



Seeking Justice for Four-Year-Old Chandan Patel

On 15 September, 2015, Chandan Patel, a four-year-old permanent resident of Pokhariya Municipality, Parsa district, was shot in the Bethari Market, Rupandehi district. That day, his mother Anita Devi Kurmi had taken him to the market to buy goods for Teej (a sacred festival for Hindu women in Nepal). The victim's family had been living in Rupandehi for last three years.

That evening, the market was particularly crowded because people had gone to buy goods for Teej. All of a sudden, a jam formed on the main road of the market. On high alert, the Nepal Police and the Armed Police Force present at the scene suspected that United Democratic Madhesi Front cadres were behind the abrupt commotion and began firing shots indiscriminately.

With her son in her arms, Anita Devi ran to the outskirts of the market to escape the hail of bullets. However, one of the bullets hit Chandan Patel in the head. Victim's mother Anita called an ambulance to take him to a nearby hospital but the present police did not cooperate to ease the traffic jam. Anita Devi begged police officials to clear the way for ambulance but her request fell on deaf ear. Police's intention was to obstruct the ambulance. She ran across the paddy fields to the factory where her husband, Abdhesh Kurmi, worked. He rushed to the hospital with his son on his bike with the help of a colleague.

Doctors in the Universal Medical College, Bhairahawa pronounced Chandan Patel brought dead. When police officials came to know that Chandan Patel had been declared dead, they took the body in their control and pressured their parents to not disclose the names of the guilty police officials in the FIR they intended to file. In such a situation, being a Hindu, it became more important for Abdhesh Kurmi to momentarily prioritize the performance of cremation rites for Chandan Patel, so he agreed with the police.

When the Patel family went to District Police Office, Rupandehi to file an FIR against the perpetrators, the Police refused to file the case. Later, the Patel family sent the FIR to the District Police Office by Worldwide express courier service to register the FIR with no avail — once again, the police refused to file the FIR. The victim's family made several attempts to file an FIR but they could not do so. The victim's parents then approached THRD Alliance's regional office in Bhairahawa for assistance. A human rights monitor and advocate from THRD Alliance took this matter to the Butwal Appellate Court. The court ordered a writ of mandamus on August, 17, 2017 to District Police Office, Rupandehi to register an FIR as sought by the victim's family.

