



INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF JURISTS

Commission internationale de juristes - Comisión Internacional de Juristas

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PRESS RELEASE

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Human rights defenders detained in Nepal: *The ICJ calls for their immediate release*

The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) today called for the immediate release of human rights defender Krishna Pahadi, arrested on Wednesday, 9 February in Kathmandu. Krishna Pahadi is the founding chairman of the Human Rights and Peace Society (HURPES).

The ICJ also called for the immediate release of at least eight human rights defenders arrested during a protest rally organised by HURPES today in Putalisadak. These human rights defenders are detained along with scores of political and student leaders and several lawyers and journalists since King Gyanendra took direct rule and declared a state of emergency on 1 February. The Government must grant detainees immediate access to lawyers, the National Human Rights Commission, their families and necessary medical assistance. The Government should immediately issue details of those who have been detained since 1 February, why they are being detained and where they are held.

“Human rights defenders must be allowed to carry out their legitimate duties,” said the ICJ. “Arrests of human rights defenders will only bring more instability and will not solve Nepal’s problems.”

The ICJ remains concerned about the health and safety of Sindhu Nath Pyakurel, former President of the Nepal Bar Association, detained on 3 February. On Wednesday, 9 February, the Supreme Court ordered that Sindhu Nath Pyakurel should be brought to the court within three days. It is now up to the security forces to comply with the judicial order. The ICJ calls upon the remedy of habeas corpus to be made fully available and effective as required under Nepali and international law.

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The ICJ is an international non-governmental organisation comprising sixty of the world's most eminent jurists and has a worldwide network of national sections and affiliated organisations

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