

**RESEARCH PAPER****Role of the NHRC in the Promotion of Human Rights****Pinki Gautam**

Department of Political Science, Ch. C.S.-S.D.S. (P.G.) College, Iglas, Aligarh

Email: pinkigautam00@gmail.comReceived: 16th January 2017, Revised: 10th March 2018, Accepted: 15th March 2018**ABSTRACT**

The promotion of respect and realization of human rights cannot be ensured by relying on external means alone which are discussed in the preceding paper. It can be brought about by addressing the root-causes of the malady which is internal and requires attitudinal and cultural changes. That's why, the NHRC has been entrusted with the responsibility to play the active role in the promotion of human rights culture in the country.

Key words: NHRC, Human Rights, India

INTRODUCTION

The promotion of respect and realization of human rights cannot be ensured by relying on external means alone which are discussed in the preceding paper. It can be brought about by addressing the root-causes of the malady which is internal and requires attitudinal and cultural changes. That's why, the NHRC has been entrusted with the responsibility to play active role in the promotion of human rights culture in the country.

The promotional role of the NHRC is well spelt out in the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993. As per the Act, the promotional functions of the NHRC include: (a) to study treaties and other international instruments on human rights and make recommendations for their effective implementation; (b) to undertake and promote research in the field of human rights; (c) to spread human rights literacy among various sections of society and promote awareness of the safeguards available for the protection of these rights through publications, the media, seminars and other available means; (d) to encourage the efforts of non-governmental organization and institutions working in the field of human rights; and (e) such other functions as it may consider necessary for the promotion of humans rights.

The cultivation of human rights culture requires a long term approach for the promotion of human rights awareness. The NHRC, right from its inception, gave it a top priority and worked out a systematic strategy to spread human rights literacy among the masses and also the governing elite. Towards this end, it resorted to the mobilization of education system at all levels, holding training programmes for administrators, security personnel's, professionals and others. Methods such as seminars, conferences, publications, research-studies, publicity-campaigns and other media methods were adopted to create public awareness by all possible means. With a view to keep India in the vanguard of the world-wide movement to promote and protect human rights, the NHRC has interacted with external groups and organizations on a regular basis. It has also promoted the role of the non-governmental organizations in the protection and promotion of human rights.

HUMAN RIGHTS LITERACY AND AWARENESS

Recognizing the significance of human rights literacy both in terms of present and future perspectives, the NHRC identified three key-sectors of our democratic polity for the purpose of imparting human rights education. These sectors included educationists, the executive authority at all levels and political parties.

As a first step towards mobilizing education system, the NHRC made a request to all political parties to constitute Human Rights Cells at the Central, State and District levels of their organization specifically charged with the responsibility of promoting and protecting human rights. It also requested them to remain in continuing touch with the NHRC in this regard. These cells

were expected to serve a dual purpose to propagate and thus promote a climate conducive to human rights. Similarly, the State Governments were also approached to initiate moves to impart appropriate training in human rights with a view to sensitize the administration to show respect to human rights. Lastly and most importantly, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and the University Grants Commission (UGC) were also approached to introduce human rights education as an essential component at all levels of education.

MOBILIZATION OF EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

The promotion of human rights literacy is a task that calls for great perseverance, deep and lasting commitment, not only on the part of the NHRC, but also on the part the State. That is why, the NHRC sought to mobilize the educational system at all levels to impart human rights education nation-wide. It approached the Ministry of Human Resource Development and the Department of Education to initiate the steps for the purpose of including human rights education as an essential component of national educational curriculum.

The prime educational bodies such as the University Grants Commission (UGC), the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and the National Council for Teacher-Education (NCTE) have been roped in to prepare materials for the education at various levels of schooling. The NCERT has prepared a source book on Human Rights as a guide for teachers and others, a project in which the NHRC fully collaborated, making specific suggestions as to its contents. The NCERT was also asked to undertake a review of existing text books with a view to eliminate from them those passages that were inimical to human rights or that distorted them. Steps have been initiated to encourage the inclusion of alternative material sensitive to human rights. On the recommendation on the NHRC, the Source Book on Human Rights was translated into Hindi and other regional languages for wider use.

