

Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission

Co-Chairpersons:
Sultana Kamal, Lord Eric Aveybury, Elsa Stamatopoulou

Members:
Shapan Adnan, Sara Hossain, Iftekharuzzaman
Khushi Kabir, Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, Tone Bleie
Lars-Anders Baer, Michael C. van Walt van Praag
Jamal Nazrul Islam, Yasmeen Haque

27 September 2012

To
Her Excellency Sheikh Hasina
Honourable Prime Minister
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Prime Minister's Office
Tejgaon, Dhaka

Subject: Call for immediate exemplary action against perpetrators of violence against Indigenous People in Rangamati on 22 September, 2012.

Your Excellency,

The International CHT Commission (CHTC) shows respect towards the present Government's commitment towards the implementation of the 1997 CHT Accord. However, we condemn yet another round of unprovoked and unacceptable violence against members of the indigenous community by a section of settlers that shook the Rangamati town of the Chittagong Hill Tracts on 22 September 2012. We call upon you to act firmly and without any delay to ensure fully unbiased investigation and bring the perpetrators to justice so that no such incident takes place in the future.

According to credible media reports around 60 persons, mostly from the indigenous community, have been injured in the attack, many of them severely, including a doctor, 12 UP chairmen, teachers, students and villagers. We call upon the Home Ministry to conduct jointly with the CHT Ministry an independent judicial inquiry into this violence, make its findings public and ensure exemplary punishment to those found responsible.

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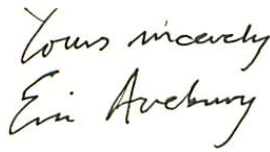
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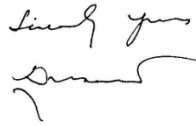
We reiterate our concern that much of the violence in the CHT is related to the land disputes between Bangalis and Paharis, whereas the CHT Land Commission has not yet been able to settle a single land dispute in the three years of its existence. We call upon the Government to take immediate steps to amend the Land Commission Act of 2001, appoint a competent and credible Chairman to the Commission, so that it can start work effectively to fulfill your government's commitment as a part of the CHT Peace Accord as well as your electoral pledge.

We also demand that as a means of building mutual trust the military should be barred from handling civil law and order situations and in line with the 1997 CHT Accord immediately take steps to dismantle all temporary military camps from the CHT. Instead, the police should be immediately trained and equipped to handle such violence and to maintain peace and order in CHT.

On behalf of the CHT Commission,



Eric Avebury
Co-chair of the
CHT Commission



Sultana Kamal
Co-chair of the
CHT Commission



Elsa Stamatopoulou
Co-chair of the
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