

From Dr. R.S. Dewan,
C/o Dr. H.D. Locksley, Dept. of Chemistry,
Salford University, Salford M5 4WT, England.

Date: 20 Sept. 1984

Sub: An appeal to save the Chakma and other tribes of the
Chittagong Hill Tracts from the total annihilation by
the Bangladesh Government.

Dear Sir,

May I present to you a copy of the memorandum written by Mr. Bhabatosh Dewan and Mr. Priti Kumar Chakma, Chairman and Secretary-General respectively, of the Jana Sanghati Samiti of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT).

The memorandum vividly describes the barbaric depredation of tribal villages by the Bangladesh armed forces and police. "Bangladesh Government resorted to mass killings, arson, loot, raping of women, forceful occupation of tribal lands, indiscriminate arrest of youngmen, desecration and destruction of Buddhist temples, torture and killing of Bhikkhus, creation of concentration camps in the name of ideal villages." These camps have been started "from September 1977 and Army contingents were used to compel the villagers to go to the concentration camps. In Sadar (Rangamati) subdivision concentration camps were established at Maghban, Balukhali, Ijachari, Kangrachari, Bilaichari, Sakrachari, Taktanala, Dhupsil, Pharoa, Kandyaduar, Basanta Hemanta, Tinkunia, and Kutubdia all under Kotwali P.S. (Rangamati Police Station). In Bandarban Subdivision similar concentration camps were established at Pengchari, Kachchaptali, Bagmara under Roangchari P.S., Reisa under Bandarban P.S., Murunghuk, Thanchi and Balipara under Ruma P.S., Alikadam under Lama P.S." "Houses and villages were set on fire and village after village were burnt to ashes, boys aged 5/6 years were thrown in the fire...." In short, the racist regime of Bangladesh has been exterminating the indigenous people of the CHT on the one hand and Islamising the tribal homeland by bringing in the outsider Muslim Bengalis on the other.

The dossier of the Jana Sanghati Samiti has revealed many human rights violations committed by the Bangladeshi armed forces. But this information is just the tip of the ice-berg. I earnestly appeal to you to send an inquiry team to the CHT in order to investigate into inhuman crimes committed against the defenceless people of the CHT.

To
Rudy Ryser Esq.,
Centre for World Indigenous Studies,
P.O. Box 911, Snoqualmie,
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U.S.A.

Yours sincerely

Ramendu Dewan

A MEMORANDUM OF THE HELPLESS

Chakmas
Marmas
Tripuras
Tongchanggyas
Chaks
Khumis
Khyanggs
Lushais
Bowns
Pankhos
Murunggs
of Chittagong Hill Tracts in
Bangladesh

To
The Governments of all peace-
loving countries,
All humanitarian organisations,
Humanitarian people,
Democratic forces :

To intervene and save their life
and existence from imminent and
final annihilation.

by
the BANGLADESH RULERS

A CLOSED DOOR SLAUGHTER HOUSE CHADIGANG (CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS)

1. Situation.

Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), which presently form the largest district of Bangladesh, is situated between 21°25' and 23°47' north latitude and between 91°45' and 92°50' east longitude. It forms the south-eastern part of Bangladesh and Rangamati is its capital.

The general aspect of CHT is a mass of hills, ravines and cliffs covered with dense bamboo, tree and valuable forest. The hills run from north-west to south-east.

CHT is divided into four main valleys, formed by its four principal rivers—the Karnatuli, Pheni, Sankha and Matamuhuri and their tributaries. Fertile cultivable lands are found in these valleys. These four principal rivers finally entered into the Bay of Bengal.

2. Boundary.

CHT is bounded on the north by the Tripura State of India ; on the west by the Chittagong district of Bangladesh ; on the east by the Arakan province of Burma and the Mizoram State of India and on the south by the Arakan province of Burma and the Bay of Bengal.

3. Area.

The PRESENT SQUEEZED area of CHT is only 5,138 square miles (13,250 square Kilometers). Unfortunately it suffered a number of severance for obvious reasons. Previously the Cox's Bazar Sub-Division, having a beautiful sea coast, was a part of CHT. Later, it was curved out and included to Chittagong District. This Sub-Division was peopled by mongoloid ethnic people. The Bengali Muslims later driven them out and occupied

the land. A part from this, numerous changes of its Boundary-lines had taken place in the past due to political changes in the area.

4. Name and creation.

'CHADIGANG' was the ancient name of present CHT and Chittagong Combined. Gradually CHADIGANG changed into 'CHITTAGONG' as pronounced by the Englishmen. The larger and eastern portion of Chittagong was separated in 1860 A.D. and was christened as 'CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS'. It was demarcated as a separate district vide Act XXII of 1860. Its boundary was redefined vide Act IV of 1863.

