



An NGO supporting the indigenous Jumma Peoples of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh

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Letter of Concern regarding Mr. Rang Lai Mro

January 16th 2009

Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Fax: 880-2-811-1490

CC: Dr. Dipu Moni, Foreign Affairs Minister; Advocate Shahara Khatun, Home Affairs Minister; Barrister Sharif Ahmed, Minister of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Issues; Dipankar Talukdar, Minister of CHT Affairs; Ashraf-ud-Doula, Ambassador, Embassy of Bangladesh, Japan

Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina,

We would like to express our deep concern regarding the alleged torture of and denial of effective medical treatment to Mr. Ranglai Mro, an Adivasi leader, the elected Chairperson of Sualok Union Parishad, and head of the local NGO Mrochet of Bandarban, Chittagong Hill Tracts.

On 23 February 2007, Mr. Ranglai Mro, aged 38, was forcefully taken away from his residence in Bandarban town by army led-security forces. He was allegedly subject to torture in Bandarban Cantonment and then handed over to the police station of Bandarban Sadar Thana. He was accused of illegal possession of weapons. Mr. Ranglai Mro was admitted to the Bandarban Sadar Hospital on the same day, and was subsequently transferred to the Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

Four months after his arrest, Mr. Ranglai Mro was convicted of illegal possession of weapons under the Arms Act 1878, and sentenced to 17 years' imprisonment. An appeal was filed before the High Court against the conviction and sentence and has been pending for over a year.

In October 2007 Mr. Ranglai Mro's health further deteriorated, and he was admitted to the Chittagong Medical College Hospital. There, doctors said he needed treatment in a hospital with better equipment, but he was once more sent back to jail without any improvement in his health. He still has not received appropriate treatment for his heart condition and other medical complications, and his health remains at grave risk.

We strongly urge the authorities to provide Mr. Ranglai Mro with immediate and sustained medical treatment in a hospital, if necessary abroad, which is equipped to provide specialist treatment for his critical heart condition. We earnestly request the authorities to order an investigation by an independent, impartial and competent body on the torture of Mr. Ranglai Mro with a view to bringing those responsible to justice.

Sincerely,
Takashi Shimosawa,
President, Jumma Net

Signatories to “Letter of Concern Regarding Mr. Rang Lai Mro”

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