



Press Statement

17 August 2023

Victims of Doramba Incident Still Deprived of Justice

Twenty years have passed since the then Royal Nepal Army (RNA) brutally killed 21 people in Doramba, Ramechhap on 17 August 2003 (2060 Shrawan 32) while State and the Maoists were observing a ceasefire. On that day, the RNA had arrived at a civilian's house, where Maoists were attending a meeting, and cordoned them off. Twenty-one people, including civilians, were taken under control, lined up, and shot dead at close range.

The Doramba incident is a flagrant breach of international humanitarian law that guarantees protection to the persons arrested and taken under control during armed conflict and it amounts to war crime.

For the last 20 years, the Doramba incident victims have been waiting for the truth, justice, and reparations, but the State has been apathetic to their demands. The State has fulfilled the victims' demand for memorialization by installing the busts of the extra-judicially executed persons but it has not put any effort to provide them justice.

Currently, a Bill for the Amendment of the Enforced Disappearances Enquiry, Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act (TRC Act), 2014 is under consideration in the parliament. However, the Bill contains several erroneous provisions that effectively deprive conflict victims, including the victims of Doramba incident, of justice.

Recently, three UN Special Rapporteurs and a Working Group have pointed out that certain provisions in the Bill are inconsistent with Nepal's obligations to investigate human rights violations committed during the conflict. The Special Rapporteurs have commented that the categorization of serious human rights violation in the Bill is problematic as the Bill excludes from its current definition of "serious human rights violations" many acts that may amount to gross violations of human rights, war crimes and crimes against humanity and would therefore not be examined by the TRC or subject to prosecution by the Special Court. The Bill's exclusion of war crimes from serious human rights violations will ensure impunity to the perpetrators of the Doramba incident.

Advocacy Forum-Nepal (AF) demands the government amend the Bill in line with the Supreme Court's rulings and Nepal's international obligations and make the law victim-centric.

On the 20th anniversary of the Doramba incident, AF pledges its support for the victims and stands in solidarity with them in their struggle for truth and justice.

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