



**National Dalit Commission of Nepal,
United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for
Human Rights, Nepal**



Press Release – Wednesday, 21 July 2010

**Government assurances to NDC and OHCHR
to implement court verdicts on caste-based discrimination**

21 July, Kathmandu,

Local Government authorities, including the Senior Superintendent of Police of Mahakali zone and the Deputy Superintendent of Police in Baitadi have assured the National Dalit Commission (NDC) and the Office of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Nepal (OHCHR) to swiftly implement two ground breaking discrimination related verdicts. The first verdict issued in January 2009, relates to a sentence of two years imprisonment issued by the Baitadi district court to the main perpetrator and a fine of rupees twenty five thousand. In this case, twelve Dalits were physically assaulted and robbed after they refused to follow discriminatory rituals. The second decision, issued by the same court in March 2010, is in relation to an assault of the father of a Dalit groom during a wedding ceremony for practicing "rituals reserved for high-caste communities".

Despite repeated calls by human rights organisations, including the NDC, the National Human Rights Commission and OHCHR, the court decisions have yet to be implemented and have remained pending for many months. The members of a joint OHCHR-NDC mission raised serious concerns regarding this matter and urged the authorities to take the necessary action in accordance with the law.

OHCHR and the NDC welcome the assurance of the local authorities to enforce the verdicts during their meetings and expect appropriate steps to be taken as a matter of urgency. The four-day joint mission, led by the Chairperson of the NDC, was aimed at assessing the overall human rights situation of *Dalit* communities in the region.

Bijul Kumar Bishwokarma, the chairperson of National Dalit Commission, stressed that "it is the responsibility of local authorities to enforce law and order, and to effectively implement court orders. I call on the Government authorities to arrest the perpetrators swiftly as ordered by the courts."

Jyoti Sanghera, the Deputy Representative of OHCHR Nepal added: "OHCHR acknowledges the proper filing of first information reports by the police on allegations of caste-based discrimination and untouchability; however, this mission has brought to light a range of obstacles that continue to prevent Dalit communities from enjoying their fundamental human rights. I call on the Government to undertake all necessary steps to address these challenges, and to execute the court orders as soon as possible."

For further information contact

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