

NHRC, India's Online Short Term Internship Programme for May 2026 begins

100 university-level students from diverse academic backgrounds shortlisted out of 1,417 applicants

Chairperson, Justice V. Ramasubramanian says, the internship aims to help students become more empathetic, fair and sensitive towards society and human rights issues

NHRC Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal stresses compassion for the needy and character-building

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The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India began its two-week Online Short Term Internship Programme (OSTI) for university-level students. Chairperson, NHRC, Justice V. Ramasubramanian inaugurated the programme in the presence of Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal, Joint Secretary, Smt. Sainingpuii Chhakchhuak, Director, Shri Irsad Alam and senior officers. 100 students from diverse academic backgrounds, shortlisted out of 1,417 applicants from 29 states and union territories across the country, are undergoing the internship. The two-week programme will conclude on 29th May 2026.



Addressing them, Justice V. Ramasubramanian said that the world is facing nearly 130 armed conflicts, the highest since World War II, underscoring the growing importance of human rights awareness and dialogue. Citing the Global Peace Index 2025, he said that 98 countries are currently experiencing external conflicts and the global economic damage has reached nearly 20 trillion dollars. He noted that more than 120 non-state armed groups are involved in these conflicts, many of which have continued for over a

decade, leading generations to grow up amid violence and insecurity. He said that over 122 million people worldwide have been forcibly displaced, while in 17 countries, more than five per cent of the population are refugees or internally displaced.



Justice Ramasubramanian noted that technology has created new opportunities for communication and participation in society. At the same time, it has also contributed to unrest and instability in several instances, with protests amplified through social media at times turning violent and influencing political developments in different countries. Referring to ethical and philosophical questions surrounding justice and fairness, he encouraged the interns to remain open to dialogue and differing viewpoints. Stressing the importance of empathy or 'Daya,' which is regarded in Indian scriptures as the greatest dharma, he said that the programme aims to help students become more empathetic, fair and sensitive towards society and human rights issues.



Earlier, NHRC, India Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal said that the OSTI, launched during the COVID-19 pandemic, enables students from across the country to participate without facing financial and logistical constraints. He said that the number of internship programmes conducted annually has increased from three or four in a year to six, while the intake has risen from 80 to 100 students per batch. This enables the NHRC to reach 600 students in a year through this format. Urging the interns to make full use of the opportunity, he encouraged them to imbibe constitutional values of equality, justice and fraternity and to develop the capability to observe. He also urged the interns to develop sensitivity and the ability to reflect before reacting to situations.



Emphasising the need for sensitivity and compassion in daily life, he urged the interns to extend support to those in need. He highlighted the focus of the two-week programme on building the character of the interns and preparing them to face future challenges.

Smt. Saidingpuii Chhakchhuak, Joint Secretary, NHRC gave a detailed overview of the internship programme. The interns will have 45 sessions curated for them, with 40 eminent speakers drawn from a pool of senior government officials, academicians, human rights defenders, representatives from international organisations, civil society organisations and experts in law enforcement, mental health, child rights and human rights protection. The interns will also have virtual tours of a Police station, Tihar Prison and Asha Kiran Shelter Home to gain practical insights into their functioning. The programme will also include interactive learning activities such as book review competitions, declamation and group research project presentations.

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