5. The People.

The people of CHT ethnically belong distinctly to the MONGOLOID human races. It is an original homeland of different nationalities with distinct mongoloid features. They have been living here with peace and harmony among themselves. There are three principal nationalities; they are Chakmas, Marmas (Mogs) and Tripuras. In addition there are Murung, Lushai, Khumi, Pankho, (Bonjugi) Boyan, Khyang, Chak and Tongchangya.

6. Religion.

The Chakmas, Marmas, Chaks, Murungs, Tongchangya, Khumis and Khyangs are Buddhists. Among them Chakmas are traditional Buddhists and some say that they are the last remnants of the 'SHAKYA RACES' which Lord Buddha belonged to. The Tripuras are Hindus and the Lushais, Bowns and Pankhos became Christians during British period.

7. Population

According to the census of 1981 the total population of CHT including Bengalis was 7,46,000 souls. Among them Tribals form roughly 600,000 of which Chakmas preponderate. They are about 80% of the tribal population. Next to the Chakmas Marmas stand 2nd and Tripuras third in terms of population.

It is to be noted that the total population ascertained in the census of 1981 is very much doubtful in the case of CHT. The tribals were not correctly enumerated due to prevailing unrest and the number of muslims were shown in great numbers as preplanned.

8. Early history.

CHT is the traditional homeland of the ethnically MONGOLOID people of different groups as mentioned earlier. It was originally occupied by them. Before the advent of the British they were free and independent people. The Nawabs of Bengal and the Mughal satraps vainly tried to extend their control over this region. After the famous Plassey War that took place in 1757 and ended in the defeat of Nawab Siraj-uddholla, the British East India Company made Meer Jafar Ali Khan and later on Meer Kashem Khan the Nawab of Bengal in 1760 A.D. The Company entered into a pact with the Nawab and got the administrative control, with some other regions of Bengal, and the present Chittagong town which was under muslim occupation then. With Chittagong town the British received from the Mughals the western part of the Nizampur road present (Dacca trunk road) and the rest of the Chittagong left with the Chakma King Sher Dowlat Khan (Chakmas used to adopt muslim name at that time). The Chakma King fought many battles with the British during 1777 A.D. to 1780 A.D. After his death his son Jan Box Khan continued the war with the British upto 1784 A.D. He finally concluded a peace treaty with the British at Calcutta in 1785 A.D. and recognised the hegemony of the British in Chittagong area. In this way the Chakma Kingdom of Chadigang became a tributary state of the British Indian empire.

The British rulers were very much afraid of the Chakmas and they gradually tried to neutralise them by importing Bengalee families from other areas of Bengal. This inroad of Bengalee families into Chittagong has increased to such an extent that the British rulers were alarmed with the flood of Bengali population and put a Check to their policy just after hundred years in 1860

A.D. vide Act XXII of 1860 and in 1900 vide CHT Regulation 1900. A separate district-Chittagong Hill Tracts (C.H.T.) was created in 1860 A.D. to save the ethnic minorities from extinction by the British and the district was declared Excluded Area. The outsiders were not allowed to settle permanently in C.H.T. this arrangement continued till the day of independence of India Sub-continent in 1947.

The British Ruler did not interfere with the internal administration of CHT for about a century. R. H. N. Hutchinson, Deputy Commissioner of CHT, wrote in 1909. "It was not until the appointment of a Superintendent of the Hill Tracts in 1860 that we began to interfere with the administration of the Hill Tracts. Before 1860 the internal Govt. of the country, which now forms the Chittagong Hill Tracts District, was in the hands of two hill chiefs, the Chakma Chief and the Bohmong Chief..."

9. British Period.

The Status of tributary State of C.H.T. ceased in 1860 and came under direct administrative control of the British India.

In 1881, for the maintenance of peace and discipline within C.H.T., the British Govt. formed C.H.T. Frontier police force by Act III of 1881.

In the year 1900 A.D. the British Govt. promulgated C.H.T. Regulation 1 of 1900 for the good government of the country. This regulation received the assent of the Governor General of British India on 6th January 1900 and since then it was directly governed by the governor of Bengal presidency. This Regulation declared C.H.T. as an 'EXCLUDED AREA' considering the desparate situation, backwardness and ethnic differences of the tribals with the people of plain lands of Bengal. This Regulation was the constitutional safeguard which protected the backward tribals from advanced outsiders especially the muslims. This Regulation prevented the muslims and others from outside from settling permanently in C.H.T. and purchasing land from the local people. The outsiders could be expelled from C.H.T. if they were thought undesirable and found doing any-

thing detrimental to the interest of the local people. Thus the British Government recognised the separate identity and existence of the people of C.H.T. and protected them from advanced outsiders.

