

Human Rights Watch World Report 2015 - caste extracts

Caste-based discrimination and neglect of tribal communities is also a continuing problem in India, as is sexual abuse and other violence against women and children. Pg. 277

Dalits (so-called Untouchables) and tribal groups continued to face discrimination and violence. The difficulties the Dalit community has in obtaining justice were highlighted by recent court verdicts in four cases in Bihar and one in Andhra Pradesh states. In each of the cases, the courts overturned convictions in high-profile incidents that took place between 1991 and 2000 involving killings of Dalits due to lack of evidence, highlighting the failure of prosecutorial authorities.

Despite numerous initiatives and laws prohibiting “manual scavenging”—the cleaning by hand of human waste by members of communities considered low caste—the practice persists. Those who try to leave such work face retribution, including threats of violence or displacement. In March 2014, the Supreme Court held that India’s constitution requires state intervention to end the practice. P. 279

Legal reforms were introduced in response to the 2012 Delhi gang-rape and murder, but at time of writing the Indian government had yet to introduce monitoring and reporting mechanisms to track their implementation. Reports of rape—including of Dalit women, individuals with disabilities, and children—continued to make national news in 2014, leading to protests. P. 281

By awarding its peace prize to Kailash Satyarthi, the Nobel committee drew attention to the continuing employment of children in the worst of labor. The Right to Education Act and government schemes have resulted in near-universal enrolment of children in early grades. But millions of children, particularly from vulnerable Dalit, tribal, and Muslim communities, facing discrimination, inadequate support in government schools, and pressures to earn money, soon drop out and start working. P. 281

Read the full report here: <http://www.hrw.org/world-report/2015>