Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere, said the late civil rights activist, Dr Martin Luther King, Jr.

Perhaps no campaign has embodied those sentiments better than Amnesty's flagship campaign Write for Rights, an annual letter-writing marathon, which sees people from across the globe rally in support of individuals whose rights have been violated or are currently under threat.

For this year's campaign, Amnesty decided to put its might behind a group of young activists who are taking on the world's biggest crises. These include people like Yasaman Aryani, a 24-year-old activist from Iran, who was sentenced to 16 years in prison for campaigning against the country's forced veiling laws and Grass yogurt Narrows Youth, a group of youth activists from an indigenous community in Canada, who have suffered one of Canada's worst health crises.

During the campaign, we are often asked about the value of such work. People come to us and say, why should I campaign for someone who is a thousand miles away or what good will a single letter do to ensure that a person gets justice? And this gives us the perfect opportunity to explain the impact Amnesty's campaign has had over the years.

In 2016 Moses Akatugba was granted a full pardon in Nigeria after pressure from Amnesty supporters. He had been wrongfully sentenced to death for a crime committed when he was 16. Similarly, in 2018, online activist Mahadine was freed after spending more than 18 months in a Chad prison on fabricated charges. Nearly 700,000 people wrote for his freedom. And just last year, Gulzar Duishenova's campaign for disability rights paid off when Kyrgyzstan signed up to the Disability Rights Convention. Supporters wrote nearly 250,000 messages backing her calls.

Therefore, we truly believe that a single letter has the power to change a life. It brings hope to people in distress, and when the letters arrive in huge numbers, it serves as a reminder to authorities and the governments that the world is watching.

It is with the same spirit that Amnesty Nepal recently organized a rally to condemn the ongoing crackdown on peaceful demonstrations in India. Right to dissent is a cornerstone of every rights-respecting society and when that right gets violated, we need to speak up, regardless of where the violation is taking place.

Lastly, we want to thank each member and supporter who have worked tirelessly to make the Write for Rights campaign a success. These actions, we know, will not go in vain.

QUOTE: “A right delayed is a right denied.” – Martin Luther King, Jr.
On 28. November 2019, Amnesty International Nepal launched its global letter-writing campaign “Write for Rights”, whereby supporters worldwide write letters for people whose rights are under threat or are being violated.

This year, Amnesty is campaigning for young human rights defenders. Among others, Amnesty International Nepal is campaigning for Yasaman Aryani, a young Iranian activist, who was sentenced to 16 years in prison for campaigning against forced veiling laws; Sarah Mardini and Sean Binder, two humanitarian workers, who were charged with 'people smuggling' by Greek authorities for participating in a rescue operation of refugees and are now facing up to 25 years in prison, and 17-year-old Magai Matiop Ngong of South Sudan, who was sentenced to death in November 2017 while still a child, in contravention of both South Sudanese law and international law.

This year’s campaign kicked off with a one-day workshop for members of Amnesty’s group and youth networks in order to orient them about the year’s theme and campaign strategies. The workshop was held at a training hall of the Agricultural Development Bank in Bhaktapur.

Following the workshop, members of Youth Networks held their own letter-writing events at Patan, Bhaktapur and Kathmandu Durbar Squares.
Celebrities participate in Amnesty's campaign against Acid Attack

As parts of its ongoing campaign against Violence Against Women, Amnesty Nepal has been collecting petitions demanding the Nepali government implement the 2017 Supreme Court order on regulating sale and distribution of acids.

Amnesty’s campaign was endorsed by blogger Mr Lex Limbu and musician Ms Bartika Rai, both of whom enjoy a massive following on social media. The two recorded video messages, appealing the government to introduce regulatory policies concerning sale of acids.

Executive Director of Amnesty International Nepal, Mr Nirajan Thapaliya, said: "Incidents of acid attacks, which mainly target young girls, have been on the rise in the country. It’s time for the government to take this issue seriously and regulating the sale and distribution of acids which are currently easily available in the market can be a good first step."

The petitions will be delivered to Home Minister, Mr. Ram Bahadur Thapa at the end of the campaign.

AGM concludes with adoption of two HR resolutions

Amnesty International Nepal held its 28th Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Dharan on 8 and 9 November. Honorable Justice Anup Raj Sharma, chair of the National Human Rights Commission, graced the opening ceremony as the chief guest. In his speech, Justice Sharma emphasized the need to adopt a holistic approach to transitional justice. Other speakers at the inaugural sessions included Mr Bhagiram Chaudhary, Chair of the Conflict Victims Common Platform, Ms. Devi Sunwar, central committee member of the Conflict Victims National Alliance, Mr Maniram Neupane, Justice at Sunsari District Court, Mr. Raju Prasad Chapagai, Chair of the Constitutional Lawyers' Forum, Dr. Anjhula Mya Singh Bais, Amnesty’s International Board member and Charan Prasai, Amnesty Nepal’s former Chair.
After the opening session, the AGM participants took part in a silent protest march demanding an end to violence against women and regulate the sale of acids. Amnesty International Nepal’s youth members affiliated to Central Campus of Dharan Youth Network organized a street drama depicting the consequences of acid attacks.

