

# Demilitarisation of CHT admin a must

*Int'l CHT Commission recommends*

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

International Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission (ICHTC) members yesterday said activating land commission, pursuing voluntary demilitarisation of Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) administration within a declared time frame must be considered on priority basis to ensure full implementation of the CHT peace accord.

"CHT administration must be demilitarised as far as it is possible. Land commission must be activated and illegally occupied lands must be recovered and returned to its real owners," said Dr Shapan Adnan, one of the delegation members.

at a press briefing at the National Press Club in the city.

The commission also recommend the government for engaging an impartial and accountable body to review vexatious cases to ensure effective redress and reparation to the affected indigenous people who very often fell victim to false cases.

The commission came up with the recommendations after completing its second mission in CHT and urged the government to initiate concrete and time-bound actions for full implementation of the treaty.

Commission Chairman Lord Eric Avebury said, "ICHTC agrees with the government that the problems of the CHT are primarily political in nature and therefore demand political rather than military solutions."

The recommendations focused on enhancing the power of civil administration in CHT and protecting human rights and ensuring access to justice in the areas.

The recommendations also mentioned that the ongoing Operation Uttor in CHT confers on the military rights to intervene in civil matters beyond their proper jurisdiction and urged the government to publicise text of the operation for public scrutiny, saying, "The commission would like to see the phased withdrawal of troops

from the areas as mentioned in the accord to be completed within a declared time frame."

Other recommendations include activating Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Domon Tribunal in every CHT district, implementing provisions for resettlement and rehabilitation of repatriated hilly refugees, survey and updating land records and compiling voter list in the hill district councils, activating land disputes resolution commission and cancellation of unduly prolonged provision for free rations to Bangladeshi settlers in the areas.

Barrister Sara Hossain and Sultana Kamal also took part in the programme.

## BTTB Ordn (Amend) 2008 challenged

### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday issued a rule upon the government to explain why its actions turning Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB) into Bangladesh Telecommunications Company Limited (BTCL) and transferring the services of BTTB officials under BTCL should not be declared illegal and without lawful authority.

Upon a writ petition jointly filed by 313 BTTB officials, including Md Giasuddin and Md Abdul Hannan, yesterday, an HC bench of Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain and Justice Quamrul Islam Siddiqui issued the rule.

Authorities concerned, including secretary of the telecommunications ministry, were asked to reply to the rule within four weeks.

The immediate past caretaker government in 2008 proclaimed the BTTB Ordinance (Amendment) 2008 by amending the BTTB Ordinance 1979 with provisions of turning the state-owned Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB) into Bangladesh Telecommunications Company Limited (BTCL), a public limited company.

On July 1, 2008, the government issued a notification in the light of the BTTB Ordinance (Amendment) 2008 transferring the services of BTTB officials to the BTCL.

## Govt to establish accountability in public, pvt sectors

*Says Hasina*

UNB, Dhaka

betterment.

Hasina said that all in the government are working hard to meet the needs of the people. "The government always keeps the responsibility in mind," she was quoted as saying by the press secretary.

Hasina singled out poverty as the main problem of Bangladesh and said only sustainable development can remove poverty from the country.

She urged the Japanese government to increase its investment in various sectors, including health, education and communications.

## Australian edn exhibition begins Feb 25

BSS, Dhaka

A two-day Australian Education Exhibition will begin at Hotel Sonargaon in the city on February 25.

Australian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Justin Lee is expected to inaugurate the exhibition organised by the Australian High Commission and IDP Education.

The exhibition is aimed at creating an opportunity for Bangladeshi students to get admission related information.

## MASS SIGNATURE CAMPAIGN

## Call for trial of war criminals

### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The people of the country want to see the trial of war criminals and a ban on religion-based politics as soon as possible, members of Bangladesh Internet Bloggers' Community said at a press conference yesterday.

To mobilise public opinion to this end, the community has already started a campaign to collect mass signatures from across the country.

In the first phase of the campaign from January 3 to February 21, members of the

community collected around 2 lakh signatures, speakers at the press conference said at the National Press Club.

Responses from non-resident Bangladeshis have also been extremely encouraging, they added.

The signature form can also be collected online. Anyone can print it to put their signatures and send it to the Bloggers' Community.

"We want to show that we, the citizens of the country, are disappointed that the war criminals are still moving freely and giving

speeches claiming there are no war criminals in Bangladesh," said Irine Sultana, a blogger.

"It is shocking that thirty-eight years have passed without any action being taken against the people who betrayed us during the War of Liberation and tried to take the victory away from us," she added.

Bloggers' Community members said they intend to collect another eight lakh signatures in the second phase of the campaign from February 22 to March 26.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:58pm today and rises at 6:25am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius	Humidity in percentage
Dhaka	32.0	20.3
Chittagong	29.5	17.3
Rajshahi	32.5	15.5
Kulna	32.5	17.0
Barisal	31.5	17.8
Sylhet	30.1	15.0
Cox's Bazar	30.5	17.2
		54
		80

### Roundtable

A forum of the student leaders of '80s organises a roundtable on career in electronics and communication technology sectors. Venue: Brac auditorium. Time: 2:30pm.

### Discussion

Bangladesh Sangbadik Oikya Parishad organises a discussion marking the 25th death anniversary of Bangabir Osmani. Venue: Press Institute auditorium. Time: 4:00pm.

### Roundtable

A forum of the student leaders of '80s organises a roundtable on transit, corridor, taskforce and sovereignty of Bangladesh. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3:00pm.

### Reception

Citizen Council for Father Rigan's Reception will accord a reception to Father Rigan. Venue: Liberation War Museum auditorium. Time: 5:30pm.

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