In 1935, even under the India Act of 1935, C.H.T. remained an 'EXCLUDED ARBA' outside the purview of the Legislature of Bengal and Assam.

10. Independence of Indian Sub-Continent.

(A) Partition.

The British Rule was over. The Indian Sub-Continent became independent and divided into two dominions—India and Pakistan on August 15, 1947. Pakistan was created as a 'Home-Land' for the Muslims demanded by Mohammad Ali Jinnah, President of the Muslim League of India. This so called muslim-homeland was created on the basis of muslim majority areas.

(B) Fate of C.H.T.

So, C.H.T., being a non-muslim majority area, there was no doubt that it would automatically fall into India as per rule of India Independence Act of 1947. The people of C.H.T. unfurled the Indian National Flag at Rangamati, capital of C.H.T., publicly and officially on 15th August, 1947, the day of independence of India, at zero hour. It continued flying upto 20th August, 1947.

But when the most controversial Radcliffe Award was announced on 17th August 1947, it was found in utter surprise that C.H.T. though almost a purely non-muslim majority area, was included in Pakistan. Sir Cyril Radcliffe declared: 'C.H.T. shall be the part of Pakistan'.

Radcliffe's award was incompatible with the India Independent Act of 1947. Radcliffe clearly and intentionally violated its terms in the case of C.H.T.

(C) Protest

The people of C.H.T. protested against this injustice. This was a whimsical and exparte judgement of Sir Cyril Radcliffe, Chairman of the Bengal Boundary Commission.

The C.H.T. Frontier Police personnel and the people revolted against this injustice. The Action Committee of the C.H.T. people's Association, the only socio-political party in C.H.T. passed a resolution and declared : 'C.H.T. shall not abide by the Radcliffe Award'.

The Pakistan Government sent the Baluch Regiment personnel and they cracked down upon the protesting people and thus forcibly occupied the land and hoisted the Pakistan Flag.

The leaders of the C.H.T. people's Association tried to draw the attention of the Indian national leaders and called upon them to intervene. It was a cry in the wilderness.

11. Pakistan period.

The tragic scenario in the historical drama of C.H.T. began after its inclusion into Pakistan—a muslim home-land. The Pakistan Government did not abrogate the C.H.T. Regulation, 1900 and declared that C.H.T. should be administered as an 'EXCLUDED AREA' according to the Regulation, 1900. But, although this Regulation was left functioning its terms were ignored. Pakistan gradually began to intervene with the administrative affairs of C.H.T. Soon after the independence it repealed the C.H.T. Frontier Police Regulation, 1881 (III of 1881) and dissolved the C.H.T. Frontier Police Force and replaced it by the East Pakistan Police constituted mainly by muslims.

In early fifties Pakistan Govt. started to bring hundreds of muslim families for settlement in C.H.T. from outside. These families were settled in different places in C.H.T.

This kind of muslim settlement was against the provisions of the C.H.T. Regulation, 1900. So protest was lodged with the Government. The government stopped it but did not withdraw the settled muslim families.

In 1956, the first Constitution of Pakistan was adopted. In this Constitution the 'EXCLUDED AREA' status of C.H.T. was preserved.

Pakistan Govt., in the meantime, already prepared a 'Master Plan' to eliminate the tribals of C.H.T. and convert it into a

'MUSLIM MAJORITY AREA'. To fulfil this target it constructed a Hydro-Electric Dam at Kaptai on the Karnapuli River in 1960 on the pretext of Industrialization of the Country. As a result over one lakh people mostly Chakmas were uprooted from their ancestral homes as they fell in the reservoir area. About one lakh other were affected in various ways. According to the survey of the rehabilitation department about 20,000 ploughing families having land in the reservoir bed were displaced. This did not include 8,000 landless Jumia families who fell victim due to this Dam. The inundation threw over 45% of the total settled cultivable land of C.H.T. under water. Thus the most fertile area which we call 'Granary of C.H.T.' has been inundated. Had this Dam been constructed on the Shankha or Matamuhuri river, this heavy loss could have been avoided. But this Dam must be on the Karnafuli river. The reason is obvious—Conspiracy.

On the other hand proper rehabilitation and compensation were not provided to the effected people; as a result of which hundreds of effected families are still on the move in the deep forests.

Let us have a glimpse at the pattern of compensation paid to the effected families.