As a next step to imparting human rights education at the school level, modules for teacher-training relevant to teaching at various levels were prepared. For this purpose, a national level training programme on "Human Rights and National Values for Teacher Educators" was organized by the National Council for Teacher-Education (NCTE). In addition, two video films have been made of the modules and a Hindi version of these modules has also been developed. For the propagation of human rights literacy, these modules were adopted by the distant education institution named the National Open School as well.

At the higher education level, the NHRC approached the universities with the proposal to induct the subject of human rights in their curriculum, undertake research and publication and conduct seminars on human rights. It also suggested the linkage between the academic community and the non-governmental organizations. Consequent to the NHRC's suggestion, the University Grants Commission appointed a Standing Committee on human rights education at the University level to bring out a degree of uniformity in the standard of teaching of human rights in different universities.

In a major effort to establish a center of excellence for human rights education, the NHRC has set-up an "Institute for Human Rights Education, Research and Documentation" at the National Law School of India University (NLSIU), Bangalore. In addition, it has endowed a Chair for Rupees Thirty Lacs in the National Law School of India University for the said institute.

The NHRC is of the view that human rights education does not end with the academic institutions. It believes that all elements of civil society need to be brought into the fold: the bench and the bar, administrators and defence personnel, doctors and scholars, politicians and trade unionists, public and private sector employees and members of the fourth estate, to mention a few.

Agreeing with the NHRC, the Union Government set up a National Committee consisting of representatives from various Ministries and Departments to formulate a National Action Plan for human rights education and to coordinate its implementation.

Apart from mobilization of education system for the purpose of incorporation of human rights education, the NHRC has also made use of informal educational methods for spreading human rights literacy. With the declaration of the UN Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2005), it played a catalytic role in the drawing up of a National Action Plan for observing the UN Decade as

well as to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) during 1997-1998.

HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION FOR POLICE PERSONNEL

Recognizing the fact that the largest number of human rights violations is result of insensitive and ignorant police force's high-handedness, the NHRC has given top priority to revamp the training and re-training of police personnel so as to make them more aware of, and sensitive to human rights considerations.

As a consequence to the NHRC's initiatives, the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Police Academy in Hyderabad introduced the teaching of human rights in its courses and also included sensitization programmes as an essential component of its training courses. The NHRC has extended all possible help in this endeavour. It is convinced that training programmes, when properly structured and conducted, can have a most valuable effect on police personnel and improve their responses even in provocative situations.

The NHRC has also devised a three-tier syllabus for various ranks of the police service, ranging from constables to senior officers. This module has proved useful in the training of all cadres of police force at the State level and training materials are increasingly being prepared in the regional languages for their wide application.

The NHRC is always receptive to the innovations in police practice and encourages the participation of members of its own Investigation Division in courses being conducted both at home and abroad.

HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION FOR PARA-MILITARY AND ARMED FORCES PERSONNEL

The importance of human rights education for the personnel of Paramilitary and armed forces has not been lost on the NHRC, specially in the light of the fact of their fighting against insurgencies and terrorism. Moreover, the limited mandate given to the NHRC under the Statute in the matter of paramilitary and armed forces, makes it imperative on the part of the NHRC to persuade them to educate and sensitize their personnel to human rights considerations. The NHRC has contacted the higher functionaries of these organizations for the purpose of impressing upon them the need for the cultivation of human rights culture in their respective forces.

Encouraged by the positive response from the leadership of the para-military and armed forces, the NHRC has advised them on continued basis on a variety of matters, including those relating to the training of the personnel at all levels. The functionaries of the NHRC paid regular visits to their academies and headquarters to give talks on human rights and answer their queries and remove their doubts. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has also been involved to enlighten them on humanitarian jurisprudence. Methods such as debate and discussions have been adopted to make the whole exercise interesting and participatory instead of lecturing.

