

# 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

### **CHTC concerned about repeated attacks on indigenous people in the CHT. Calls for bringing the attackers to justice and ensuring accountability of the security forces.**

**Dhaka: December 18, 2014.** The International Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission (CHTC) is shocked to learn about the attacks on indigenous people's homes, shops and places of worship in Naniarchar Upazila of Rangamati District in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) of Bangladesh. It is further concerned that according to some media accounts the arson attacks occurred in the presence and with the active participation of some army officials. This shocking crime was carried out on December 16, the Victory Day. On the previous day, a 14-year-old indigenous girl, Umaching Marma, was allegedly raped and killed by Bengali settlers.

The Commission calls on the Government to bring to justice those responsible for the attacks. There should be a judicial inquiry into the role of the local civil administration, law enforcement agencies and the army. While some cash and other relief were distributed soon after the incidents in Naniarchar, the victims should be fully compensated by the Government and properly rehabilitated.

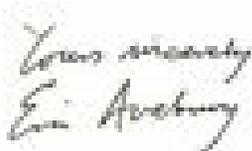
According to media reports, the incident began when plantations belonging to Bengali settlers were damaged on the night of December 15. The next morning at around 08.30, about 450 settlers torched and vandalized around 50 homes, seven shops and a Buddhist temple belonging to indigenous peoples in an act of revenge in Suridaspara, Campara and Amtola villages near the Rangamati-Khagrachari road under Burighat Union of Naniarchar Upazila of Rangamati District.

The CHTC is disturbed by the repeated attacks on the indigenous people in the CHT and the consistency with which they are carried out. We deeply deplore the lack of investigations into these attacks which provide clear impunity to the perpetrators and encourage further communal violence.

Many of these attacks can be traced back to disputes over land conflicts. The CHTC and other stakeholders have repeatedly requested the Government to amend the Land Dispute Resolution Commission Act 2001 and make the Land Commission functional.

The CHTC thus urges the Government to ensure the safety and security of all indigenous people of Naniarchar and all other areas in the CHT. It is also essential for the Government to rehabilitate all the people who have lost their homes and property in this and other arson attacks. The Government must undertake an urgent, independent, and high level investigation into the arson attack and prosecute through fair, prompt and independent processes those who are responsible for such violence. Only by ensuring justice can the Government restore faith in the people of Bangladesh and meet its national and international obligations.

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