



Sammilito Garment Sramik Federation brings out a procession in the capital on May Day.

PHOTO: STAR

CHTC calls for full execution of peace accord

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Appreciating the statements made by the representatives of several states to implement the 1997 CHT Accord at the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in Geneva, the International CHT Commission (CHTC) again urged the government to implement the accord in full.

At the second cycle of UPR on April 29, representatives of a number of countries called on Bangladesh to implement the accord in full and create a roadmap with a timeframe for its implementation.

They also called for immediate action to amend the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Land Dispute Resolution Commission Act 2001 to reflect the accord and to ratify the relevant ILO Convention No 169 and to protect the

rights of indigenous peoples and religious minorities, including ensuring safety and security of places of their worship.

The government of Bangladesh, in the national report that it submitted to the UPR, stated that most of the clauses of the accord had been fully or partially implemented and a modest number was under implementation.

It is, however, the view of the CHTC that some of the main factors responsible for unrest and human rights violations in the CHT, especially ongoing land disputes and militarisation, remain far from properly addressed, it said.

The CHTC, in its a statement signed by three of its co-chairs Eric Avebury, Sultana Kamal and Elsa Stamatopoulou, said the government restricted it from working on the CHT issues.

US talking labour rights with buyers

Says US State Department official

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The US is actively engaged with the highest levels of Bangladesh government, exporters, and buyers on the issues of workers' rights and safe working conditions, a US official said on Wednesday.

Asked whether any US companies sourced from garment factories housed in the building which collapsed near Dhaka on April 24, he said they understood that businesses operating in that building appeared to have links to numerous companies in the US and Europe.

"And so we'll continue to engage with US companies to discuss what role they can play in improving working conditions, including in Bangladesh," Patrick Ventrell, acting deputy spokesperson of the US State Department, told the media in Washington DC.

Ventrell said they had an ongoing dialogue with US buyers. "And so we continue to speak with many US companies that source from Bangladesh."

Asked if the US authorities have identified these companies, the spokesperson said some of these companies were already identifying themselves. "But we discuss these issues broadly with companies that operate in Bangladesh...And we do that at the assistant secretary level and the ambassador level regularly."

Ventrell termed the collapse a "really terrible tragedy" and said, "Our hearts continue to go out to the victims."

Obituary

METRO DESK

Brig Gen (retd) Nasiruddin Sarwar passed away at CMH Dhaka on April 26.

A doa mahfil will be

held today after Maghrib prayers at New DOHS Mosque in the capital's Mohakhali.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers have been requested to attend the programme and pray for the salvation of the departed soul.



RESPONSIBLE FOR SAVAR DEATHS Gonojagoron Mancha seeks highest penalty

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Gonojagoron Mancha once again roared with the demand for the maximum punishment on Wednesday, but this time it was for those responsible for the deaths of over 400 people and wounding of countless others in the Savar tragedy.

At a condolence meeting at the capital's Shahbagh where hundreds gathered to mourn the deaths, speakers there also demanded workers' right to form trade unions in all factories, particularly in the garments industry. The condolence meeting replaced a scheduled May Day rally there.

The nation observed May Day while reeling from the shock of the death of workers in the collapse of Rana Plaza that housed five clothing factories.

Gonojagoron Mancha spokesperson

Imran H Sarker said, "We demand that the state ensure the maximum punishment for all those responsible for the humanitarian disaster." He urged the state and citizens to stand beside the injured and the families of the deceased, and insisted that a comprehensive list of the wounded be prepared for their rehabilitation.

The anti-war criminal campaigners vowed to keep helping the wounded.

Workers' leader Shirin Akhter demanded compensation for the injured alongside the families of the deceased.

Terming the deaths at Savar as "murder", veteran cultural personality Kamal Lohani said the state, along with the factory and building owners, must also be held responsible. "Workers are not an ingredient for production. They are human beings and must be treated as such."

CONGRATULATIONS TO



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Meena Media Award 2013

Introduced in 2005, Meena Media Award has stepped the nine year in 2013. The award recognizes excellence in promoting children's issues in the media. Submission are solicited from Bangladeshi citizens working with both print and broadcast media in two different age groups: Under-18 and 18 & above. News, articles, features published in print media and programmes broadcast by radio and television that investigate and explore children's issues to improve the lives of children in Bangladesh, or provide healthy entertainment for children are eligible to compete for the award. Entries are invited in the following six categories:

Print Media	- Reports (news reports, investigative reports, post editorials)
Print Media	- Creative (articles, features, stories, poems)
Television	- Reports (news reports, investigative reports)
Television	- Creative (features, documentaries, short film, plays, songs)
Radio	- Report (news reports, investigative reports)
Radio	- Creative (features, documentaries, radio dramas, songs)

For all categories prizes are:

First Prize:	A Crest, certificate and Taka 50,000
Second Prize:	A Crest, certificate and Taka 25,000
Third Prize:	A Crest, certificate and Taka 15,000

Entries should be published/broadcast between May 1, 2012 and April 30, 2013.

Deadline: By June 13, 2013

To download the details of the submission and eligibility criteria for the award, please visit www.unicef.org.bd or collect from the Reception Desk, UNICEF Bangladesh at BSL Office Complex, 1 Minto Road, Dhaka 1000

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