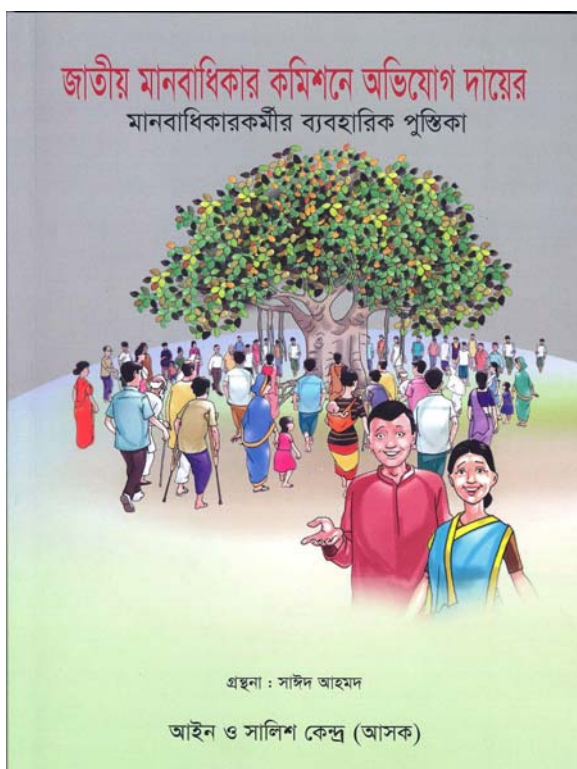


A Practical Handbook on filing complaints to the NHRC

Summary of the Publication

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) was established by the National Human Rights Commission Act 2009 to abridge the people, deprived of rights or victims of violation of rights, with the State. The reconstituted Commission has started working since June 23, 2010. Since its inception, the NHRC's main concern was to see a human rights culture is created in the society. The Commission believes that to ensure the dignity of human beings, full realization of human rights is essential and to that end culture of human rights is necessary in every sphere of the society.

The need for such a publication on filing complaint to the NHRC has been felt because of requirement of a guideline on how the NHRC can work as a bridge between the State and the



stakeholders or the people deprived of their rights. Therefore, it can be said that this publication, as a guideline, is the first step toward fulfillment of this necessity of realization of rights.

This publication is a practical handbook on filing complaint before the NHRC. Those who want to know about the complaint procedure of the NHRC, especially those who are in need of filing a complaint before the Commission directly, are expected to be benefited by this publication. Considering people from all spheres of the society,

simplicity has been prioritized in use of language. But ASK does not claim hundred percent success in this work. Rather, that part of evaluation rests with the users of it. ASK expects opinions from the users, which it would consider while publishing the second edition of this work.

A number of methods have been followed in this publication considering selection of issues, use of language etc. As a first step of publication, such a person has been selected as the

author of this handbook, who has a long experience of working as a human rights activist and has also intimately worked with the NHRC. The author, Sayeed Ahmad first set a list of contents upon discussion with the staff members of Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK). Then a sharing meeting was held on the draft contents of the publication with representatives of some non-governmental organizations in the presence of Dr. Mizanur Rahman, the Chairman and Neerupa Dewan, one of the Members of the NHRC. A good bunch of suggestions were obtained from that discussion which have enriched the contents of this publication. In the next step, the draft handbook was prepared and shared with taskforce members, different professionals, CBO's in twelve districts of the country (Sirajganj, Gaibandha, Kishoreganj, Netrakona, Mymensingh, Naogan, Jaipurhat, Jheindah, Pabna, Kushtia, Rajshahi, Sunamganj) with the assistance of grass roots partner organizations of ASK i.e. Manabdhikar Nari Samaj (MNS, organization of women leaders), Manabdhikar Sangrakkhan Parishad (MSP, organization of local opinion leaders including men and women), Manabdhikar Ainjibi Parishad (MAP, organization of local pro-bono lawyers) and members of the local partner organizations. In those places, opinion was collected through a survey with a questionnaire on the simplicity of language of the manual, ease of understanding, coherence of language with the illustrations etc. Based on all the opinions gathered, almost a final version of the handbook had been prepared. At the end, it was finalized by incorporating the suggestions of the Chairman, other Members and concerned officials of the NHRC.

ASK already has formed a taskforce with 108 members of the community organizations from 12 districts. In total 36 persons, three from each district; have been nominated as focal persons for the task force. These 36 focal persons will be trained on the institutional structure of the NHRC, complaint procedure of the Commission and will be instructed on how to use the handbook practically. These members of the taskforce shall systematically record the incidents of human rights violations in their respective areas and will send them to the NHRC.

Divided into four chapters, the publication contains in its first chapter some concepts regarding human rights such as concept of human rights, responsibilities of the State and the citizens in order to ensure human rights. The second chapter contains the powers and mandate of the National Human Rights Commission. The main part of this publication is the third chapter. In this part different aspects of filing complaints in the Commission have been

depicted with illustrations and conversations with questions. Especially, answers of the minute questions, such as ‘whether human rights of a person has been violated or not’, ‘on which issues a person or an institution can file a complaint in the Commission and what procedure should be followed’, ‘which of the issues are beyond the powers and jurisdiction of the National Human Rights Commission’ etc. could be found in this chapter. In the last part of the publication some important documents including the biography of each member of the Commission, the National Human Rights Commission Act 2009, the ‘form’ for filing complaints in the Commission have been annexed.

Bangladesh, where violations of human rights have been taking place in a continuous manner, and where there are violations that could not be stopped yet by the legal machineries of the State; it is expected that this handbook will play an important role in strengthening the modes of realization of human rights. The human rights defenders can have a clear idea about their work by using this handbook. At the same time, the people at large will know about the procedure of filing complaints before the Commission. As a result, the task of filing complaint before the Commission following proper procedure would be relatively easier and more expeditious. In addition to that the movement of establishing a human rights culture in the society would be strengthened.

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