook 1993 was developed.

INSEC was actively engaged in the anti-untouchability programs

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launched by *Utpedit Jatiya Mukti Samaj*. INSEC cooperated the Dalits-led programs such as dalits' entry into temples. It had helped the Dalits for their entry especially into the Manakamana temple in the Gorkha district and in the movement of the Dalit dairy farmers at Udhiyachaur. Similarly, six-month long human rights and sensitization programs were conducted targeting Dalit communities in 15 districts in 2054 BS. The programs were given continuity in 1055 as well. But, out of the 10 districts having majority of Dalits, only five districts were chosen this time. Special programs were implemented in the districts such as Saptari, Siraha and Udayapur, in which the number of so called Dom caste is very high.

INSEC had organized public feasts in which so called high caste and low caste people dined food by food sitting together and had raised voice against exclusion of Dalits in the Nepalese society. These efforts had helped in surfacing the issues of Dalits. INSEC had also protested the blockade imposed against Dalits in the Siraha district by so called high caste people for not scavenging carcasses. It also expressed its solidarity with the protest programs initiated by Dalits. Various organizations have been organizing public feasts even today in the hilly districts such as Myagdi, Parbat, Sankhuwasabha, among others. These feasts are generally attended by the Chief District Officers, the chiefs of the district level government offices and political parties in the districts, professors, teachers, business persons, the representatives of NGOs and the so called high caste people. The rationale of co-feasting conceptualized by INSEC has remained equally meaningful even today.

Dalit activist Biswendra Paswan, who was actively involved in the Dalit movement locally, was feted with Prakash Human Rights Awards. Paswan, who had been leading the

Dalit movement being based in Lahan in the Eastern Development region, was given the Prakash Human Rights Award 2056. He is former member of the Constituent Assembly. Similarly, Ramrati Devi Ram from Siraha district and representing the Dalit community was given Prakash Human Rights Award 2063. She was feted with the award for her active role in raising voice against racial discrimination and violence against women. She is also a former member of the Constituent Assembly.

For working on Dalits' issues, INSEC had formed a separate department at its office. A number of organizations are working for Dalits now. Dalit commission is also already in place. Therefore, rather than working in isolation for the Dalits, INSEC has been working on their issues jointly with other organizations now-a-days. INSEC has ensured compulsory and meaningful presence of Dalits at its various programs and organizational structures. Also, it has been giving first priority to Dalits while recruiting its staff members.

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Poster Published by INSEC on Increasing Awareness Against Caste Discrimination



Prakash Human Rights Award and Its Recipients

The then General Secretary of INSEC Late Prakash Kaphle was also a founder General Secretary of *MASAM*. It was based on his experience while working at *MASAM* that he had envisioned another organization. Accordingly, INSEC was established for systematically documenting the incidents of human rights violations. However, unfortunately, he passed away several years after the inception of INSEC. He was killed in a Thai aircraft crash on July 31, 1992. He was with the unflinching belief that human rights protection and development could be possible only through sensitization of people and their organized voice. Nepal Human Rights Yearbook has been continuously published since 1992 as per his line of thought.

INSEC, in 1994 had established "Prakash Human Rights Award" after Prakash Kaphle's name. The award, which contains worth NPR 50 thousand, letter of appreciation and a token having the logo of INSEC, is given away every year to an individual contributing to human rights and social justice in Nepal. A total of 17 individuals have been feted with the award so far.

Personalities Feted with Prakash Human Rights Award

Prakash Human Rights Award 2051 was given to Binaya Kumar Kasajoo of Palpa district for his contribution in spreading human rights awareness at rural areas through journalism. Mr. Kasajoo, who has special expertise in development journalism and is actively engaged in community communication aspect, is the

first person to bag this award. Currently, he is the chief commissioner of the National Information Commission.

Prakash Human Rights Award 2052 was bagged by Gajendra Bahadur Basnet, a social activist from Birganj for his contribution to free health checkup of poor people. Rishi Ram Tharu is the third personality to receive this award. A permanent resident of the Tribhuvan Municipality, Mr Tharu has been struggling for the emancipation of the Kamaiya tradition for more than half a century. He was even sent to jail for raising voice for the rights and freedom of the Kamaiya people. Similarly, Daya Bir Singh Kansakar, the founder of *Paropakar Sanstha* and also one of the founding members of Nepal Red Cross Society was provided with the Prakash Human Rights Award 2054. Mr Kansakar was also the first blood donor of Nepal. He dedicated his whole life to social works especially in the field of health, education, orphanage, ambulance service, among others. He is perceived as the leading and inspirational personality in these fields.

