

Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission

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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 Release

The International Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission expresses shock at the death of five indigenous men at the hands of the military

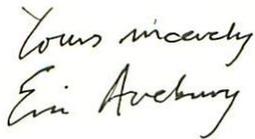
12 September 2015, Dhaka: The International Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission (CHTC) is very concerned at the death of five indigenous men in an alleged 'gunfight' with members of the Bangladesh Military in Baghaichhari Upazila of Rangamati District in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) on 15 August, 2015. The five men killed are reported in the media to be members of the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (MN Larma faction).

According to media reports the Baghaihat army zone in Khagrachhari were tipped off about alleged 'terrorist' activities when they went there on a crackdown. There are no details in the media about the nature of the exchanges between the military and the activists and the CHTC would like to urge the government to conduct an impartial judicial investigation into the exact circumstances of the events.

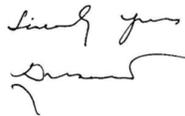
In August 2014 Timir Baran Chakma, another member of the JSS (MN Larma faction) was allegedly tortured and killed while in custody of the Bangladesh military. There have been no independent reports about his death to date.

In the meantime, leading newspapers of the country have also reported about this incident and labeled the dead as 'terrorists' and 'criminals'. It is extremely unfortunate that these newspapers do not seem to be following basic journalistic norms. Without carrying out a proper investigation of the incident and without background information of the alleged gunfight labeling persons criminals does not only bias general people towards the dead persons it also directly influences an investigation and any possible judicial process. We condemn such irresponsible journalism on the part of the media, especially the leading newspapers of the country.

On behalf of the CHT Commission,



Eric Avebury
Co-chair of the
CHT Commission



Sultana Kamal
Co-chair of the
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Elsa Stamatopoulou
Co-chair of the
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