



For immediate Release:

Global Human rights watchdog on Bangladesh calls for real commitment to change and demands an end to impunity.

Drishtipat issues a Charter for Rights in five key areas for the new government in Bangladesh.

London – January 10th, 2008

Hoping for a new era in human rights practice in Bangladesh, Drishtipat today issued a charter for rights and recommendations for the new government in Bangladesh.

“We urge the incoming government to deliver on an election manifesto that promised economic and human security for all citizens”, said Asif Saleh, executive director of Drishtipat, a Global human rights watch dog on Bangladesh. “We believe this is a unique and historic moment for Bangladesh to respond to the needs and demands of ALL her citizens and not just a few”, added Saleh, while releasing the charter of demands.

The Charter for Rights specifically focused on five key areas of ensuring rule of law, various economic and cultural rights, rights of expatriate Bangladeshis and religious and ethnic minorities and rights of those threatened by global warming.

Drishtipat demanded immediate action on starting up the process of trial war criminals by working with Sector Commanders Forum, legal experts, forensic scientists and organizations that have been involved in documentation process over last 37 years. It said that the trial must begin now along with investigations of various other political and extra judicial deaths from the past and recommended it to be spearheaded by a strong, empowered, independent National Human Rights Commission.

Drishtipat called for the repealing of various black laws like vested properties act, which has, in various times, disenfranchised all citizens, and especially the minorities. It also demanded full implementation of 1997 Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord, with priority given to withdrawal of security camps from the Hill region.



Highlighting the rights of the global Diaspora, Drishtipat called for voting rights for all Bangladeshis citizens around the world and demanded specific actions to protect the rights and dignity of millions of migrant workers, whose remittance is a key pillar of Bangladesh economy.

It stressed Government of Bangladesh argue the case of impact of climate change on Bangladesh from a position of strength in the international forums, and from a point of view of basic economic rights of millions of people. It also highlighted the need for the adaptation fund created for Bangladesh to be managed by a national body rather than any international donor agency.

Drishtipat hopes that by taking concrete measures on these recommendations on its first hundred days, the government would show a real commitment to change from the way various government has done business in the past.

To see the complete charter of rights, please visit <http://www.drishtipat.org>

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About Drishtipat:

Drishtipat is a non-profit, non-partisan volunteer organization, built up of membership of young people inside Bangladesh and the global Diaspora (<http://www.drishtipat.org>). Drishtipat works towards building human and economic rights for all citizens of Bangladesh. Drishtipat uses digital technology, including blogging, podcast, vlogging, online chat, electronic publications, etc. to organize and network between the global Diaspora and those living and working in Bangladesh. Drishtipat members have written numerous opinion essays for publications as diverse as Daily Star, New Age, Prothom Alo, Shamokal, Forum, Foreign Policy (US), Guardian (UK), etc. Drishtipat members have also appeared on RTV, ATN, CNN, and BBC to discuss matters of human rights. Its forthcoming book will be a compendium of all Drishtipat essays written in the run-up to Election 2008. Drishtipat also raises funds for various philanthropy projects focused on the marginalized people in Bangladesh. Drishtipat also works to empower and enable the underprivileged and marginalized segment of the society and individuals living on social and economic poverty so that they can exercise the most basic human rights with dignity, opportunity and hope. Established in 2001, Drishtipat has quickly managed to establish itself as the biggest secular philanthropic organization in the Bangladeshi diaspora. Started from a single website and one man effort, Drishtipat has mobilized quickly over the years and has grown into having nine chapters in five countries with more than 5000 members and donors. Since its inception, Drishtipat has far



successfully completed numerous campaigns, many petitions and appeals. Its notable campaigns include, Women of 1971 Campaign, Arsenic Project Campaign, the Tipu Sultan Campaign, Campaign for Survivors of Acid Violence, Ushnota and the Cheye Dekho Campaign. Drishtipat recently completed via the United Bangladesh Appeal one of the biggest fund raising projects for the victims of Cyclone Sidr through a compensation fund for the victims.