Ramananda Prasad Singh, who was one of drafters of the Constitution of Nepal 1990, received Prakash Human Rights Award 2055. Mr Singh is a founder member of various human rights organizations in the country. Similarly, he has written the books titled "Criminal Justice System of Nepal, "White Collar Crime of Nepal and Prevention of White Collar Crime", among other books. Dalit activist Biswendra Paswan, who was actively involved in the Dalit movement locally, was feted with Prakash Human Rights Award 2056.

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He is the former member of the Constituent Assembly. Likewise, Sonam Chhejung Lama of Mugu district received Prakash Human Rights Award 2057. She was actively engaged against social ill-practices, wrong traditions and mismanagement. She had started her social activism by raising voice against social biasedness faced by the widows. Basanti Devi Jha is another woman who received Prakash Human Rights Award 2058. Basanti Devi was active for women's rights and their voting rights. She is also the former member of the Constituent Assembly.

Narayan Prasad Sharma bagged Prakash Human Rights Award 2059. Mr. Sharma has been contributing remarkably to freedom of expression, social justice and equality through journalism and social organization, even during difficult periods, for three decades. He was the one to start publication of *Yugbodh* – a monthly magazine in the Dang district for social movement and the magazine was started to be published as daily newspaper with the changed name- *Naya Yugbodh*. Although he was born to a Brahmin family, he has raised voice against racial and caste based discrimination some 50 years ago. He had also worked as a priest for a Dalit family on one occasion for which he had to face exclusion from his so called high caste Brahmin community.

Prakash Human Rights Award 2060 was given to Tek Nath Baral, an active human rights defender from the Kaski district. Mr Baral is still active in his field with the unflinching belief in human rights and social justice. He is especially focused on justice, equality and prosperity of citizenry. Ram Bahadur Chand who is fighting for press freedom in the Baitadi district in the Far-Western region was the next

personality to bag Prakash Human Rights Award 2061. Mr. Chand is trying his best in order to open up avenues to social justice by taking press freedom as the key to all other rights. He is with the view that peace is impossible in the absence of social justice and he takes dialogic culture for democracy and press freedom for such the culture as the indispensable elements. Shiva Bahadur Karki is Biratnagar based another personality who has been fighting for the rights of Nepali people for four decades through journalism. He was given Prakash Human Rights Award 2062. He had contributed a lot to the people's movement of 1980, 1990 and 2006 for democracy.

Ramrati Devi Ram bagged Prakash Human Rights Award 2063. She was active in the Siraha district for the Dalit women's rights. She views that nothing is more inhumane than enduring perpetual oppression of the so called high caste people. She has been raising voice against such the oppression existing in society. She has been threatened and put pressure by so called high caste people for raising voice against caste based oppression. However, she has been working actively disregarding such the pressure and threats. She is the former member of the Constituent Assembly. Dukhuwa Tharu, a permanent resident of Dhodhari VDC in the Bardiya district and leading personality of the Kamaiya movement received Prakash Human Rights Award 2064. Mr. Tharu is well-known in the district as the leading social worker of the Tharu community. Although he himself is a Kamaiya person, he has been leading the ex-kamaiya people in the district.

Uttam Sanjel received Prakash Human Rights Award 2065. Mr Sanjel is involved in the field of education with the belief that education gained by

new generation is the base for the development of the country. He has established Samata Sikshya Niketan at Jorparti in Kathamandu with the aim to cater quality education to the children of poor people for low fees. His school has been already branched out in more than 20 districts and 50 thousand students have benefitted from his scheme so far. His school system has been established as an educational campaign and he has been well-known as a unique example of ensuring rights to education from the non-government side.

The sixteenth personality to bag Prakash Human Rights Award is Dr. Arun Budha from the Team Hospital in the Dadheldhura district. He received Prakash Human Rights Award 2066 for his contribution to health issues in the Far Western Region as a medical doctor through the hospital. He has also been contributing to the basic health rights of the people in the far western region by organizing free health camps occasionally. Ghanashyam Acharya, human rights defender based in Rolpa district, was feted with Prakash Human Rights Award 2067 for his remarkable contribution to human rights and civil movement in his district from the beginning of the inception of INSEC and even during the armed conflict in the country.

It is hoped that the life, perspectives and experiences of the Prakash Human Rights Award recipients will inspire, encourage to and build up confidence among the human rights defenders working at various level and regions. Continuity of this award established in memory of late Prakash Kaphle will keep Late Kaphle eternally memorable. Therefore, INSEC has already established a permanent fund for giving continuity to the award.