The ceiling rate for payment of compensation as fixed by the Board of Revenue was as follows :

(a)	A class cultivable land—Rs. 600'00 per acre
(b)	B " " —Rs. 400'00 " "
(c)	C " " —Rs. 200'00 " "

This ceiling rate for payment of compensation was fixed inhumanly as the rate per acre was so poor that the Pak Govt. felt shy to display it boldly outside and created an image that these wretched tribal people are being compensated out of mercy.

The figure of the affected families shown in the scheme was incorrect as those having settlement with the government were shown only and the Jhumias (Jhum cultivators) who were registered with the headmen and who used to pay taxes to the

Chakma King were not included in the compensation scheme. In this way the economic backbone was totally crushed.

Yet unsatisfied, the Pakistan Govt. set the process of extermination violating the constitutional safeguards, brought several hundreds muslim families for settlement in C.H.T. in the early fifties. These muslim families were settled in Naniarchar area of Chengi valley and Langadu area of Kasalong Valley. Then again in the sixties hundreds of muslim families were brought from different parts of East Pakistan (at present Bangladesh) and settled in Ramgarh area, Tabalchhari area and Belchhari area of Feni Valley, Bandarban area of Sankha Valley, Lama area, Nakhyangchhari area and Alikadam area of Matamuhuri Valley in the southern part of Ctg. Hill Tracts. Thus the plan to turn the homeland of the ethnic national minorities in a land of muslims was set afoot.

The Second Pakistan constitution was framed in 1962. The provision of Excluded Area was preserved in the constitution. The term Tribal Area was inserted in place of Excluded Area and that the separate identity of Chittagong Hill was maintained. In 1963 the National Assembly of Pakistan amended the constitution in which the Tribal Area status of C.H.T. ceased to exist. In the Pakistan constitution the term Tribal Area was defined—"If the whole or part of the tribal area is necessitated to be ceased the president of Pakistan shall consult the opinion of the people of the said tribal area". In fact the Pakistan Government did not follow the provision of the constitution and the people of C.H.T. were not consulted whether they were or were not in favour of withdrawing the tribal area status of C.H.T. Pakistan Government executed a conspiratorial plan to cease the existence of the Excluded Area status of C.H.T. in the constitution of Pakistan by passing a constitution Amendment Bill to that effect in the National Assembly of Pakistan in 1963. After 16 years the communal passion of Pakistan devoured Ctg. Hill Tracts—the land of the Buddhists and allied ethnic minorities.

When the news of the cessation of the tribal area status was spread, the people of C.H.T. rose in protest. Appeal was placed

before the Pakistan Government and deputation was sent to the authorities ending in failure. People became panicky and began to feel insecure. In 1964 more than 40,000 people migrated to India and another 20,000 fled away to Burma. On the face of this exodus Pakistan Government adopted a cryptic policy to avoid the international pressure and preserved C.H.T. Regulation 1900 to pacify the unrest of the people of C.H.T. in a sudden move as a saviour. The C.H.T. Regulation 1900 was meaningless with the withdrawal of the Excluded Area status of C.H.T. In this way Pakistan was on the one hand converting Ctg. Hill Tracts into a muslim area on the other hand uprooting the ethnic minority nationalities by adopting tactics for liquidation of an unwanted human race.

12. Bangladesh period.

The Pak regime was thrown out by Bangladesh MuktiFouz in December 1971, East Pakistan emerged as an Independent State called Bangladesh. The people of C.H.T. fell from frying pan to fire. The new Bangladesh Government hated the Chakmas and other ethnic minorities of C.H.T. and immediately after attaining independence the Bangladesh constitution was passed in 1972 in National Assembly. The constitution effaced the Special Status and constitutional safeguards of Ctg. Hill Tracts. The separate ethnical and religious identities of the minority groups in Bangladesh were liquidated through the principle that all citizens of Bangladesh shall be known as "Bangali" under the weight of Bengali majority the voice of Ctg. Hill Tracts was thrown in the depth of pacific ocean. Because the country shall be flooded with Nationalism, Democracy, secularism and socialism, the simple constitutional safeguards to the ethnic minorities of C.H.T. was denied.

In February 1972 a delegation of local MPs and leading people of C.H.T. met the Prime Minister of Bangladesh. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and submitted a charter of demands which included (1) Autonomy for Chittagong Hill Tracts with its own legislative, (2) Retention of the Regulation 1900 in the constitution

(3) continuation of the chief offices, and (4) constitutional provisions restricting the amendment of the Regulation 1900 and imposition of a ban to the influx of muslims and other outside nationalities. Sheikh Mujib rejected the demands and said. "Do away with your ethnic identity, go home and become Bengalee".

After the delegation returned massive military posting of one army division, four battalions of infantry, armed police reserves and several thousand officers and men of the para-military Bangladesh Rifle have been committed to the Hill Tracts. Three garrisons were established at Dighinala, Runa and Alkadam. A naval base was also established at Dhulyachari in the Kaptai lake.

