

# Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission

**Co-Chairpersons:**  
Sultana Kamal, Lord Eric Avebury, Elsa Stamatopoulou  
**Members:**  
Shapan Adnan, Sara Hossain, Iftekharuzzaman  
Khushi Kabir, Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, Tone Bleie  
Lars-Anders Baer, Michael C. van Walt van Praag  
Hurst Hannum, Yasmeen Haque  
Myrna Cunningham Kain, Victoria Tauli-Corpuz

## Press Statement

### **CHT Commission Condemns BGB & Police attack on indigenous villagers in Dighinala; Calls for urgent action for independent investigation and justice**

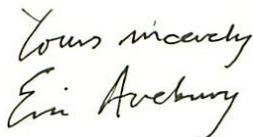
**Dhaka: June 12, 2014.** The International Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission (CHTC) condemns the alleged attack by the 51 Border Guards Bangladesh (BGB) on indigenous villagers in Babuchara Union in Dighinala Upazila of Khagrachari district in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) of Bangladesh in the afternoon of June 11, 2014. The CHTC calls upon the Government to take immediate action to ensure fully independent and impartial investigation and bring the guilty to justice in a manner to prevent any further recurrence.

According to news reports, between 14 to 17 people have been injured in this attack which was over a long-standing dispute over land which the BGB has been trying to use to set up a new battalion.

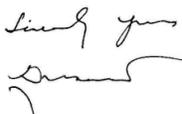
There is a Court Stay Order over the land which says that no one is to use the piece of land in question until the Court has given its verdict over the ownership of the said land. Local indigenous people have been using this land for cultivation for many years and it was only in 1991, during the insurgency and before land ownership issues were settled, that the Government of Bangladesh took the initiative to build a BGB Battalion there, to which the locals protested as they had customary ownership of the land. It is most regrettable and unacceptable that members of the disciplined forces like BGB and police defy the Court Order and involve in gross violation of human rights of the innocent people of the indigenous community.

In the incident of June 11, there are allegations that both the BGB and nearby police attacked and injured local indigenous people who protested the setting up of the battalion and also used tear gas on them. It is completely unacceptable for state authorities to use such brutal force against protesters. We immediately urge the authorities to carry out a fair, thorough and independent investigation into this attack and arrest those responsible for abusing their power as law-enforcers. Those found guilty in the due process must be brought to justice failing which such violations will go on unabated. CHTC also calls upon the Government to urgently amend the Land Commission Act and appoint an able, credible and fair person as the Chairperson of the Land Commission to settle all land disputes in the CHT to prevent further violence and human rights violations in the area.

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  
CHT Commission