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'Media should focus on peace building and transitional justice' (<https://thehimalayantimes.com/kathmandu/media-focus-peace-building-transitional-justice/>)

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Kathmandu, January 23

Action Nepal in partnership with ICRC Nepal organised a national seminar here today. The event mainly focused on the role of media in peace building and transitional justice.

Speakers at the event discussed various forms of armed conflict and challenges for media to cover the stories of disappearance, torture and murder, among other things. They also talked about how media could play an important role in helping the victims of Maoist insurgency in the country get justice.

Speakers at the event said thousands of victims were still awaiting justice and stressed the need for the media to become the voice of voiceless. Citing the challenges for the reporters to cover the stories of victims, Ghana Shyam Khadka, one of the speakers, said journalists faced threats while covering such stories. "Lack of in depth knowledge about transitional justice in the newsroom is another challenge," he added.

Most of the speakers said journalists should talk to the victims to bring out the truth and understand the real pain of the victims.

Manchala Jha, member of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, admitted that the commission was not able to work as it was supposed to. The commission is responsible for finding out the truth about incidents of gross violation of human rights during the armed conflict and recommend legal actions. "We haven't been able to work in a full-fledged manner due to political parties' pressure and lack of proper mechanism to initiate investigation," Jha said.

The speakers also advised journalists to do some research and be more sensitive with such issues. "Media should have highlighted the cases of human rights violation during the insurgency period even after the peace process started."

A version of this article appears in print on January 24, 2018 of The Himalayan Times.

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