The NHRC has made sustained efforts to ensure that the paramilitary forces continued to improve the quality of their training in human rights matter. Towards this end, a Core-Group was set up to prepare a common training syllabus for the paramilitary forces with the approval of the NHRC. Six out of the seven Central police organizations have adopted this syllabus in their training curriculum.

HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION FOR POLITICAL PARTIES

In a democratic polity like ours, the political parties, role in creating a human-rights conducive culture is quite significant. Considering this fact, the NHRC approached the top-leadership of various political parties and top functionaries of parliament and State legislatures to seek their support and suggestions for the promotion of human rights culture in the country.

Besides suggesting the constitution of human rights cells at all levels of the party organization, the NHRC made a request to the party leaders to oversee the conduct of their members. Each party was also requested to designate a senior leader to liase with the NHRC in regard to human rights matters. The NHRC also made specific recommendations as to the manner in which they could monitor the conduct of their cadres.

In a parliamentary democracy, political parties are important constituent of decision-making process. That's why, the NHRC intensified its efforts to impress upon the political parties the need to include the issue of free and compulsory elementary education for the children of India in their party manifestoes for the impending General Elections. Thus, the NHRC has tried to play the role of an interest group for the purpose of promotion of human rights by lobbying political parties to work for the realization of human rights.

The NHRC does not hesitate to reproach the political parties whenever they indulge in irresponsible behaviour. It has recommended that political parties should have a clear code of conduct to govern the behaviour of their cadres in matters affecting human rights of the people of this country and the transgressions of such a code be dealt with severely. It has also advised greater restraint and moderation by political parties in dealing with issues sensitive to human rights.

SEMINARS AND WORKSHOPS

The NHRC has made use of seminars and workshops extensively for the purpose of spreading human rights education in the country. These informal methods of teaching are very effective ways to impart human rights education and are popular with the academics as well as with the laymen. The members of the NHRC and its other functionaries have been much in demand to address various seminars and symposia on different human rights related issues. They have participated in the end number of these events and made maximum use of these platforms for the purpose of generating public awareness about human rights.

A number of major seminars were supported by the NHRC. They were variously organized by non-governmental organizations, universities, the armed forces or State Human Rights Commissions. One such seminar on "Human Rights and Terrorism and Human Rights Education" was held in Bangalore in August 1996 to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). It was very well attended seminar. The participation of distinguished justices, diplomats, scholars, administrators and human rights activists helped in enhancing the quality of deliberations and recommendations.

Another major international seminar on "Human Rights Education" was jointly organized with the Canadian Human Rights Commission in February 1996. It was inaugurated by the President of India and attended by the Special Advisor on National Institutions to the UN High-Commissioner for Human Rights and other leading experts both from the grass-root and top-brass of different organizations.

Another seminar was held in New Delhi in 1999 as a part of the Indo-British Project on Prison Reforms which was undertaken jointly by the NHRC, the British Council, the Bureau of Police Research and Development and PRAJA, an NGO. It focussed on jail management and training in India and the role of the judiciary in the protection of human rights. It also looked into the changing practices in prisons in other parts of the world with a view to reform India's prison-management in the context of human rights parameters.

Similarly, the NHRC has also extended its support to several workshops conducted by research institutions, non-governmental organizations or universities in selected place around the country, including Bhopal, Bhubaneshwar, Bombay, Burdwan, Calcutta, Cuttak, Delhi, Gulburga, Indore, Jammu, Kochi, Madras, Madurai, Patna, Rourkela, Tirupathi, Thiruvananthapuram and Varanasi. Besides participating in these workshops, the NHRC also cooperated by sponsoring the visit to India of foreign academics and human rights activists for this purpose.

