



CENTRE FOR DEMOCRACY, PLURALISM AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Weekly Human Rights Report

(1-07-2024 to 7-07-2024)

New Delhi. 7th July 2024. This week it was the turn of Shias to be terrorised by the Sunni extremist organisations like TLP. As the community was preparing for the mourning several hate speeches and threats were issued as Shias are viewed as a heretic by extremists in the country. Another case emerged in Pakistan wherein a man was sentenced to death over the infamous blasphemy charges. Globally, several instances of human rights violations were reported. Cambodia sentenced several activists from an environmental group to long prison sentences. The organisation has in the past protested several mega-Chinese-led projects. Qatar's Shura Council gave certain recommendations which threaten the rights of migrant workers. In West Asia, several human rights organisations from Lebanon and the region along with the families of the victims of the Beirut port blasts wrote to the UNHRC criticising the Lebanese government's probe into the incident. Finally, the situation of Human Rights remains critical in several West African states. In the latest news, Cameroon arrested an activist after his criticism of a local politician.

Pakistan

Christian Youth from Jaranwala Given Death Sentence Over Blasphemy Charges

Last year, August Pakistan's town of Jaranwala witnessed severe rioting against Christians in the City. At least 19 [churches](#) and hundreds of homes and properties were gutted. As a result, hundreds were forced to flee. After an international outcry, Pakistan was forced to file a complaint against 135 rioters and arrest them. Most of the rioters, belonging to the majority Muslim community, are out of jail now. But a local court, this week, has decided to sentence a member of the minority community under infamous blasphemy charges and also for starting the riot in the city. The court in Sahiwal also imposed a fine of 1 million Rupees. The justice

system of the country continues to play a cruel joke on minorities as the victim of rioting was sentenced to death row while men from the majority community are all free.

For more information:

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1843074>

<https://sg.news.yahoo.com/protest-pakistan-christian-given-blasphemy-125406274.html>

<https://morningstarnews.org/2024/07/christian-sentenced-to-death-under-pakistans-blasphemy-law/>

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/world-news/pakistans-jaranwala-violence-19-churches-gutted-says-human-rights-report/articleshow/102893891.cms?from=mdr>

Extremists Threatening Shias on the Occasion of Muharram and Ashura

After harassing Ahmadis for weeks leading up to Eid Al Adha last month. The religious extremists have now turned their focus on Shias in the country as the country braces for Muharram and Ashura (10th day of Muharram mourning). The 10-day-long observance has seen large-scale violence in the past too. Extremist Sunni organisations regularly target the community during this period. As a result, there are reports of the Pakistan government limiting social media and the internet in the country.

For more information:

<https://www.arabnews.pk/node/2544926/pakistan>

<https://shiawaves.com/english/news/islam/pakistan/107648-pakistan-deploys-army-rangers-for-nationwide-muharram-security/>

https://x.com/voice_minority/status/1808391474070917430

Cambodia: Environmental Activists Famous for Protesting Chinese-led Mega Projects Given Harsh Sentences

At least ten activists from an environmentalist group called Mother Nature have been given sentences ranging from six to eight years this week. Among other things the group was known for protesting Chinese led mega projects in the country. It opposed a Chinese hydroelectric project in Areng Valley in the past. The activists were charged under Article 453 i.e. plotting against the state.

For more information:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c1340lze6ppo>

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/7/2/cambodia-accused-of-conducting-political-trial-as-it-jails-green-activists>

<https://edition.cnn.com/2024/07/06/asia/mother-nature-cambodia-climate-youth-activists-intl-hnk/index.html>

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/article/2024/jul/02/cambodia-jails-10-environmentalists-in-crushing-blow-to-civil-society>

Cameroon: Activist Rearrested After Serving Three Months in Prison

Abubakar Siddiqui a vocal critic was rearrested this week. He was released recently, on 21st June, after serving a three-month prison sentence. This week he was arrested on the charges of charges of disturbing public order, demonstration, and hate speech.

For more information:

<https://x.com/IFEX/status/1810965997119041669>

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/07/03/artist-rearrested-cameroon>

Qatar: Shura Council Proposed a Controversial Migrant Worker Rights Regulation

Qatar's Shura Council approved a controversial proposal which places, already vulnerable migrant workers, at risk of exploitation by their employers. According to the proposal, the workers would require their employer's permission before leaving the country. This proposal if accepted would backtrack recent developments in the domain of worker's rights in the country. The country has a bad track record when it comes to worker's rights as they face dangerous working conditions in an environment which is in general hostile towards their issues.

For more information:

<https://www.qna.org.qa/en/News-Area/News/2024-06/24/0054-shura-council-lays-out-perspectives-on-measures-of-domestic-workers%27-departure,-endorses-draft-law-on-job-localization-in-private-sector>

<https://www.migrant-rights.org/2024/06/qatar-shura-councils-calls-for-reintroducing-exit-permits-for-domestic-workers-threatening-to-undo-reforms/>

Lebanon: Rights Groups and Families of Victims Demand Independent Inquiry into Beirut Blasts

In 2020 Beirut port witnessed large-scale blast triggered in a warehouse storing inflammable chemicals/explosives. Lebanese authorities have since covered up and refused to do a proper investigation so far. With victims' families continuing to seek for justice and answers this week many human rights organizations from West Asia and families wrote to the UNHRC demanding an international action.

For more information:

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/07/01/lebanon-joint-letter-rights-groups-and-victims-families-call-international-action>