Ms Manju Bhandari, Acting Chief and Deputy Mayor of Dharan sub-metropolitan city, was the chief guest at the closing ceremony. The 28th AGM was formally closed by the Chair, Mr Bikram Dhukuchhu, who thanked all guests, participants, staff, volunteers, observers and supporters for their contribution towards making the meeting a success.

Mr Pradip Pokharel, advisor to the board, congratulated Amnesty Nepal members for a successful AGM and urged all membership to continue speaking out for thousands of conflict victims who are yet to receive justice.

The AGM concluded with the adoption of two human rights resolutions: Resolution on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCRs) and Resolution on the Internal Measures to Mitigate Global Warming.

**EVENT TIMELINE**

**December:**

- On 20 December, Amnesty Nepal organized a solidarity march to condemn the Indian State’s brutal crackdown on peaceful demonstrations. Over 100 people participated in the march.
- On 17 December, Amnesty Nepal and Amnesty International South Asian Regional Office (SARO) jointly organized a consultation workshop with civil society organizations working on migrant workers' rights in Nepal to assess the current recruitment practices. Discussions also focused on major challenges and potential solutions to address recruitment abuses and exploitation through legislative interventions and practices.

- On 10 December, Amnesty Nepal held a candle light vigil at Basantapur Durbar Square to mark the International Human Rights Day.

November:

- Amnesty Nepal organized its 28th annual general meeting in Dharan sub-metropolitan city of Sunsari district on 8 and 9 November 2019. The AGM concluded with the adoption of two human rights resolutions: Resolution on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCRs) and Resolution on the Internal Measures to Mitigate Global Warming.

- Amnesty Nepal held a one-day workshop for its members on the Write for Rights Campaign. Representatives from group and youth networks participated in the workshop held at Bhaktapur on 25 November.

- A workshop on housing and land policies organized by Nepal Mahila Ekta Samaj and Nepal Basobas Basti Samrakshyan Samaj and supported by Amnesty International Nepal was held on 20 November 2019. The workshop was aimed at increasing awareness among local representatives in Kathmandu Metropolitan City on the issue of land and housing rights.
October:

- October 2. Amnesty Nepal, Community Self Reliance Centre (CSRC) and Justice and Rights Institute Nepal (JuRI-Nepal) made public their joint briefing entitled Land for Landless Peasants: Comments and Recommendations on the Amendment to the Lands Act 1964. The briefing highlighted 17 crucial recommendations related to land reforms in Nepal.

September:

- September 13. Amnesty Nepal submitted a letter to the Ambassador of India to Nepal, His Excellency Mr Manjeev Singh Puri, urging the Government of India to remove the communications blackout in Kashmir.

- As part of its commitment to the global climate action week, Amnesty Nepal worked with a host of other organizations to conduct a series of actions from 20 to 27 September.
On 16 September, Amnesty Nepal organized a panel discussion titled “Climate Change: Intersectional Understanding and Role of Youth” at the Nepal Law Campus in Kathmandu. The event was organized to mark the conferring of the Ambassador of Conscience award to Greta Thunberg, the 16-year-old Swedish activist and the leader of the Fridays for Future movement.

Over 200 youth activists participated in a demonstration rally to express solidarity with the Fridays for Future movement.

August:

To mark the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances (IDD) Amnesty Nepal in association with 19 other civil society and conflict victims’ organizations, held a candle light vigil at Maitighar Mandala. Participants expressed their disappointment at the continuing state of impunity and demanded speedy justice. The candle light vigil was arranged in the numbers “1350+” in memory of those who were forcefully disappeared during the conflict.

17 August. Amnesty Nepal organized a residential workshop for journalists covering human rights issues in Nepal with the objective of highlighting the role of journalists as human rights defenders. Around 30 journalists participated in the workshop.
July:

- July 29. Amnesty International, the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), Human Rights Watch, and TRIAL International released a joint statement calling out the Government of Nepal for its failure to fulfill its commitment to provide justice for the victims of the country’s decade-long armed conflict.

- July 20. Representatives from Amnesty International Nepal, Justice and Rights Institute Nepal (JuRI-Nepal), Community Self Reliance Centre (CSRC) and National Land Rights Forum jointly submitted a letter to the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) urging it to monitor, investigate and recommend the Government on issues related to violation of the right to unhindered access to their land, right to food and food sovereignty, right to property of peoples affected by the flood and subsequent change of the course by the Geruwa river in Bardiya district.