To enhance the understanding of human rights and promote exchange of ideas at the regional and international level, the NHRC has been supportive of joint collaboration in the matter of workshops on human rights. For instance, the NHRC held a workshop on "Managing Human Rights Institutions", in Calcutta in June-July 1997 with the joint collaboration of the Commonwealth Secretariat and West Bengal Human Rights Commission, which was attended by the Commonwealth Countries of Asia.

The NHRC has also hosted the Second Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop on National Human Rights Institutions in September 1997 which was attended by the members of the Asia-Pacific Forum together with the representatives of the United Nations agencies, programmes and key-NGOs. In

addition, the Chairpersons of the State Human Rights Commissions in India also participated in the workshop.

The NHRC has encouraged non-governmental organizations in their effort to organize seminars and workshops with the purpose of gaining better understanding of the specific issues relating to human rights such as women, dalits, disabled persons and child labour etc. For instance, a National Workshop on "Human Rights and Social Change" was held in Madras in joint collaboration with the People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) and the Dalit Liberation Education Trust. It constituted a major effort by the NHRC to better its understanding of the special problems facing the Dalits, helping it to find appropriate ways of resolving and redressing these problems.

Thus, it is indicative of the fact that the NHRC is not always content in playing the preacher's role for others, but is also ready to learn from others to promote the cause of human rights.

PUBLICATIONS AND MEDIA

To reach out the people in the big way, the NHRC's dependence on press and media is an obvious need. The NHRC makes use of publications and media for the purpose of dissemination of information which helps in creating awareness about human rights. The media also acts as a watch-dog for the protection of human rights. No doubt, the NHRC considers media as its key-ally in the promotion and protection of human rights.

For the purpose of educating public opinion, the NHRC sought the cooperation of the media, both print and electronic, by way of giving regular press-briefings and continuing the practice of periodic meetings with editors/special correspondents of important newspapers and news channels. The interviews of its Chairmen appeared in national dailies putting across their viewpoints about the activities of the NHRC. Some of the members of the NHRC have also shared their views and perceptions with media on various aspects of human rights issues.

The growing interaction between the NHRC and the media has resulted in the increased coverage of human rights issues in the media. The NHRC has noted a marked improvement in the coverage in the range and depth of such coverage since 1993 when the NHRC was established.

The electronic media has also been used to highlight human rights issues in the form of documentaries features, discussions and talks etc. both on the All India Radio and Doordarshan. The NHRC has received the fullest cooperation from these two State-owned media organizations. The NHRC has prepared twelve "Spots" which are being regularly broadcast by the All India Radio. In addition to these items, "Human Rights Watch", a half-hourly programme has been started on monthly basis by the All India Radio. It has been regularly broadcasting spotlight and commentaries on human rights issues. On Human Rights Day, a member of the NHRC participated in a 'Phone-in-Programme' broadcasted by the All India Radio, Private Television Networks, too, have been contacting the NHRC for interviews and other information concerning human rights issues and telecasting programmes on these issues.

The growing media visibility of human rights issues and the activities of the NHRC has prompted a number of film makers to take up projects on human rights issues and make use of the cases handled by the NHRC in their footage.

The NHRC attaches a great importance to the role of media in the protection and promotion of human rights and has commended the role played by the Indian media. Media acts as the eyes and ears of the NHRC as it takes suo motu action on reports appearing in the media. At the same time, the activities of the NHRC are also open to media.

No doubt, the NHRC depends heavily on print and visual media for the promotion of human rights, but it also brings out its own publications for the purpose of propagation of information regarding the activities of the NHRC and human rights issues with a view to enlighten people about them.

Initially, it made a humble beginning with a monthly Newsletter, in October 1994, which was very well received. The Newsletter, published in Hindi and English, got an overwhelming response and its ever-growing demand, inside and outside the country, has forced the NHRC to launch it on its website.

The Clippings Information Service of the NHRC is also of keen interest to researchers, students and academics. All news items relating to human rights scanned from twenty newspapers, are clipped and filed in a computerized database, facilitating retrieval of important clippings topic-wise, date-

wise and newspaper-wise. The clippings serve as an important source of information to the NHRC for taking suo-motu action.