The tribal people also did not sit idle, a political party named Jana Sanghati Samiti (JSS) was formed in 1972 to ventilate the demands of the people of C.H.T. An armed force called Santibahini (peace force) was organised to protect the people of C.H.T. from the hostile rulers of Bangladesh.

Bangladesh Government resorted to mass Killings, arson, loot, raping of women, forceful occupation of tribal lands, indiscriminate arrest of youngmen, desecration and destruction of Buddhist temples, torture and killing of Bhikkhus, creation of concentration camps in the name of ideal villages. Houses and villages were set on fire and village after village were burnt to ashes, boys aged 5/6 years were thrown in the fire suspecting them to be working as advance informers of troops approaching a village. The detainees are subjected to repeated harrasment, physical abuse and constant interrogation, forced exposure to the sun all day with eyes focused on the sun, sleeping in self dug ditches, hanging on trees etc. The heinous crimes carried out by Bangladesh Army and police since 1971 upon the people of C.H.T. are mentioned here for information of the people of the world.

13. Stories of torture and Killings.

The Bengali muslims of East Pakistan (Bangladesh) never took the ethnic minorities of C.H.T. as equal members of the same

country where they used to live from time immemorial. They treated them as foreigners and serfs. This sort of discrimination created the present trouble of Bangladesh. The tribal people wanted to live in peace and in brother-hood with others including the Bengali muslims. But suspicion, massacre, hatred were imposed upon them even before the creation of Bangladesh which was noticed first on 5, Dec. 1971. The Mukti Bahini of the Bangladesh while entering into Panchari area were received by the tribal people with great joy and happiness. But the Mukti Bahini suddenly fell upon the tribals Killing them in cold blooded murder. The tribal villages were plundered, pillaged and burnt into ashes.

On 14, Dec. 1971 similar fate was bestowed upon the 22 tribal people who remained hidden in trenches at Kukichara under Khagrachari P.S. The hundred houses in Kukichara area were set on fire, women were raped at gun points, tribal youths were apprehended, mercilessly beaten and many were shot dead on the alleged pro-Pakistani stooges.

At Bangalkathi village 5 Tripuri tribesmen were Killed on 16, Dec, 1971. The day was the Day of Independence for Bangladesh as Pakistani Army surrendered at Dacca on that day to the Indian Army and Mukti Bahini. The Bengali muslims celebrated their independence day by Killing tribal people as a mark of bravery.

On 21, Dec, 1971 at Tarabania under Dighinala P.S. 9 Chakmas including women and children were Killed. Many houses were burnt away after ransacking the properties. On 22, Dec, 1971 a boy (5) was killed at Panchuri under Panchari P.S. to extract Rs. 10,000 from his parents. On the same day the Bangladesh forces reaching at Bandarban in the southern part of C.H.T. gave a shockingly barbaric treatment to one M. S. Prue a son of late Bohmang Chief. He was made to parade the streets of Bandarban town with his head shaven and a string of shoes around his neck. It is said that all the mogh ladies of Bandarban town including the teen aged girls were molested.

On 22, March 1972 the Bangladesh Rifles (B.D.R) personnel

beat up the villagers of Dhalya under Manikchari P.S. and 5 girls were raped. The village was looted afterwards. At Bairagbazer under Dighinala P.S. the B.D.R. personnel posted in the area ransacked the village and almost all the girls were dishonoured on the same day on 29, March, 1972 two thousand Bengali Muslims armed with automatic weapons raided the villages of Manikchari Chikanchari Sangupara Pakkamura and Godatala under Ramgarh P.S. and looted the properties of the villagers. The villagers, had to vacate the area for safety.

On April 30, 1972 the B.D.R. personnel manhandle 5 school teachers at Machyachara under Mahalchari P.S. and took away some girls who did not return home.

On May 8, 1972 about 10 B.D.R. personnel in a jeep went to Logang village under Panchari P.S. they carried away 3 Chakma girls in their jeep. The Santibahini members to save the honour of their women lay in wait and ambushed the jeep. The B.D.R. personnel for fear of their lives brought the jeep in dead halt and fled away leaving the girls and their arms and ammunitions.

Bangladesh Government realised that the Santibahini, armed wing of JSS was a force to reckon with and suspended executing its design for the time being. During this period from 1973 to 1975 a massive armed built up was arranged throughout the length and breadth of the C.H.T. The Bangladesh forces, include Bangladesh Army Bangladesh Rifles, Bangladesh Reserve police, Bangladesh armed police battalion, Bangladesh police and Ansars (Islamic guards). There was lull in C.H.T. at the time of this armed built up, government did not create any trouble inviting insurgent activities in the Hill Tracts.