(The writer is Officer at INSEC)



INSEC's Publications and Library

INSEC has been accomplishing various works on human rights and social justice since its establishment. It has been actively engaged on the protection and promotion of human rights relentlessly. With the aim to make its works further effective and also to pressurize policy makers, it has been utilizing different mediums of communication for disseminating these issues among the people ranging from the grassroots level up to the educated ones.

INSEC has been airing Human Rights Education Radio Program via Radio Nepal since 1995. This is the first radio program on human rights in the history of Nepal. Since 2004, INSEC has been disseminating news and other related materials on human rights through an online news portal- INSEConline, both in Nepali and English languages. Similarly, the organization has been preparing various TV documentaries and music videos on human rights as per the needs and disseminating them through different TV channels. Likewise, it has been preparing CDs of human rights related songs, which are aired by many FM radios in the country.

Apart from these electronic materials, INSEC has been specially utilizing publications. As print media is the most important and reliable one, the organization has utilized it most. However, all types of media have

been really important for INSEC in disseminating its views and information on human rights.

It has been publishing brochures, pamphlets, postcards, research reports, books and booklets on human rights in Nepali, English and even in various dialects of Nepal. INSEC's publications can be categorized into two - as regular and other.

Regular Publications

Based on the frequency of their publication, there are four types of regular publication of INSEC. They are published monthly, bimonthly, quarterly and annually.

Other Publications

Other publications of INSEC are more than the number of regular publications. It seems that INSEC has been publishing nine books annually on average. It had published a total of 16 books in 2054 BS. This is the highest number ever published in a year. These publications or their number vary as per the situation of the country. However, INSEC normally publishes books following the completion of studies on particular issues or on the programs implemented by it. It has published books and booklets on diverse issues such as democracy, election, bonded labor, women, children, racial discriminations, people's movements, peace, constituent assembly, among

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Regular Publications					
S.N	Title	Frequency of Publication	Language	Started to be Published	Present Situation of publication
01	Nepal Human Rights Yearbook	Annually	Nepali and English	1992	On-going
02	PRACHI	Bi-Monthly	Nepali	2049 BS	On-going
03	INFORMAL(it was published as INSEC Bulletin until 1995)	Quarterly	English	1992	On-going
04	INSEC Abhiyan	Monthly	Nepali	2053 BS	It has been published on a quarterly basis these days.
05	Manabadhikar Sthitisuchak	Quarterly	Nepali	2051 BS	On-going
06	Human Rights Situation Report	Quarterly	English	1994	On-going
07	INSEC Annual Report	Annually	English	1993	On-going

others.

Similarly, international treaties on human rights and humanitarian laws such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, various treaties and covenants on human rights, Geneva Conventions, Guidelines on the international displacement are translated from English into Nepali language. This has ensured easy access of people to the international documents.

INSEC Publications (Except the Regular Ones)	
Year(BS)	Number
2047	4
2048	13
2049	9
2050	7
2051	6
2052	8
2053	9
2054	16
2055	8
2056	10
2057	10
2058	7
2059	10
2060	10
2061	5
2062	10
2063	10
2064	14
2065	9
2066	3
2067	8
2068	6
Total	191

INSEC has also been propagating its publications. The entire concerned stakeholders are invited publically before releasing Human Rights Yearbook. The books published by INSEC are even sold for discounted price on the occasion. The organization also takes part in the book expos for the propagation of its books. Discounts are applied even during such the expos however, many of the INSEC publications are provided for free.

INSEC has converted all its books into the electronic version. Does not matter how old one publication is, INSEC promptly provides with the electronic version to those who want to get it. It delivers its publications itself to the target groups. The other individuals, who want to study our publications, are always welcome to our central library where they can read books of their choice for free. INSEC has libraries at its all five regional offices. There too one can study for free.

INSEC's library was established with the aim to collect books and materials on human rights in a managed way and to ensure access of the researchers, students and ordinary people to these books. The founders of

INSEC were of the view from the inception of INSEC that Nepal lacked books on human rights. INSEC library was established to meet this gap. The library is evolving over time. As human rights was at the center of establishing the library, INSEC's library is a special library in Nepal's context. Therefore, this library is the first special library of Nepal.

INSEC's library at its central office contains eight thousand and five hundred books, including its own publications. Besides this, it also contains various photos, videos and newspapers collection etc. Researchers, students, human rights activists, among others, visit the library regularly. The materials of the library such as photos and videos are demanded nationally and internationally. INSEC provides these materials free of cost. It charges no cost for the library use, except for photocopy and laser printing. Internet can be used for free. Hence, the organization has tried and will try its best through its publications and libraries for the protection and promotion of human rights in Nepal.

