

SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS THIS MONTH



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

Human rights violations noted this month have been enlisted below:

NATIONAL UPDATES

1. HUMLA DISTRICT HOSPITAL X-RAY SERVICE RESUMES AFTER TWO-WEEK HALT

The X-ray service at Humla District Hospital, suspended since February 3 due to a malfunctioning cassette, resumed on February 18 after a replacement machine was provided by the Nix Simons Institute, Lalitpur, free of cost. Acting Chief Medical Officer Dr. Bhim Budha noted that locals had been turned away daily, and repairing the old machine would have cost Rs. 300,000–400,000. The hospital acted promptly following media coverage highlighting the disruption, ensuring patients could access X-ray services again.

2. NEPAL HUMAN RIGHTS YEAR BOOK 2026 RELEASED

The Nepal Human Rights Year Book 2026, published by INSEC and released on February 19, 2026, reflects the country's human rights situation, emphasizing both legal and moral obligations. Dr. Gauri Shankar Lal Das stressed that protecting citizens' security, justice, and equal opportunities remains central to democracy. Contributors, including Sushil Pyakurel, Dr. Shambhu Ram Simkhada, and Dr. Kundan Aryal, highlighted historical challenges, the role of INSEC in documenting violations, and emerging issues from digital platforms, weak state capacity, and gender-based violence. The Year Book underscores the need for institutional reforms, rule of law, state accountability, and public awareness to build an equitable, just, and democratic Nepal.

3. BHOJPUR ISSUES CITIZENSHIP IN MOTHER'S NAME FOR THE FIRST TIME

For the first time, the District Administration Office of Bhojpur issued citizenship in a mother's name on February 17. Aditya Darnal of Temke Maiyung-3 received citizenship in his mother Basanti Damai's name, as his father's identity was unknown, confirmed Chief District Officer Rajan Paudel. The office stated that anyone meeting the required procedures—including birth registration, educational certificate, mother's citizenship, local authority certificate of unknown father, and a written self-declaration—can apply for citizenship in the mother's name.

4. HETAUDA CHILD REFORM HOME FACES SEVERE OVERCROWDING

The Child Reform Home in Thanabharyang, Hetauda, designed for 30 boys, now houses over three times its capacity, including juveniles from Chitwan, Makwanpur, and other districts transferred due to disruptions at other facilities. Many detainees are aged 16–18, with 29 over 18 who legally require separate arrangements. Severe overcrowding forces boys to sleep on floors, with education and literacy support inadequate. Delays in case adjudication and lack of infrastructure have worsened conditions, prompting calls for urgent government attention to improve management, facilities, and educational opportunities for the juveniles.

5. NHRC CALLS FOR HUMAN-RIGHTS-FRIENDLY ELECTION

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) highlighted concerns over violations of voters' rights ahead of the March 5 House of Representatives election. Monitoring revealed the use of hate speech, indecent language,

social media misuse, and breaches of the secret ballot. Instances of misleading news, vandalism, and election code violations were also noted. NHRC urged political parties, candidates, and stakeholders to respect voters' privacy, avoid hateful accusations, curb violence, and strengthen voter education to ensure a human-rights-friendly election.

INTERNATIONAL UPDATES

1. **TARIQUE RAHMAN SWORN IN AS BANGLADESH PM**

On February 17, Tarique Rahman was sworn in as Bangladesh's new prime minister, marking the return of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) after two decades and ending 18 months of caretaker rule under Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus. The political comeback raises hopes for economic revival, reduced corruption, and greater public security. Citizens expressed cautious optimism, seeing the day as a potential turning point for the country.

2. **UKRAINE FACES RECORD ATTACKS ON HEALTH CARE AMID FIFTH YEAR OF WAR**

In 2025, Ukraine experienced nearly 20% more attacks on health care than the previous year, totalling 2,881 since the start of the full-scale war in February 2022, according to the WHO. Hospitals, clinics, ambulances, and medical warehouses have been targeted, while strikes on civilian infrastructure worsen health access. WHO reported that 59% of frontline residents rate their health as poor or very poor, and mental health issues, cardiovascular disease, and medication shortages are surging. WHO provided support to 1.9 million people, with a focus on frontline and hard-to-reach areas, while emphasizing that peace remains the ultimate solution to the crisis.

3. **PAKISTANI AIRSTRIKES IN EASTERN AFGHANISTAN KILL AT LEAST 13 CIVILIANS**

At least 13 civilians were killed and seven were injured in Pakistani airstrikes on February 21–22 in Nangarhar and Paktika provinces, according to the UN. The strikes, targeting alleged militant camps, follow a series of suicide attacks in Pakistan and threaten to reignite cross-border tensions along the 2,600-km frontier. Afghan authorities condemned the strikes as violations of sovereignty, with schools and madrasas among the casualties. Pakistan justified the operations as intelligence-based responses to militants operating from Afghan territory, while Kabul denies permitting attacks. The incidents come amid months of border clashes and closures affecting trade and movement.

4. **FORMER UK AMBASSADOR PETER MANDELSON ARRESTED OVER EPSTEIN TIES**

Former British ambassador to the U.S., Peter Mandelson, 72, was arrested on February 23 by London police on suspicion of misconduct in public office, following revelations of his close ties to convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein. Emails released by the U.S. Department of Justice showed Mandelson shared information with Epstein while serving as a minister in 2009. He has since resigned from the Labour Party and the House of Lords. Mandelson was released on bail pending further investigation, and police have also searched his London and Wiltshire homes. The arrest does not imply guilt.

5. **UKRAINE POWER CUTS WORSEN CRISIS FOR WOMEN AND VULNERABLE**

UN Women and IFRC officials have highlighted the severe impact of Ukraine's destroyed energy infrastructure on women and vulnerable populations. Attacks have destroyed 65% of the country's energy generation capacity, leaving families without heating, electricity, or reliable shelter amid winter. Extended blackouts increase women's exposure to harassment, limit mobility, and threaten livelihoods, especially in sectors like education, health, and social services. Funding cuts are putting women-led organizations at risk, potentially depriving 63,000 women of vital services in 2026. The WHO also reports 2,870 attacks on healthcare, rising disabilities, and over-stretched facilities, compounding the humanitarian crisis.

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