In 1974 the president of Bangladesh, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman abolished all political parties and organised Bangladesh Awami Kriśak Sramik League (BAKSAL) in which J.S.S also joined hands.

On November 19, 1975 another delegation of 67 Hillmen met the president of Bangladesh Justice A.S. Sayem and reserved their

demands. In 1976 Mr. Ashok Kumar Dewan presented similar proposals to Gen. Ziaur Rahman then president of Bangladesh. All the efforts for a permanent peace in C.H.T. were in vain.

The Bangladesh armed forces having well set in their outposts and Cantonments started combing operations in November 1976 and continued the same upto January 1977. The operation was launched in the upper reaches of Sankha river and the villages in the Madhu and Thanchi area under Bandarban subdivision. Many villages were destroyed. One thousand Mogh tribals were killed and 15000 thousand of them fled away to Arakan and near by jungles.

In March 1977 Bangladesh Government sent troops to massacre the inhabitants of Matiranga, Guimara, Manikchari, Lakmichari areas in Ramgarh Subdivision the troops shot dead 50 Mogh tribals, 23 women were tortured to death, 54 men died in pits, many women were raped, the villagers were robbed of their properties and hundreds of houses were set on fire. More than 5000 Mogh tribals were pushed into Tripura in India. This operation continued upto August 1977. India Government after negotiation sent back the tribals into hostile hands of Bangladesh Army. This action of Bangladesh Government was in retaliation of the Burma Government action. It is stated that thousands of muslims were sent out of Burma in 1976.

In May 1977 another operation was launched in Bandarban Subdivision against the Mogh tribals and it continued upto December 1977. Similar operation was also launched in Madhu and Thanchi areas under same subdivisions. The troops destroyed many villages. Killed and arrested many persons and committed rape and loot in Hnara, Bagmara, Udalbanya, Paikhong, Rajbila and Bangaldalya areas under Bandarban P.S.

After the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, President of Bangladesh in 1975 the military Government of Ziaur Rahman continued to follow the foot steps of Sheikh Mujib. Concentration camps in the name of IDEAL VILLAGES started from September

1977 and Army contingents were used to compel the villagers to go to the concentration camps. In Sadar subdivision concentration camps were established at Moghban, Balukhali, Jachari, Kangra-chari, Bilarichari, Sakrachari, Taktanala, Dhupsil, Pharoa, Kandya-duar, Basanta Hemanta, Tinkunia, and Kutubdia all under Kotwali P.S. In Bandorban Subdivision similar concentration camps were established at Pengchhari, Kachchhapali, Bagmara under Roangchhari P.S., Reisa under Bandorban P.S., Murughuk, Thanchi and Balpara under Ruma P.S., Alikadam under Lama P.S.

In January and February 1978, Madhu and Thanchi area, were destroyed for the third time. In July 1978 the Bandorban P.S. area, the villagers were mercilessly tortured by Bangladesh Army beyond description. This illtreatment continued upto December 1978. In September to December 1978 all the villages of eastern Ichhamati valley under Sadar subdivision were burnt to ashes by Bangladesh Army. In December 1978, 10,000 Chakma Buddhists crossed the Indian border to take shelter. Many thousands of them were killed and some of them marooned in the jungle and died there of starvation. These people fled away from Harina, Thega, Subalong and Rankhang area under Sadar Subdivision, Burning of houses, raping, looting, killing, merciless flogging made new history.

In April 1978 during the Biju festival (New year day of Chakmas) the army entered Rangapani in the north-west of the hill Tracts. They surrounded the house of the headman and beat him and his four sons to death. His two daughters, one of them seven month pregnant were raped and then shot. The bodies were buried in hastily dug graves in the family's vegetable garden.

From January to April 1979 this action of torture and killing continued till the India Government intervened and the refugee Chakmas were sent back to Bangladesh. From January to May 1979 the villages of eastern Ichhamati valley under Sadar Sub-

division were again destroyed. From December 1978 to January 1979 the Bangladesh troops invaded a big area comprising Dumdumya mouza, Maidong mouza and Panchari mouza totaling 175 Sqr. miles. The area contains 50 villages and a population of 75000 people. During the operation the army burnt away all the 22 villages of Dumdumya mouza. Mrs. Basantamuni Chakma (30) of Bagakhali and Mrs. Roalsong Pankho (42) of Dulkhob were shot dead. Mrs. Chandramala Chakma (25) and Miss Gurimila Chakma (18) of both Mandirachara mukh were taken away by the troops. All the villages of Maidong mouza were burnt away, People fled away in deep jungles. The troops wiped out the villages of Panchari mouza, Mrs. Anal Devi (22) of Bhuatlichara was shot dead and Mrs. Bunga Kajji (71) Mrs. Kandari Chakma (57) were burnt alive in their houses while the rest ran away in near by jungles.