(The writer is Officer at INSEC)



Human Rights Movement in Nepal is Getting Divided

Sushil Pyakurel is founder Chairperson of INSEC and former commissioner of National Human Rights Commission, Nepal. He is one of the prominent personalities in Nepal who have introduced and propelled human rights movement in the country. He has even received international human rights award for his contribution to the movement. He talked in detail on a range of issues related with INSEC in particular and on the human rights movement of Nepal in general. Excerpts:

● **Could you please inform us about the context and background of INSEC's establishment?**

INSEC was established as per the need of the then time. Both Prakash Kaphle and I, who were the founders of INSEC, were also the founders of *MASAM*. Besides, we had founded another organization named *Prajatantrik Rastriya Ekata Manch*. One was meant for advancing human rights movement in the country and the other was for the political movement. Various friends were involved in those organizations. Badri Khatiwada, I and Prakash Kaphle were involved in both the organizations. *MASAM* had been demanding especially for the release of the prisoners of conscience at that time.

The broader political direction at that time was to end the then Panchayati autocratic rule and restore multi-party democratic polity. And, within the political direction, we were ideologically affiliated to the then CPN(ML), which was doing its activities in an underground way. It was necessary to encompass all the political parties other than Panchayati supporters for the purpose of comprehensive unity among the parties and also for consolidating people's movement. Those parallel organizations having their own objectives and distinct identities were formed. As heavy preparations were underway for the People's Movement 1990, we were in need of disseminating information nationally and internationally

on how human rights violations were taking place in the country. Therefore, it was necessary to go for political struggle by combining both - politics and human rights.

Accordingly, our friends from different political parties, especially those who were affiliated to left parties and were in need of camouflage of various social forums to continue their political mission wanted to be the members of *MASAM*. Political rights started to be discussed. However, it was quite necessary at that time to be clear about our kind of human rights definition and to know the situation of human rights in other sectors of Nepali society such as jail, disappearances etc.

Opposing the Panchayati rule and monarch was to be charged with high treason at that time. Criticizing the monarch was like committing public offence. Hence, those who were imprisoned under these offences were said to have been imprisoned under criminal case. Challenges were there before to debunk this and prove those cases to have been political, not criminal. It was required at that time to establish the fact that criticizing the king was not a crime and opposing the autocratic Panchayati regime was right of people. We were also required to manage and document these issues.

Our international friends had suggested us that it would be prudent to provide information to the international community through the legitimate

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institution of the time. Accordingly, we, Prakash Kaphle and I, among other confidants, discussed the need of forming a legitimate organization. The international community was not aware of our situation that forming and registering organizations was prohibited in Nepal. With the aim to disseminate the human rights situation of the country internationally, we registered an organization, disguised as a research team, titled "Informal Sector Research Center". It was not possible to register social organization at the District Administration office. Hence, the center was registered at the Department of Cottage and Small Industries as an organization to carry out studies on various social issues.

● *A cart pusher is seen pushing his cart in the INSEC logo. Does the logo have any thing to do with INSEC's works?*

Although the organization had an ulterior motive of documenting human rights situation of the country, it started to conduct studies on health and education situation of porters especially of the cart pushers of the Kathmandu valley. Therefore, we can still see an image of pushcart as the logo of INSEC. The logo was designed by Bishnu Rimal, the current President of GEFONT. Seemingly, it was a social organization, but the organization was supposed to record the incidents of human rights violation and the abuses and disappearances committed by the autocratic Panchayati regime. We used to provide information to the UN and other concerned international organizations as per need.

● *How challenging was it to work for human rights at that time?*

I cannot imagine even now how difficult the situation was at that time. The generations brought up after the liberal democratic set up especially following the political movement in 1990 and living in the republican era cannot imagine the difficulty. Those who lived some 20 years ago and experienced the regime

can explain the then situation, which is necessary to know by the present generation. Literally, we had to conceal our computers, physical assets and documents. The friends from the Netherlands Development Organization had helped us at that time. We did not need to bid/submit proposals at that time for monetary support. Some organizations would provide with computers, fax machines and some others would provide donations.

● *How did INSEC focus its work only on human rights later on?*

Following the success of People's Movement in 1990, it was realized that the organization had to be changed into a non-government organization. Accordingly, it was registered at the Kathmandu District Administration Office by slightly changing its name – Informal Sector Service Center. The word "research" was replaced with "service". The organization was established with the help of Badri Khatiwada, Birendra Keshari Pokhrel, Subodh Pyakurel, Santosh Pyakurel, Prakash Kaphle, among others. Now, we had an objective of turning the organization into an institutional one. We had thought of developing INSEC as a human rights organization having its network across the country.

