



Genocide Watch: Nepal February 8, 2024

The Nepalese Civil War (1996-2006) was a conflict between Maoist insurgents and the Nepalese government. Maoist rebels committed [torture, rape, and unlawful killings](#). Out of 286 individuals who should face legal action, [only 30 have been held accountable](#). Since the conflict ended, security forces in Nepal have carried out extrajudicial killings, brutality, and are unwilling to follow through on civilian complaints.

[Corruption in the Nepalese government](#) has affected the distribution of foreign aid to humanitarian efforts in the past. On July 16, 2023, the [government proposed legislation](#) that allows the government to withdraw criminal cases against political leaders if crimes were of “a political nature”. A [transitional justice bill](#) was presented to the Nepalese parliament in March of 2023 which allows pardons in certain cases of murder, sexual violence apart from rape, and beatings. The Nepalese government has additionally announced health budget cuts, and children receive a [very small portion of social protection spending](#) even though they make up 40% of the population. Systemic issues in Nepal include [long case backlogs](#), [obstruction of due process](#), [child labor](#), and [high maternal mortality rates](#). Child marriage is rampant, with [33% of girls and 9% of boys getting married before the age of 18](#).

The Nepalese government fails to prosecute individuals who engage in [caste-based discrimination](#) and [gender-based violence](#), and the [police often refuse to register complaints](#) from vulnerable populations due to stigma. People feel comfortable inciting violence against women and Dalits because there is a lack of fear of law enforcement and a culture of impunity.

Caste hierarchy was established in Nepal in 1769 and legalized in 1854. The Dalit caste is at the bottom of the social hierarchy and makes up [13% of Nepal's population](#). Dalits have [few job opportunities](#), [little access to medical and legal services](#), and are [targeted for human trafficking and sexual slavery](#). Dalits are unprotected from abuse, socially excluded, prohibited from entering temples, unable to marry above their caste, and sometimes are forced to live in segregated neighborhoods. As of 2022, [42% of the Dalit population](#) is living below the poverty line. There has been an increase in violence against Dalits since the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2019, [49 cases of discrimination](#) against Dalits were recorded. In 2020, the count spiked to [753 reported cases](#), including 34 murders.

Women are assigned a subservient position to men due to [social, religious, and economic norms](#) in Nepal. Women are often [dependent on their husband's assets and illiterate](#), so they cannot live sustainably on their own. [22% of Nepali women](#) ages 15-49 have been physically abused, and [7%](#) have been sexually abused. Women also face forced marriage, [human trafficking](#), [few job and education opportunities](#), and [difficulty acquiring property](#). In agrarian communities, women are banished to menstruation huts or barns when they get their period every month, a practice known as [chhaupadi](#).

Nepal's treatment of women and Dalits demonstrates **Stage 3: Discrimination** and **Stage 4: Dehumanization**.

Genocide Watch recommends:

- The Nepalese parliament does not pass the legislature pardoning the criminal behavior of political figures.
- The Nepalese parliament adds amendments to their transitional justice bill making murder, sexual violence, and beatings illegal; calls for the creation of a special investigation unit to collect evidence of these crimes; and removes the statutes of limitations for these crimes.
- The Nepalese government increases available resources for victims of violence, including hotlines, shelters, mental health services, and increased prosecutions against instances of violence.
- Trade allies of Nepal, such as India, Bangladesh, and the United States, hold the Nepalese government accountable in mitigating humanitarian concerns on a strict timeline through economic sanctions such as trade restrictions or capital blockades.