

## US State Department 2013 Human Rights Report on Nepal – Caste Excerpts

<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/220612.pdf>

Violence associated with caste-based discrimination occurred. There were some restrictions on worker rights, and forced, bonded, and child labor remained significant problems. (pg.2)

No specific laws restrict women, indigenous people, or minorities from voting or participating in government or political parties, but tradition limited the participation of women, some castes, and some ethnic groups in the political process. (pg. 17)

The law prohibits discrimination based on race, caste, gender, disability, language, and social status, but the government did not effectively enforce these prohibitions. Despite passage of the Caste Discrimination and Untouchability Act in 2011, a rigid caste system continued to operate throughout the country in many areas of religious, professional, and daily life. Societal discrimination against lower castes, women, and persons with disabilities remained common, especially in rural areas. Transnational and internal sex and labor trafficking persisted. (pg. 20)

Traditional beliefs about witchcraft negatively affected rural women, especially widows, the elderly, persons of low economic status, or members of the lower Dalit caste. (pg. 22)

Discrimination against lower castes and some ethnic groups was especially common in the Tarai region and in rural areas. (pg. 26)

Caste-based discrimination is illegal, and the government outlawed the public shunning of Dalits and made an effort to protect the rights of disadvantaged castes. Progress in reducing discrimination was more successful in urban areas. Better education and higher levels of prosperity, especially in the Kathmandu Valley, were slowly reducing caste distinctions and increasing opportunities for lower socioeconomic groups. Better-educated, urban-oriented castes continued to dominate politics and senior administrative and military positions and control a disproportionate share of natural resources. Dalits occasionally were barred from entering temples and sharing water sources. (pg. 27)

Resistance to intercaste marriage remained high and in some cases resulted in forced expulsion from the community. On March 14, according to media reports, a Dalit boy married a non-Dalit girl in Rupandehi district without the bride's parents' blessing. As a result, villagers forced the couple to leave their village. On August 6, the couple was forced to divorce in order to stop attacks on the boy's family. (pg. 27)