Once I was appointed as a member of the NHRC, the then General Secretary of INSEC Dr. Shiva Sharma was made its officiating chairperson. Before this, Dr Rajesh Gautam was the General Secretary. He has been actively involving on human rights issues and contributing to INSEC. The executive committee of INSEC was and is broader. Many institutions and organizations came into existence following the political change of 1990. However, INSEC worked with the aim to take the human rights issues down to every village. The then General Secretary Late Prakash Kaphle used to reiterate that human rights movement would not succeed if it is not taken to every village and household. Later, he died in an aircraft crash July 31, 1992. We formed human rights groups in 25 districts in the first phase and had

them registered in their districts. Similarly, we provided support to the organizations besides providing affiliation with INSEC.

● *Could you please say something about the initial work experience of INSEC on human rights?*

By the time it was 1991, politics started to be gradually criminalized. It was an issue before us waiting for intervention. We had published informative and awareness-raising posters targeting the general election of 1991. The posters had intended to provide knowledge on the types of candidate running for election and also on which category of candidates to vote for. Prakash Kaphle had also taken lead on the observation of election. He was the general secretary of the election observation committee formed at that time.

After working on various issues, INSEC thought of working on economic, social and cultural field in collaboration with others in order to uncover the issues in the field. We had heard of the prevalence of Kamaiya system (bonded labor) in the areas such as Banke and Bardiya. Prakash Kaphle and I reached there in 1992 being informed that they are even sold and bought. We stayed there for 15 days studying the local society and villages. Later on, we conducted an intensive survey in three districts on their problems and then published a report. This made it public for the first time that Kamaiya was a practice involving bonded labors. Anti-Slavery International proceeded with the issue. Jointly with the organization, we conducted another study on the topic later. Then other organizations too started to work on it. We, now, started to work for the liberation of the Kamaiyas. In this way, INSEC moved ahead on the socio-economic and cultural issues as well.

We also started to publish human rights year book believing that it was necessary to document the rights situation in the country and data covering a period of a year on the issue should be made available. The very book has been established

not only in South Asia but also internationally as a book on human rights documentation. Generally, we don't find any yearbook containing the incidents, data and facts on human rights situation. The yearbook was started to be published since 1992. INSEC has given continuity to its publication.

● *As a pioneer human rights activist of Nepal, how would you compare the human rights movement now and then?*

The organization intends to expose the hidden issues with the help of other organizations rather than competing with them. There were very few human rights organizations in Nepal by the latter half of the 1980s. *MASAM*, *NEMADHISANGH* and *INSEC* were the organizations. We had helped in establishing at least one human rights organization in each district. Now, the situation is different. There are several organizations in every district now. Thousands of human rights activists are working there. However, so many issues related with human rights are remaining unaddressed primarily because human rights issues have resembled projects. We have been motivated by the misconception that we must receive foreign assistance to work for human rights whereas human rights is a movement of commitment, which goes on continuously. The issues on human rights keep on increasing over time relatively. The outlooks on the issues too get matured accordingly. The more a man becomes free, the more issues they raise on human rights. Therefore, human rights movement is a movement of commitment. Our country has been engulfed by impunity, and politics has been criminalized. Our society is on the verge of division. The issues such as how to consolidate integrity among people and how to make people committed to peace stands as a challenge before us.

Violence has been adopted as a sole means for political change and also for having ones' own demands fulfilled. This is trending over time.

The Maoists moved ahead based on weapons and established themselves as the largest party later on. Other parties are also becoming the Maoists' imitator now. This tendency has made the country divided by community and regionalism. So much so that divisions by ethnic line and religions are being appeared. This is a big challenge for human rights movement. Overcoming this challenge is a challenge of human rights activists. Being born as the first generation human rights organization, INSEC raised particular human rights issues and took them to certain resolution. The human rights issues are on the rise now. Similarly, the issues of the past are also remaining unresolved. Keeping this scenario in mind, we have to move ahead for the integrated human rights movement now. We are no longer small and helpless. Similarly, little knowledge is no longer a problem now. Many exponents on a par with international standards are already with us in Nepal. The national mechanism on human rights such as the NHRC is already formed. National Women Commission and Commission on the Dalits are already in place. However, the human rights movement in the country is divided.