On February 21, 1979 the army burnt down the entire village of Pujiang 20 miles south of Khagrachari. The Pujiang Buddhist temple was ransacked and Lord Buddha's statue was shot several times making it a target of shooting. Failing to hit the statue of Lord Buddha they broke the head of the statue with rifle butts and played football in the courtyard of the Vihar. Rev Aniruddha and Rev. Rebata Bhikkhu who were having their lunch, were beaten mercilessly breaking the right hand of Rev. Rebata and the head of Rev. Aniruddha was fractured.

On February 22, 1979 the army burnt down the villages Dhudukchhara and Logang areas about 25 miles north of Khagrachari. The properties of the villagers were looted.

On March 7, 1979 the entire village of Babuchhara under Dighinala P.S. was destroyed after looting the properties of the villagers.

On March 13, 1979 Udalbagan village about 22 miles east of Khagrachari was burnt down. On the same day the Logang village was burnt and looted for the second time.

On March 29, 1979 Durgachhara village was burnt down and the properties were looted.

Gargajyachari under Khagrachari P.S., a small village, suddenly woke up one fine morning to see a dastardly scene on March 5, 1979. The villagers were on defence duty against Child lifters. Some army men moving incognito came to the village and arrested 3 young men who were on duty. They took them to the Khagrachari military camp and made meat of them by cutting them to pieces with their knives, first separating the muscles from the bones in peculiar joy the victims are Sanjiban Talukdar (16), Alokmay Talukdar (17) and Hallewa Chakma (16) and students of Khagrachari college.

On April 9, 1979 the Army raided civilian Hdqrs. of Rangamati and took away 70 people from their home. They were arrested as bait to pressurise the Santibahini fighters into surrender. The detainees were subjected to repeated harassment, physical abuse and constant interrogation. The victims were Chandra Mohan Dewan (91), Pulin Chandra Dewan (72) and his wife Mrs. Dewan (55), Mrs. Champa Chakma (28), Miss Sormin Dewan (22) Miss Dipita Dewan (18), Purnanjoy Khisa (60) and his wife Mrs. Khisa (55), Miss Khisa (22), Kiritirata Chakma (56), and his wife (50) and son (26), Bankim Talukdar (48), and his wife (38), Mrs. Asokmitra Chakma (22) Sunimal Chakma (36), Girisankar Khisa (30), Udayan Khisa (24), Shisir Chakma (36), Sujit Dewan (35), Sanjib Dewan (26), Sujit Kumar Dewan (28), Ajit Talukdar (50), Saibal Khisa (28), Amritatal Dewan (50), Bijoyal Chakma (55), and 44 other people.

On April 13, 1979, one Kalparanjan Chakma (45) a leader of B.N.P. was dragged away from a jeep and was mercilessly beaten. He was left for dead. On April 23, 1979, the army led by capt. Abul Kalam Mahmud attacked the Kanungopara village, 16 miles south of Khagrachari and shot dead 5 people Sindhu Kumar Chakma (40), Anabil Chakma (25), Amal Chakma (22) Bhada Chakma (20) and Arun Kanti Chakma (15). The bodies of the victims were burnt in presence of the bereaved family members.

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While leaving the village Abul Kalam said—"Such shall be the fate of every Chakma, Remember this, all right?"

On March 16, 1979, army rounded up the two villages Khagrachari and Khabangparia and beaten all men, women and children whoever was caught by them. Some people were hung from the trees and the rest were kept in close door rooms without food. Lt. col. Salam declared in a public meeting at Panchari 16 miles north of Khagrachari we want only the soil and not the people of C.H.T.

On May 26, 1979 Brig. Hannan and Bangladesh Government after attempting more than three years to suppress the just movement of the people of C.H.T. changed its tactics and strategy of oppression upon the people. In this strategy army wanted to save themselves and planned to put the Bengali muslims on the altar of sacrifice before the Santibahini. They have arranged the settlement of muslims all around each army outposts and cantonments creating a belt of safety for them. For this reason in August 1979 Govt. issued a secret circular asking the Deputy Commissioners (District heads) of all the districts of Bangladesh to prepare a list of landless poor muslims and to send them to Chitragong Rly station under police escort. Big reception camps were established at Batali hills near the Rly Station and at Rangunia under Rangunia P.S. Lakhs of muslim families from outside were given settlement in C.H.T. around the army camps at the same time army continued its policy of extermination of the tribal people from C.H.T.