- July 19. Amnesty International Nepal submitted its analysis of Nepal’s law on right to housing to the Urban Development Minister Mohammed Istiyak Rayi.

- July 17. Amnesty International Nepal, Justice and Rights Institute Nepal (JuRI-Nepal) and Mahila Ekata Samaj submitted a letter to the Butwal Sub-Metropolitan City Chief Shivaraj Subedi expressing grave concern on the forced evictions of the 16 families of Bitauri Masjid Tole, Ward No.1 of Butwal.

- On 11 and 12 July, Amnesty International Nepal and Pravasi Nepali Coordination Committee (PNCC) jointly organized an interactive forum for returnee migrant workers to discuss different options and ways of reintegration and the role the three levels of government can play to facilitate such reintegration.

- The second phase of the Campaigns Skill Development Workshop was held on 4 and 5 July at Gaindakot in Nawalpur District. The workshop had over 50 participants from different groups and youth networks.
Amnesty International Nepal along with other human rights organizations organized a protest outside the Sri Lanka embassy in Maharajgunj in Kathmandu, demanding the Sri Lankan Government rescind its decision to end a 43-year-long moratorium on the death penalty. On 26 June 2019, Sri Lanka’s then President Maithripala Sirisena signed death warrants of four people convicted of drug abuse offence.

GLOBAL NEWS

Amnesty International Secretary General steps down

Kumi Naidoo, Amnesty International’s Secretary General, stepped down from his position due to health-related reasons. The International Board announced it had accepted his resignation.

“It has been a huge privilege to have worked with our excellent and committed staff and volunteers at the International Secretariat as well as with our Sections. I have been inspired by the important and courageous work being done by our movement. But due to my health, I have no choice but to take this painful decision and step down” said Naidoo in a statement.

Deputy Secretary General, Julie Verhaar, will now take up the role of Acting Secretary General until a replacement is recruited.

Climate change ranks highest as vital issue of our time -- Generation Z survey

Climate change is one of the most important issues facing the world, according to a major new survey of young people published by Amnesty International earlier this month.

More than 10,000 people aged 18-25 from 22 countries were questioned for the “Future of humanity” survey.

They were asked for their opinion on the current state of human rights in their country and the world, which issues they feel are most important and who they feel is responsible for addressing human rights abuses.
Respondents were asked to pick up to five issues from a list of 23 major issues facing the world. In total, 41% of respondents said climate change was one of the most important issues facing the world, followed by 36% who chose pollution and 31% who selected terrorism.

To read more about the survey, click: Generation Z Survey
(Source: amnesty.org)

**World-renowned artists create art to raise funds for Amnesty**

Eleven world-renowned artists including Yoko Ono, Shilpa Gupta and Gerhard Richter have come together to create a collection of original, limited-edition art to raise money for Amnesty International’s human rights work.

Art 19 -- Box One is a collection of ten limited edition, fine art prints. The art prints were first exhibited in Berlin on December 10, 2019 and will be shown at exhibitions in Czech Republic, Switzerland and France.

“The money raised from the sale of these art works will contribute to Amnesty International’s vital human rights work. We are so grateful to the artists for using their immense creativity to give such substantial support for the work we do,” said Kumi Naidoo, Amnesty International’s Secretary General.

Artists Ayse Erkmen, Shilpa Gupta, Ilya and Emilia Kabakov, William Kentridge, Shirin Neshat, Yoko Ono, Gerhard Richter, Chiharu Shiota, Kiki Smith and Rosemarie Trockel created the works without charge to benefit Amnesty International.

To read more, click: Artists raise funds for Amnesty
(Source: amnesty.org)
Amnesty Nepal
National Board Representatives

Chairperson: Bikram Dhukuchhu
Vice-Chairperson: Parbata Acharya
General Secretary: Karna Bahadur Kunwar
Deputy General Secretary: Bipin Budathoki
Treasurer: Suresh Prasad Upadhyaya

Members:
Mahesh Kumar Paudyal
Sangita Chapagain
Nikhil Pokharel
Shachita Kuikel
Govinda Wagle
Samiksha Koirala

Amnesty Nepal
Appeal Committee Representatives

Coordinator: Sudeep Kumar Sharma Bhatt

Members:
Naidu Kumari Nepali
Jeevan Prasad Phuyal

Published by

Amnesty International Nepal
Amnesty Marga, Basantapur
P.O. Box 135, Balaju
Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: +977 1 4364706 or 4365431
Fax: +977 1 4354987
Email: info@amnestynepal.org
www.amnestynepal.org