● *INSEC was visible nationally and internationally during armed conflict due to its role on minimizing the effects of conflict on people and saving their lives? What role did it play in this connection?*

Human rights organizations were formed all over the country being affiliated to INSEC since 1991. So far as the role of INSEC during armed conflict is concerned, INSEC and the other organizations working in partnership with it in the districts such as Rukum, Rolpa, and Jajarkot were working actively for the cause of human rights. The organizations had played role in freeing people from their abducted situation and had prevented the ongoing violence from turning into an inhumane one. INSEC played role in preventing conflict in the districts. People started to be killed when police

intervened and started repression against the "Seize Campaign" of the Maoists in the Rolpa district. INSEC revealed the situation of the region through *Prachi* and urged the state mechanism to remain more restrained. On the one hand, it urged the state to act as per the democratic norms of the multi-party system and, on the other hand, it exerted pressure on the Maoists to remain within the boundary of the international humanitarian laws. Despite INSEC's efforts, a big violence occurred. However, the situation would be more violent if INSEC and other human rights activists were not present in the conflict affected regions. INSEC helped in releasing many people abducted or arrested by the Maoists as well as the security forces. Similarly, many were saved from being killed or subjected to enforced disappearances.

INSEC had been playing leading role on forming national mechanism on human rights. Therefore, I succeeded to become a member of the **NHRC** while working as the Chairperson of INSEC. Violence was going on in the country at that time. The presence of state in the conflict affected zones was very weak. So, we had been demanding for an independent national body that could autonomously look into the incidents of violations. The state was committing more violations at that time. The Maoists too were committing violation and abuses. We were put into custody many times only by dint of the fact that we had been demanding for an independent body on human rights in order to make both the warring sides responsible. Our movement was so efficacious that the NHRC was established finally.

● *Some people comment that INSEC is tilted toward a particular party. What would you say to those who comment in this way?*

INSEC is perceived as an organization close to the CPN (UML). As the organization was not picked up from somewhere, I don't take this as a big deal. Democracy

was established before human rights organizations/movements started in South Asia or in the world. The organizations such as PUDDR and PUCL in India were born after Indira Gandhi imposed emergency in the country. The human rights organizations under democracy, of course, represent from apolitical sectors. However, the human rights movement in Nepal is moving ahead being embedded with restoration of multi-party democracy following the end autocratic Panchayat regime. and establishment of multi-party democracy. So, those who are involved for human rights movement are also the individuals having political consciousness. Therefore, they are also affiliated to politics. The personalities such as Rishikesh Shah, Tulsiman Amatya, Narayan Man Bijukchhe, Dr. Baburam Bhattarai, among others, were affiliated to *Nepal Manabadhikar Sangathan*. Those who were affiliated to *MASAM* and *NEMADHISANGH* had raised voice for human rights. Most of the figures affiliated to *MASAM* were from political parties. Similarly, when INSEC was established after *MASAM*, the leadership of the former was affiliated to the then CPN (ML). What is important in this connection is that political prejudice should not be reflected on the human rights issues. Accusations were there even while I was leading the INSEC. As it always worked on human rights issues remaining above party politics, the accusations could not be effective.

As some persons from the organization are affiliated to the CPN (UML) one way or another, people come up with political accusations. Whenever the issues and incidents published in the Human Rights Yearbook has to be challenged or refuted, such the allegations are put forth. However, the Yearbooks are found in many libraries and human rights organizations as a reference material to understand the situation of human rights in Nepal. This is because the book is free from petty interests and political prejudices. Almost all types of libraries and

human rights organizations have kept Nepal Human Rights Yearbook as a reference material. If it was not credible, people certainly would not use this. Impartiality and balance is most important in any work that we involve in. We have to see whether the work has been completed being politically biased or as per the objective of the organization. People do have their subjective views. Every individual is endowed with rights to put forth their views.

Those who have embraced the Maoist ideology have also founded human rights organizations. The persons affiliated to the Nepali Congress are affiliated to such the organizations. Rastriya Prajatantra party related people too might have affiliation to human rights organizations. Therefore, political blames do not keep meaning. As human beings are political by nature, possessing the ideological tilt is a subjective matter. So, how organizations work is more important. Organizations should not possess the ideological tilt and also should not involve for the propagation of ideology. Therefore, trivial issues should not be and are not the problem for INSEC. It should not take the accusations as a big deal.

