

Global Association for Indigenous Peoples of the Chittagong Hill Tracts

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Australia | Canada | China | France | Japan | India | Republic of Korea | Switzerland | UK | USA

11 November 2024

To

1. H.E. Prof. Mohammed Yunus

Chief Advisor, Government of Bangladesh

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2. H.E. Md. Touhid Hossain

Adviser on Foreign Affairs

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Subject: Request to make Interim Government's Inquiry Commission Report into attacks on indigenous peoples in the CHTs, Bangladesh on 19 to 20 September 2024 public

Excellencies,

The Global Association for Indigenous Peoples of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (GAIPCHT), Bangladesh is writing to call upon Your Excellencies to immediately release the report of the seven-member inquiry committee formed to probe the organised attacks on indigenous Jumma peoples at Dighinala and Khagrachari on 19 September 2024 and at Rangamati on 20 September 2024. In these attacks by the illegal plain settlers and the Bangladesh Army, at least four indigenous persons i.e. Mr Dhana Ranjan Chakma, Mr Junan Chakma, Mr Rubel Tripura, and Mr Anik Chakma were killed; at least 75 indigenous Jumma people were seriously injured while at least 142 houses, shops and other business establishments, properties, Buddhist temples were looted, destroyed or set ablaze.¹

¹. For details, please see, "Conflicts In Bangladesh and Myanmar: The Threat To Regional Peace And Security", Rights & Risks Analysis Group, 10 October, 2024, <https://www.rightsrisks.org/by-country/bangladesh/conflicts-in-bangladesh-and-myanmar-the-threat-to-regional-peace-and-security/>

All the indigenous peoples in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) are non-Muslims, they mainly follow Buddhism, Hinduism and Christianity and apart from their ethnic origin, they were targeted for their religious beliefs during the attack on 19 -20 September 2024.

Given the gravity of the attacks, on 21 September 2024, a high-level government delegation consisting of Home Affairs Adviser Lieutenant General (Retired) Jahangir Alam Chowdhur, CHT Affairs Adviser Supradip Chakma and Land and Local Government Minister AF Hasan Arif visited Rangamati and Khagrachari to assess the situation and ordered "*a fair investigation of all incidents related to violence and prosecution of those responsible*".²

On 26 September 2024, the Chittagong Divisional Commissioner formed a seven-member inquiry committee headed by Additional Divisional Commissioner of Chittagong Mr Mohammad Nurullah Noori to submit the report within the next 14 working days. On 30 September 2024, Mr Noori while visiting the affected areas at Rangamati reiterated before the journalists that he would submit the report to the government within 14 days after finding the root causes of the violent incidents, making a list of the victims and informing the government of their losses and making recommendations to prevent recurrence of such violent incidents.³ On 2 October 2024, the Committee visited Larma Square Bazar, Dighinala which was set on fire on 19 September 2024.⁴

The report of the Inquiry Commission was to have been submitted latest by 10 October 2024. However, as on date, no public statement has been made regarding the status of the Inquiry Commission report. This does not bode well for transparency, accountability and rehabilitation of the affected persons in these organised attacks.

It is extremely unfortunate that the Interim Government is following the same path as that of the previous dictatorial governments with respect to impunity for the gross human rights violations against indigenous peoples of the CHTs by not

². 3 advisers in two hill districts to monitor emerging situation, The Daily Bangladesh, 21 September 2024, <https://www.daily-bangladesh.com/english/national/98200>

³. Khagrachari-Rangamati violence inquiry committee visited Rangamati, The Daily Country Today, 30 September 2023, <https://dailycountrytodaybd.com/story/khagrachari-rangamati-violence-inquiry-committee-visited-rangamati>,

⁴. Probe body begins inquiry into recent CHT violence, The New Age, 20 September 2023, <https://www.newagebd.net/post/country/246496/probe-body-begins-inquiry-into-recent-cht-violence>

publishing the inquiry commission reports. In this regard, it is pertinent to mention that the then Government of Bangladesh had established a commission of inquiry headed by Justice Sultan Hossain Khan (retired) into the Logang massacre of 10 April 1992 in which as per official figures about 12 indigenous people were hacked to death. The report of Justice Sultan Hossain Khan was submitted to the Home Ministry of Bangladesh but it has not been made public as on date. Amnesty International in its report on 13 January 1993 had reported the following regarding the failure to make the Logang inquiry commission report public:

"A one-man inquiry commission under retired Justice Sultan Hossain Khan was set up by the government in May 1992 to investigate the incident. Amnesty International repeatedly wrote to the government requesting to be informed of the terms of reference of the commission and to be informed of its findings. A brief report was made available to the public on 8 October 1992. The inquiry confirmed the government's earlier statement that 12 tribal villagers had been killed following the killing of the Bengali boy, Kabir Hossain, and that 13 others had been injured and two were missing. About 550 huts were burned in the incident. It said the VDP and the Ansars acting together with Bengali settlers were jointly responsible for the killings which were a "backlash" against the earlier killing which had caused "fear and panic". Some of those apparently responsible for the extrajudicial executions were said to be in custody and proceedings against them were reported to have begun. In a subsequent communication received by Amnesty International in January 1993, the Government of Bangladesh said the inquiry had "helped identify officials of the local civil and para-military authorities responsible for the tragic incident. The Government has already instituted legal and disciplinary proceedings against the offenders and steps have been taken to strengthen effective supervision of these local forces by their higher authorities to prevent repetition of any such incident in future."⁵

The need to establish transparency and accountability with respect to the gross human rights violations cannot be stressed enough. We are therefore urging the Interim Government of Bangladesh to make the inquiry commission report into the attacks on indigenous peoples in the CHTs from 19 September to 1 October 2024 public.

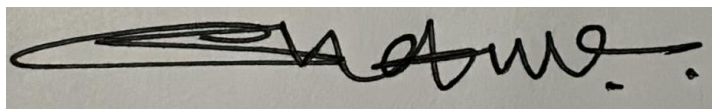
⁵.BANGLADESH: A summary of human rights concerns Amnesty International April 1993 AI Index: ASA 13/01/93 available at <https://www.amnesty.org/es/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/asa130011993en.pdf>

Through this letter/email, we also take the liberty to call upon the international community based in Dhaka to intervene with the Interim Government of Bangladesh to make its own Inquiry Commission Report into the attacks on indigenous peoples in the CHTs on 19-20 September public.

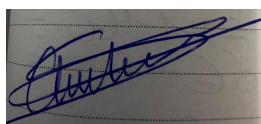
Kindly allow us to reassure Your Excellencies of our highest consideration.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely



1. Arunabha Chakma (Mr), Co-Convenor, USA



2. Samapti Chakma Borgne (Ms), Member, France

Sd/

3. Shiuli Chanpa Chakma (Ms), Member Canada

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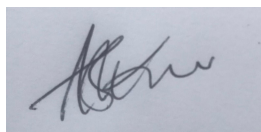
4. Ujjaini Roy (Ms) Member, United Kingdom

Sd/

5. Dr Bhagadutta Chakma, Member, Australia

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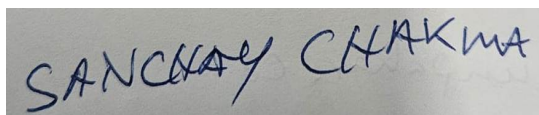
6. Pavel Chakma (Mr), Member, Australia



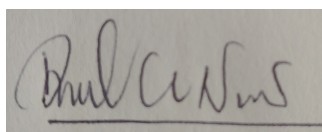
7. Ashu Chakma (Mr), Member, UK



8. Rémi Pflieger-Chakma (Mr), Member, France



9. Sanchay Chakma (Mr), Member, Switzerland



10. Ronel Chakma (Mr), Member, South Korea

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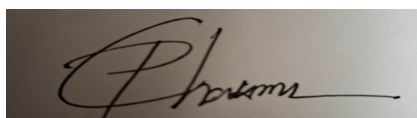
11. Dipti Sankar Chakma (Mr), Member, Japan

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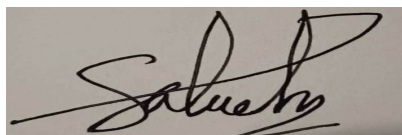
12. Devashish Chakma (Mr), Member, USA

Sd/

13. Sushil Chakma (Mr), Member, USA



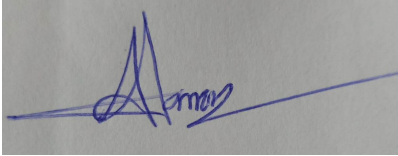
14. Parish Chakma (Mr), Member, USA



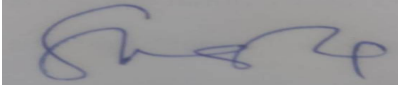
15. Satu Chakma (Mr), Member, China



16. Pragna Tapas Chakma (Mr), Member, Canada

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17. Rev Atma Dip Bhikkhu, France

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Suhas Chakma', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

18. Suhas Chakma (Mr), Convenor