



NHRC, India takes *suo motu* cognizance of misuse of its name and logo by Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) registered under names deceptively similar to it

Notes such violations continuing despite informing the concerned authorities to take strict action against people behind such dubious organisations

Observes that continuation of such illusory names may erode public trust, lead to misuse of mandate, possible misappropriation of funds and create confusion for public authorities in distinguishing between a statutory body like NHRC and NGOs

Notices issued to Chief Secretaries and DGPs of all States/UTs to take action within two weeks

Additionally, further reports sought from Karnataka Chief Secretary and DGP as well as Delhi Chief Secretary and Commissioner of Police on the matter of an NGO registered as “National Human Rights Council (NHRC)” using misleading credentials and designations

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The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India has been receiving complaints from individual complainants as well as Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) across the country alleging violation of human rights. While examining these complaints, the Commission has observed that several NGOs have got themselves registered under names deceptively similar to that of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC).

Recently, the Commission came across an NGO registered as “National Human Rights Council (NHRC)”, reportedly registered with the Government of NCT of Delhi in 2022. Its publicity material claims, “Registered by Govt. of NITI Aayog”, “Registered by Ministry of Corporate Affairs, India”, “Registered under Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India” and association with “Andhra Pradesh Human Rights Council Association”. A visiting card apparently related to the said organisation also bears the inscription “Venkatesh, State Chairman, Karnataka”.

Considering the gravity of the matter, it has taken *suo motu* cognizance of the matter. It has observed that the name adopted and the designation “Chairman” is misleading and creates confusion. Deceptive nomenclature misleads the public into believing that these organisations are either part of the National Human Rights Commission or recognised/ authorised by it to deal with human rights issues.

The Commission is of the view that continuation of such illusory names may erode public trust, lead to misuse of mandate, possible misappropriation of funds and create confusion for public authorities in distinguishing between a statutory body like NHRC and NGOs.

The Commission had earlier expressed concern through various platforms regarding the misuse of its name and logo and informed the authorities concerned to take action against the people behind such dubious organisations. However, violations continue to come to its notice.

Therefore, the Commission has issued notices to the Chief Secretaries and Director Generals of Police of all the States/ UTs to identify such NGOs/ individuals misusing the name of the National Human Rights Commission or using names deceptively similar to it and take immediate legal action within two weeks, including cancellation of registrations obtained in violation of norms. They have also been asked to sensitise registering authorities to remain vigilant and take necessary action against defaulters.

Additionally, in the instant matter of National Human Rights Council (NHRC), the Chief Secretary and the Director General of Police, Karnataka and the Chief Secretary and the Commissioner of Police, Delhi have been further directed to submit reports within two weeks regarding the action taken against the NGO, having its office in Karnataka and registered in Delhi.

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