**UN-linked body defers accreditation of NHRC-India**

In a setback for India’s human rights record, the Geneva-based, United Nations-linked Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) deferred the accreditation of the National Human Rights Commission-India (NHRC) for the second year in a row. The decision, which can affect India’s ability to vote at the Human Rights Council and some UN General Assembly bodies, was taken during the meeting of the Subcommittee on Accreditation (SCA) on May 1, that included representatives from New Zealand, South Africa, Honduras, and Greece.

**Lack of transparency**

While the committee’s latest report is still awaited, its previous report had cited a number of reasons for recommending the deferral, including the lack of transparency in appointing members to the NHRC, the appointment of police officers to oversee human rights investigations, and the lack of gender and minority representation on the member panel.

The accreditation deferral decision has been conveyed to the NHRC, sources confirmed to The Hindu, indicating that some of the demands made by the international peer review report were difficult to undertake during the election process in India.

“GANHRI wanted us to make some structural changes and incorporate a few suggestions given by them. The same was not possible at this time due to the ongoing general elections,” an official, who asked not to be identified, said confirming the decision. Officials said the deferral was likely to be reviewed later this year, during meetings in September, or again in May next year. The NHRC’s “A-status” has only been deferred once before, in 2016, but it was restored in 2017. This is the first time India’s status has been suspended for two years in a row, in 2023 and in 2024.

The NHRC was set up under the Protection of Human Rights Act, passed by Parliament in 1993. It has been accredited as an ‘A’ Status NHRI since the beginning of the accreditation process for NHRIs in 1999, which it retained in 2006, 2011 and in 2017 also after the deferment.

The ‘A’ status was deferred this time after civil society organisations and human rights activists wrote to the global body, expressing concerns about India’s record.

According to six-point submission by the SCA in March 2023, the NHRC has failed to create conditions required to be “able to operate independent of government interference”.