The NHRC has also published two booklets in Hindi and English for the purpose of educating people and creating human rights culture in the country. These booklets contain the 'do's and don'ts in respect of arrest and the convention on the Rights of the Child.

In addition, the NHRC has introduced a scheme of awards on 'Creative Writings on Human Rights in Hindi' to encourage original writings in Hindi on subjects dealing with human rights. Thus, it has tried to involve public in promoting human rights education.

RESEARCH PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

Research forms an integral part of the strategy for the promotion of human rights. The NHRC has been entrusted with the responsibility to carry out research on human rights by the Statute. In this matter, it has identified the areas that need to be explored for the purpose of suggesting practical solutions to the problems of human rights. These areas included child-labour, problems of mentally ill and their rehabilitation, female-foeticide and female-infanticide, rights of the tribal women, problems of the aged and revising ways and means for creating human rights culture.

Faced with the problem of financial constraints for the purpose of research and technical restraints placed by the Planning Commission, the NHRC decided to use its own budgetary provisions for research and earmarked a sum of Rupees 10 Lacs for this purpose. A grant of Rupees 1.20 Lacs was released to the National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences (NIMHANS) in Bangalore, for a study on "Quality Assurance in Mental Health", to be undertaken on behalf of the NHRC. The NHRC has restructured its Research Division, converting it into a Policy, Research, Projects and Programmes Division (PRPP).

The NHRC, in order to effectively perform its duties, tries to rationalize its policy on the basis of research inputs provided by its PRPP Division which identifies and takes up a variety of programmes and projects for research. Pursuant to this goal, the NHRC had referred a number of projects to the National Institute for Human Rights Research and Documentation (IHRERD) at the National Law School of India University, Bangalore. The IHRERD is of great assistance to the NHRC in carrying out its statutory obligation to undertake research on human rights with a view to formulate a policy for the protection and promotion of human rights.

The NHRC had entrusted a number of research projects to the IHRERD which included variety of subjects relating to human rights, such as, the study of human rights treaties and other international instruments on human rights for making recommendations regarding their effective implementation; the problems related with the spread of HIV infection and human rights concerns of the HIV infected persons; the question of jurisdiction of Human Rights Courts under Section 30 of the NHRC Statute; the National Police Commission's observations about the misuse of the power of arrest by the police and the collection of statistics, under the Pilot Project, as to the reasonableness of the exercise of the power of arrest by the police; and sexual abuse of women and children etc.

The IHRERD had already submitted reports on the following Research Projects referred to it by the NHRC-

1. Imminent problems connected with the spread of HIV infection and human rights concerns of privacy and dignity of HIV positive persons.
2. The First Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the question of its ratification by the Government of India.
3. The Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR and options before India.
4. International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and their Families a plea for India's ratification.
5. Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment: the case for early ratification.
6. The question of jurisdiction of human rights Courts under Section 30 of the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993.
7. Right to Speedy Trial, a compendium of guidelines for speedy trial derived from the decisions of the Apex Court of India.

8. Eye donation and transplantation of cornea: national and international dimensions.
9. Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act: agenda for reform from human rights perspective.
10. Group Accident Insurance Scheme for Fish-Workers: an analysis and a proposal.

Besides promoting research studies, the NHRC pays due attention to a variety of programmes and projects on a regular basis. During the discussion on the Programme Agenda on every Friday and also at the meetings of the Full Commission, these programmes and projects are discussed in detail and where necessary relevant recommendations are made. For example, the studies on the three major projects undertaken on behalf of the NHRC, viz, State of the Art Forensic Science: for Better Criminal Justice, Large Volume Parenterals Towards Zero Defect and Quality Assurance in Mental Health were considered by the NHRC and the recommendations contained in these studies were accepted by the NHRC and forwarded to the concerned authorities in the Centre and the States with a request to do the needful for their effective implementation.

INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

Acting on the recommendation made by the management consultants, M/s McKinsey & Co., the NHRC launched a 'Summer Internship Programme' aimed at providing the requisite exposure to the philosophy and culture of human rights to the successive batches of students and also in a measure to augment the personnel resources of the NHRC. The interns are being paid a monthly stipend of Rs. 2000/- and are selected on the basis of a strong academic background, a positive interest in human rights issues and good communication skills. The Internship programme is meant for the University students, both from India and abroad, with a view to expose them to the works of the Commission. The duration of this programme is six weeks and it is inter-disciplinary in nature. This programme has received very good response from the universities and a large number of students apply for it every year.

Apart from the Summer Internship Programme, the NHRC has given short-term placements to the three students from the National Law School of India University, Bangalore during November-December 1999 and five others during the period January-February 2000. Two other university students, one from Bochum University, Germany and the other from the Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy, Tuft University, USA were also given placements in the Commission same year.

The NHRC also received an offer from the Danish Centre for Human Rights to depute one of its Human Rights Officer to work on a research-project on '*The Conditions of Juvenile Homes and Other Institutions / Homes set-up under different Statues*', which was accepted by it. A very useful report on this project was submitted to the NHRC thereafter.

TRAINING PROGRAMMES

To promote the culture of human rights, training programmes prove effective tools of behavioural change. The NHRC in collaboration with the British Council and the Bureau of Police Research and Development conducted a two-weeks training programme for prison-officials with the aim of promoting good practices and gender sensitivity in jail-management. The trainees were to serve as a national resource for further training of trainees in India. The training programme was designed to help Indian prison officials learn from the experience of the United Kingdom in areas of prison-management and to help bring about attitudinal and behavioural changes in management practices.

Further, the NHRC constituted a core-group for the purpose of preparing training-material for the staff of the National and State Human Rights Commissions. The Core-Group consisted of representatives from NHRC, the National Commission for women, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh State Human Rights Commissions, Indian Institute of Public Administration, National Institute of Criminology and Forensic Sciences, Prof. Hargopal of the Central University, Hyderabad and Shri Joseph Gathia, Executive-Director, Centre for Concern for Child-Labour. The task before the Core-Group included preparation of the curriculum, training-manual, resource persons, training schedule and the list of the institutions for the training programme. Thus, the NHRC tried to impart

better professional skills to the personnel of human rights institutions (HRIs) through various training programmes.

INTERACTION WITH EXTERNAL GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

The doors of the NHRC are open to one and all, because it believes in the transparency of its functioning. Moreover, it provides opportunity to interact with various types of people which is important in understanding the ground realities of the problems concerning human rights issues. For these reasons, the NHRC interacts with outside people whether they be Indians or foreigners; whether individuals or organizations; and whether official or non-governmental.

The work of the NHRC has evinced interest both in the diplomats stationed in India and in the political and academic circle abroad. The NHRC has had several occasions for discussions with members of the diplomatic corps stationed in Delhi. Ministers and other leading personalities visiting the country have often called on the NHRC. Eminent parliamentarians, senators and congressmen, jurists, scholars, journalists and representatives of international nongovernmental organizations, including Amnesty International have visited the NHRC headquarters and exchanged views with its officials.

The NHRC has welcomed to its headquarters several delegations and functionaries of other regional and national human rights institutions and United Nation as officials as well. A two member delegation comprising the Deputy Chairperson and Executive Secretary of the South African Human Rights Commission, the Chief Commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission, the Chairperson of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, the Director-General of UNESCO, an Associate Administrator of UNDP, the Executive Director of UNICEF, and a number of visiting professors, from abroad interacted with the NHRC.