● ***INSEC has completed its 20 years working on human rights and social justice of Nepali society. What is your view on the financial sustainability and the working modality required to be adopted by INSEC in particular and other human rights organizations in general in Nepal now?***

There requires economic and financial source and this applies in the case of human rights organizations too. The economic condition of Europe is getting a bit weaker over time. The European donor agencies have been monetarily contributing especially to human rights organizations in Nepal so far. On the one hand, the European countries' internal economic condition is weakening and they have been attracted towards Arabian countries on the other. Their priority

is also shifting with the belief that the Nepalis can control their situation by themselves. Similarly, the economic progress of India and China has also affected Nepal. However, people's economic, social and cultural rights are going to be further shrunk due to liberalization and globalization. In this context, Nepal will have to address these problems through human rights perspectives and it is also likely that human rights organizations will face problems relating to their sustenance.

The human rights organizations in Nepal, now, have to move ahead towards integrating all the human rights issues. Similarly, it should move ahead on the basis of a system in which less number of personnel will accomplish more work. Now, we have to attempt toward creating a situation in which even the big business families and corporate sectors will contribute to human rights movement. We generally spend time by writing proposals, submitting them to the donor agencies and also by holding meetings. We are a bit backward on attracting big business families and industrialists to the human rights issues. So, it is necessary for the leading personalities of the human rights movement to dwell into this issue. Similarly, the NGOs working in the field of human rights have to work together to institutionalize the human rights movement rather than working separately. The issues of human rights should be discussed in the academic institutions, universities, campuses, trade unions and teachers' organizations. They have to be made aware of human rights issues and encouraged to partake in human rights movement. Therefore, the tradition of deploying personnel at the village level and spreading awareness with the help of pamphlets and posters should be gradually minimized. The aforesaid groups should be urged to spread human rights education and awareness while working at the village level.

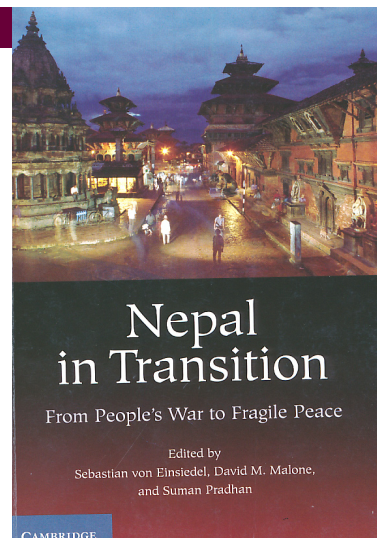
Nepal in Transition: From People's War to Fragile Peace

This book has attempted to explore details about the political twists and turns of Nepal in relation to the Maoists-waged armed conflict and the peace process that began after 2006. A total of sixteen national and international authors hailing from various backgrounds have contributed to the book. Concisely, the book has shed light on the limits, opportunities and challenges of international efforts relating to Nepal's sustainable peace and order.

Although the contributors of the book range from UN special representative to Nepal to national level researchers, journalists, civil society members and professors from international universities, this book has been a matter of talk among academicians, politicians and other stakeholders of Nepal primarily due to the article titled "*Bringing the Maoists down from the Hills: India's Role*" by Prof. S. D. Muni. His revelations through the article on Nepali Maoists' promise with the Indian authority and their connection with the Indian arbitrators has made Nepali politics vibrant. The book has triggered heated debate in public forums and print media in Nepal. These debates are concerned more with Nepali nationalism in relation to

the Maoists' political honesty/dishonesty. There are many other good articles in the book written critically by appraising the overall peace process of Nepal. The article written by Ian Martin – "*The United Nations and Support to Nepal's Peace Process: The Role of the UN Mission in Nepal*" and another article titled "*Nepal's Masala Peacekeeping*" written by Teresa Whitfield caDun be a pair of example in this connection. However, the book, it seems, has been judged and talked of without taking their thoughts into consideration. While the contributors of the book, some of them directly involved in Nepal's peace process, are found to be claiming for their share in making the Maoists a mainstream political force, the article by S. D. Muni asserts in the book as though India was solely responsible for political developments in Nepal.

The other contributors of the book are Deepak Thapa, Rhoderick Chalmers, Devendra Raj Pandey, Jörg Frieden, Sujeev Shakya, Mahendra Lawati, Frederick Rawski and Mandira Sharma, Catinca Salvu, Bhojraj Pokharel, Aditya Adhikari, Rajeev Ranjan Chaturvedy and David M. Malone and Prashant Jha. They have expressed their views



Editors:

Sebastian von Einsiedel, David M. Malone and Suman Pradhan

Publisher:

Cambridge University Press

First South Asian Edition:

2012

Pages: 398

on various issues of Nepal such as Maoist insurgency, development, peacemaking process, human rights, Constituent Assembly and regional dynamics of Nepal.

