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16 Years of Horrific Bomb Blast; Victims of Badarmude Incident Still Waiting for Justice

Today marks the 16th year, the victims of Badarmude, Madi Chitwan have been living with a hope that someday the Government will ensure their right to truth, justice, and reparation. On 23 Jestha 2062 (6 June 2005), Maoist cadres laid an ambush and detonated a bomb targeting a bus carrying civilians that resulted in the death of 35 civilians and 3 off-duty security personnel. More than 70 people were seriously wounded and many of them are still undergoing severe physical pain and psychological trauma. Sadly, 6 of the injured have since lost their lives, without any justice.

In this context, Advocacy Forum-Nepal (AF) and Accountability Watch Committee (AWC) stand together with the victims and their families and demand an impartial and independent investigation and prosecution of those involved in the heinous crime.

Immediately after the incident, Puspha Kamal Dahal, (Prachanda), the then Chairman of the Nepal Communist Party (Maoist) had released a press statement, apologizing publicly and committing that the incident will be investigated and the people responsible will be punished. Every time Dahal visits Chitwan he pledges to provide medical treatment along with employment opportunities to the victims among others. However, those promises have not yet come into reality.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established in 2015 to investigate past atrocities and deliver justice to victims during the armed conflict, including Badarmude incident. However, the commission lost its credibility and failed to settle even a single case during the 6 years of its existence so far.

AF and AWC reiterate that the Badarmude incident was a serious violation of national as well as international human rights law. It was against the fundamental provision of humanitarian law that no civilian should be harmed in the course of a conflict. Both AF and AWC strongly condemn that neither the Government nor the transitional justice mechanism have taken any concrete efforts to ensure justice to the victims, despite their repeated public commitments.

Expressing solidarity with the victims of Badarmude incident, AF and AWC strongly urge the Government to conduct a prompt, independent, and impartial investigation into the incident, prosecute the perpetrators, address the immediate needs of the victims, and ensure the victims' right to truth, justice and adequate reparation.

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