



Human Rights Congress for Bangladesh Minorities (HRCBM)
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[An NGO in Special Consultative Status with UN]

HRCBM PRESS RELEASE

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A 33-member Executive Committee of the Bangladesh National Chapter of the Human Rights Congress for Bangladesh Minorities (HRCBM-Bangladesh) was constituted at an assembly held on the premises of Swami Bholanandagiri Ashram Trust at 12 KM Das Lane, Tikatuly, Dhaka recently.

Dr Ajoy K Roy, a retired professor of Dhaka University, and Mr. Rabindranath Trivedi, a former additional secretary of Bangladesh government and and ex- Press Secretary to the President of Bangladesh, were elected unanimously as President and Secretary General of HRCBM-Bangladesh National Chapter (HRCBM-Bangladesh NC), respectively, at the meeting chaired by Professor Ajoy K Roy. The Executive Committee is comprised of retired government officials, university professors, advocates, philanthropists, former ambassador, leaders of Hindu, Baidya (Buddhist), Christian and Adibashi (Indigenous People) communities, journalist, and businessmen.

At first meeting of the Executive Committee on December 10, 2007 at 12 K M Das Lane, Tikatuli, Dhaka-1203, Professor Ajoy Roy, (President, HRCBM-Bangladesh NC) stressed the need of formation of Bangladesh Chapter of HRCBM tracing the historical development of HRCBM USA in 2001 primarily to protect the rights and uphold the cause of Bangladesh minorities. *He emphatically declare that – To-day, the 10th December, is the World Human Rights Day, so we have to say straight to the Government as well to the World community of Nations that we, the Minorities of this part of the world now constituting Bangladesh, have been the victim of persecution, physically, mentally and materially since the division of the Indian Subcontinent in 1947 and exposed to many discriminatory laws and constitutional amendments in which our fundamental rights have been constrained and marginalized. We, on this auspicious day, very sadly remember betrayals of many commitments from political parties & leaders and governments as well.*

We resolve on this World Human Rights Day, 2007 that:

Human Rights Congress for Bangladesh Minorities (HRCBM), is formed with a mission to strengthen our people called minorities who are placed in a disadvantageous position economically, administratively, socially and politically; our mission is to blend human rights advocacy with humanitarian services and sustainable development; so that minorities in Bangladesh may prosper in free and fair atmosphere and may make full contribution towards national development, international peace and cooperation in keeping with the progressive aspirations of the mankind.

We the members of HRCBM, a human rights organization, an NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations, have no other aspiration or interest, political or any sort.

We will continue to oppose all sorts of discrimination and inequity, and selective application of law on the basis of religion, caste creed and sex including 8th amendment of Bangladesh Constitution and Vested Property Act and other statutes that discriminate Bangladesh minorities.

We will oppose unlawful, fraudulent and intentional lease of Debottor Properties, Cremation Sites, Religious Institutions of minorities, grabbing of minority properties and lands with special reference to lands of indigenous people and settlement of non-locals in Chittagong Hill Tracks that directly violates the judgment in the Higher Court of Bangladesh; We will continue to support for materialization of CHT Peace Accord, and uphold principles of equity, natural justice and fundamental human rights.

We extend our congratulation on the Caretaker Government led by Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed that the council of advisers approved the National Human Rights Commission Ordinance 2007 very recently, a few hours before World Human Rights Day today. The cabinet, at its weekly meeting, approved the ordinance to set up the long-awaited National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), which can investigate human rights violations but is empowered to only settle issues or refer them to the court.

However, we noted with dismay and despair that there is no provision for members belonging to various minority groups (religious and ethnic) and women.

We demand, loud and clear, to the government for adequate minority representation (not less than two) in the proposed National Human Rights Commission.

We demand a special chapter dealing with minority human rights issues be included with adequate representation of minority communities with full status of commission members. A similar chapter dealing with rights of women and children also be constituted within the frame of national human rights commission. If this is not done a demand may arise for the constitution of a separate and independent separate Minority Rights Commission (like Justice Sachar Commission in India). There have been some reports in the daily newspapers that the US House of Representatives has expressed concern over human rights violations in Bangladesh and is said to have requested their country's foreign office to investigate the violations.

We note with concern that the US House of Representatives (according to press reports) has expressed concern over human rights violations in Bangladesh and is said to have requested their country's foreign office to investigate the violations. It is also reported that the representatives have requested the US President to take punitive actions against Bangladesh. We appeal to the government to take stern measures against those who indulge in minority persecution of any sort.

The other office bearers of the newly Elected Executive Council of HRCBM-Bangladesh NC are:

Vice- Presidents: Brig Gen (Retd) Jayanta Kumar Sen, Mr. NG Paul (Retd. Addl. Sec), Mr. P.R. Barua (Retd. DIG, Police), Mr. Chitta Ranjan Sarkar (President, Bangladesh Puja Udjapan Parishad), Mr. Satya Ranjan Barai (Retd. Addl. DIG, Police), Prof. P. B. Chakma (Dhaka University), Adv. Subrata Chowdhury (Supreme Court), Mr. Sanjib Drong (Gen. Sec., Adibashi Forum), Bishop Michael Baroi (Bishop Church of Bangladesh) and Mr. S.S. Chakma (Erstwhile Bangladesh Ambassador to Nepal), **Chief Coordinator:** Mr. B.N. Chowdhury (Trustee, Swami Bholanandagiri Ashram Trust), **Treasurer:** Mr. Ramesh Chandra Ghosh (Proprietor, M/S. Shymali Paribhahan), **Additional Treasurer:** Manindra Kumar Nath (Exec. VP, Mercantile Bank), **Additional Secretary General:** Prof Ashok Taru Saha and Mr. Debashish Nag (Retd. Deputy Sec.), **Secretaries:** Mr. Dipak Kumar Saha (Retd. Addl. Sec.), Mr. Gopal Chandra Sen (Retd. Divisional Chief, Planning Commission), Shrimati Rakhi (Bhadra) Dasgupta (Director, Dhaka Bank), Mr. Anish Kumar Sarkar (Retd. G.M., Sonali Bank), Mr. Samaresh Boidya (Journalist, HR Activist), Mr. Gobinda Chandra Mondal (Asst. Prof., Dhaka Univ.) and Mr. Ranajit Paul (Jony Enterprise), and **Members:** Mr. Shib Shankar Chakraborty (President, WHF-Bangladesh Chapter), Shri Hiralal Bala (Retd. Sec., G.O.B.), Mr. Dipak Ranjan Sengupta (Retd. Sec. G.O.B.), Mr. Shankar Ranjan Saha (HRCBM, Naogaon), Adv. Rana Das Gupta (Acting Sec. Gen. BHBCOP), Adv. Jagadish Sarkar (Judge Court, Dhaka), Mr. Madan Sahu (Asst. Editor, The daily Star), Adv. Titus Hillol Rema (Adv. Supreme Court, Adibashi Christian Leader), and Shrimati Sabitri Bhattacharya (VP, WHF-Bangladesh Chapter).

Dr. Ajit K. Roy,

Dhiman Deb Chowdhury,

Secretary General, HRCBM-Central

President, HRCBM-Central