The interaction is always a two-way process. It is not that the NHRC has been approached by the external groups and organizations all the time, but it has also reached out to other external groups and organizations and contributed towards international cooperation for the promotion of human rights. The Chairperson of the NHRC has had the honour of serving as the Chair of the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights since April 1996. The NHRC was also requested by the United Nations to depute a member of the NHRC or the Secretary-General to participate in the workshops on National Institutions that were organized in Mongolia, Moldova and Jordan where they were considering establishing such institutions. Further, a member of the NHRC participated in the meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in Paris. Similarly, the NHRC has also been sending its officials to various seminars, workshops, training-programmes and study tours to make them learn from others experiences and also to share their own experiences with others.

NETWORKING WITH NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Indispensability of non-government organizations to the protection and promotion of human rights is a well known fact. That is why, the NHRC is called upon by the Statute to encourage the efforts made by the non-governmental organizations in the field of human rights. The NHRC has also recognized the significance of the role of non-governmental organizations in discharging the duties assigned to it under the Statute; and it considers non-governmental organizations as its natural allies, sternest critics and indispensable partners.

The NHRC has perceived its relationship with non governmental organizations as both the constructive and critical, and in both senses it is crucial for the protection and promotion of human rights. The constructive relationship of the NHRC with non government organizations is revealed in the now well established cooperation between the two in respect of the receipt and handling of complaints relating to human rights, and the conduct of seminars and workshops. Also, non-governmental organizations render invaluable contribution in imparting human rights education and training and in spreading human rights awareness. They are of immense help in providing valuable policy-inputs based on their research studies. In their critical role too, they are the eyes and ears of the NHRC.

With a view to supplement its own efforts, the NHRC has drawn on the vast pool of talent and commitment provided by the non-governmental organizations. No field of activity of the NHRC

now remains insulated from these organizations whose advice has been sought on ways to make it more effective. The NHRC utilizes the services of non-governmental organizations in reaching out to the grassroot levels and getting their perspective in understanding complex problems affecting dalits, tribals, child-labour, child-prostitutes, women, disabled, migrants and other vulnerable groups. The non-governmental organizations are also involved in various research projects and programmes in association with the NHRC. They also act as the resource bank for various counselling and practical training programmes.

In order to strengthen the cooperation with non-governmental organizations, the NHRC has also extended modest financial support to these organizations in organizing various programmes of relevance to human rights, such as, study programme, seminars, workshops and training programme etc. The NHRC also sponsored representatives of three non-governmental organizations for a three week International Human Rights Training Programme conducted by the Canadian Human Rights Foundation during June-July 1997, together with members of its own staff. Thus, the NHRC considers it important to help strengthen the capacity of non-governmental organizations through the training of their staff.

Convinced of the need and the benefit of working closely with the non-governmental organizations, the NHRC has been working to prepare a directory of all these non-governmental organizations with a view to expand and strengthen the network of these organizations. This will add to systematized working of the NHRC. Furthermore, the NHRC is planning to set-up an 'NGO - Liaison and Service' unit under its Projects and Programme Division for the purpose of creating a database of active and credible NGOs in the human rights field and promote networking amongst them and the NHRC.

From the above, it is evident that the NHRC's commitment to human rights is total. It has given equal attention to the task of promotion of human rights. The enormity of the challenge has strengthened its resolve to work endlessly for the promotion of human rights. Its all inclusive approach has helped it to get the support of various organizations in this task. The systematic and methodical way has simplified the task. Realizing the fact that promotion of human rights culture is a long-term approach, the NHRC has adopted multi-pronged strategy to cultivate human rights values through education, campaigning, publicity and training etc.

REFERENCES

1. Annual Report of the NHRC (1993-2000).
2. Memorandum of Action Taken Report of the Annual Report of the NHRC (1998-99): Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.
3. Memorandum of Action Taken Report on the Annual Report of the NHRC (1995-96): Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.
4. Section 12 (f) (g) (h) (i) and (j), The Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993.

How to cite this article:

Gautam P. (2018): Role of the NHRC in the Promotion of Human Rights. Annals of Education, Vol. 4[2]: June, 2018: 10-14.