



UNITED NATIONS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN NEPAL



Press Release – 18 June 2008

**OHCHR-Nepal Representatives visit communities affected by
September 2007 violence in Kapilvastu**

OHCHR-Nepal Head of Protection Gillian Kitley and Head of Western Regional Office Britta Madsen met on Wednesday with groups representing victims of the violence that resulted in the deaths of 14 people in Kapilvastu in September 2007. As part of OHCHR-Nepal's ongoing work in the area, the OHCHR representatives visited Chandrauta and Khaire villages. They also met with representatives from Krishnanagar.

Wednesday's meetings followed OHCHR's discussions on Tuesday with representatives of national human rights defenders, NHRC, UN agencies and local officials in Taulihawa. On Sunday, OHCHR-Nepal Representative Richard Bennett met with the Deputy Inspector Generals of the Nepal Police (NP) and the Armed Police Force (APF) for the Western Region.

During all of the visits OHCHR discussed its recommendations to ensure an end to this and previous incidents of violence and full respect for human rights in Kapilvastu. These include the swift and thorough completion of ongoing investigations and prosecution of persons responsible for September's violence, along with the implementation of adequate law enforcement measures. Security of communities can only be ensured when all stakeholders demonstrate a commitment to tolerance and authorities take the lead in confidence-building of the population.

“Although some steps were taken at the local level to improve the security of the local population, the authorities and local political leaders need to do much more to restore communities' confidence in the State, and they should be allowed to undertake their important work free from political interference,” said Bennett. “Until impunity is addressed and respect for the rule of law is re-established, it will be difficult to break the cycles of violence and impunity in Kapilvastu.”

Among other recommendations in OHCHR's report are that:

- Key findings of the judicial commission established to investigate the violence should be made public and its recommendations implemented;
- Reforms to prevent and respond to public security challenges should address structural, policy, legislative, operational and training issues;
- Representatives of victims and internally displaced persons (IDPs) should be included in all district level decision-making processes that address their situation, including resettlement and compensation;

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- Existing quotas for recruiting women and members of marginalized groups to fill vacant posts in the NP and APF should be applied across the ranks of the police forces, ensuring representation of these groups in the officer ranks, and;
- Impunity should be addressed through prosecutions for serious crimes committed in the past by both the CPN-M and former *Pratihar Samiti* members.

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