This book can be an easy medium to understand Nepal's armed conflict and its genesis, the international dynamics in relation to conflict and the role of southern neighbor and other outsiders on conflict and peacemaking efforts of Nepal. The book vividly mirrors the political dynamics of Nepal especially since 1996 until recently. Hence, the book can be of great importance to those who are interested or involved in political developments and power politics of Nepal.

Reviewed by Binod Gautam

INSEC's Past and Present : A Pictorial Glimpse



Supreme Leader Ganesh Man Singh Releasing Human Rights Yearbook 1994



Former Prime Minister Late Girija Prasad Koirala Releasing Human Rights Yearbook 2002



Guests of Human Rights Yearbook 1996 Release Ceremony, 1997



Guests of the National Human Rights Conference Organized by INSEC, 1997



Prominent Politician and Historian Dilli Raman Regmi Releasing Human Rights Yearbook 1996



Human Rights Activists Protesting against Anti-Human Rights Ordinance



*Former Prime Minister Late Krishna Pd. Bhattarai
Releasing Human Rights Yearbook 1997*



*Guests of Human Rights Yearbook 1997
Release Ceremony, 1998*



*Former Prime Minister Late Man Mohan Adhikari
Expresses Solidarity with Kamaiya Liberation Campaign*



*The then Chairperson of INSEC Sushil Pyakurel
Expressing his View on Kamaiya Liberation*



*Former Prime Minister Late Man Mohan Adhikari
Expressing his View on Liberation of the Kamaiyas,
1996*



*Former Prime Minister Late Man Mohan Adhikari Giving
Away Prize to the Participants of Human Rights Related Lyrics
Competition 1999*



*Former Prime Minister Late Man Mohan Adhikari
Giving Away Prakash Human Rights Award*



*Guests attending the Program Organized to Mark
INSEC's Establishment Day, 2001*



Mobile Expo of INSEC Publications



Human Rights Activists Demanding for an end of Armed Conflict Related Violence



Police Arresting the then Chairperson of INSEC Sushil Pyakurel, who had been Demanding for formation of National Human Rights Commission



Praticipants of the National Level Meet of Elected Women



The then Chairperson of INSEC Sushil Pyakurel, Along with the International Delegates, Meeting with Former Prime Minister Late Krishna Pd. Bhattarai to Discuss the end of Bonded Labor System



The then General Secretary of INSEC Subodh Raj Pyakurel Releasing Report on the Situation of Civil Rights Following Imposition of Emergency, 2001



International Delegates Expressing Solidarity for Peace at National Human Rights Commission, 2004



INSEC Activists Monitoring the Indefinite Banda Called on by UCPN Maoist, Kathmandu, 2010



INSEC Chairperson Subodh Raj Pyakurel Presenting Shadow Report on CERD at Geneva, 2004



INSEC Chairperson Subodh Raj Pyakurel Observing the then General Secretary of CPN-UML Madhav Kumar Nepal's Vandalized House, 2006



INSEC Chairperson Subodh Raj Pyakurel and Executive Director Bijay Raj Gautam, Along with the International Delegates, meeting with the former Prime Minister Late Girija Prasad Koirala to have the Rome Statute of the ICC Acceded to, Kathmandu, 2006



INSEC Protests the Code of Conduct issued by Government for the NGO's



INSEC Chairperson Subodh Raj Pyakurel Addressing the Crowd Demanding for Accession to the Rome Statute, Kathmandu



Human Rights Activists Meet with President Ram Baran Yadav



INSEC Activists Observing the Bus Damaged by Maoists-Triggered Blast at Madi, Chitwan, 2005



INSEC's Executive Director Bijay Raj Gautam Talking with Other CA Election Observers, 2008



Conflict Affected Internally Displaced People Return to their Place of Origin, Humla as Initiated by INSEC



INSEC Chairperson Subodh Raj Pyakurel discussing Human Rights Situation with the American President Barack Obama, 2010



INSEC Activist Accompanying Internally Displaced People as they Return to their Places of Origin, Humla



INSEC Chairperson and Other Human Rights Activists Take to the Street in protest of Autocracy



INSEC Activists Listening to the Local Leaders of the UCPN Maoist Who Welcome the Internally Displaced People upon the Latter Reach Birat VDC, Jumla



INSEC Football Team Takes Part in the Football Match Organized by National Human Rights Commission on the Occasion of International Human Rights Day, 2011



Busts Erected by INSEC in Yedukuha VDC in Dhanusha District in Memory of those Locals Killed in the Course of People's Movement 1990

INSEC During People's Movement 2006







Some Publications of INSEC



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For:

- immediate reports on human rights violation
- information collected from all 75 districts
- updated information on various issues of human rights (in English & Nepali)



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