In September 1979 the army launched attack upon the villages in Madhu and Thanchi areas for the third time and destroyed the newly constructed houses.

On October 15, 1979, 40 armed police battalion personnel posted at Mahalchhari went to Mubachhari about 16 miles south of Khagrachari. They were attacked by Santibahini killing 30 of them. In retaliation army burnt down all the villages with in a

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radius of 16 sqr miles. Many innocent men, women were arrested whose fate still is not known.

On October 20, 1979 Mr. Ali Haider Khan, D.C. and Abdul Awal, Commissioner of Ctg. division in a public meeting said—“Chakmas and other people of C.H.T. could be extinct in the next 5 years.”

In November 1979, 30 army personnel led by Lt. Hadi were killed at Adarakchhara while coming back from a combing operation against Santibahini. In retaliation the army burnt down the entire area covering 50/60 sqr miles. They have even destroyed the Cattle in the area.

From October to December 1979 a merciless and inhuman operation was launched by the army in the entire Bagasadar union under Langadu P.S. and turned the area into a no-mans land. The villages Bangahata, Thakuiyamakalak, Gulsakhali, Nala were destroyed, thousands of Chakma tribals were killed. Rev. Bannitananda Bhikkhu and Rev. Ajara Bhikkhu were butchered inside the Thakuiyamakalak Buddhist Vihar. The entire family consisting of 7 members of Rangabap Chakma were killed. One Mrs. Kamala Chakma (30) was raped and then put to death by bayonet. A population of 50000 people was made homeless and were forced to flee away into jungles. Muslims families brought from outside the district were settled in the area. This operation continued upto March 1980.

In January 1980 the army burnt down several villages under Matranga P.S. and about 4000 Mogh tribals fled to India.

On March 10, 1980, in an ambush by Santibahini 22 soldiers including Maj Mohsin Raja was Killed in the Rankhiang area. In retaliation on March 25, 1980 the army posted at Kaukhahi called a meeting of leading Buddhists of the area to discuss problems of the locality and the restoration of Buddhist temples at Poapara. A large number of Chakma and Mogh tribals arrived at the Vihara and devotees were busy doing repair work in the monastery. The

army came and cordoned the temple, lined all of them up in the middle of the temple courtyard. They fired on them from their automatic weapons. All of them were killed in temple premises. The Buddha statues were molested and broken asunder. To add insult to injury the army men Kicked the Buddha statues and played a devils foot-ball game with the dilapidated images of Lord Buddha until they were too tired for a breath. After this shooting game they burnt down the villages at Kaukhali, Poapara, Kachukhali, Rangipara, Roazapara and more than 300 Chakma and Mogh tribals were killed. Several hundred people are still missing. The Buddhist temple of Roazapara was ransacked and the hands of the priests Rev. Panyasara Bhikkhu and Rev. Wannasara Bhikkhu were broken. A great number of Buddhist temples were destroyed including Betchari, Headmanpara, Kachukhali, Tanghapara, Rangcipara, Poapara, Chotadalu, Baradalu and Tripuradighi. People Killed among others were Kumud Talukdar (60), Sashi Chakma (40), Aswini Karbari (45), Aswini Chakma (35), Kalimohan Karbari (50), Udayan Chakma (42), Dinanath Chakma (48), Bijoy Kumar Chakma (55), Lah Thwai Marma (47), Kalarjoy Chakma (49) and Krishnahari Chakma (37).

On April 1, 1980 Mr. Upendra Lal Chakma M.P. held a press Conference said—“side by side thousands Bengali refugees in collaboration with the army moved in various directions and jumped upon the tribal villages committing plunder, arson and killing irrespective of child, old man and women”.

On 25 April 1980 three opposition M.Ps Mr. Rashed Khan Menon, Mr. Shahjahan Siraj and Mr. Upendralal Chakma gave a press conference in Dacca after returning from a tour of the C.H.T. where they met about 500 tribals. They reported in detail the incident. This report states, among other things, that the Govt. plan includes forcible distortion and destruction of the religion, culture, languages and traditions of the tribal people.

On September 3, 1980 2nd Lt. Kamal Ahmed called the

Chakma tribals of Langadu P.S. area in his office and kept them under arrest for days together and beaten them mercilessly. Benode Dewan (50), Indu Chakma (40), Nagarehand Chakma (45) and Jyotish Chakma (46) were beaten to death and the rest were released after 3 days.

On Sept. 15, 1980, army along with muslim refugee families entered into Rasayabil area under Kaptai P.S. They set the houses of the area on fire Killing Kalkinkar Chakma (30), Nilratan Chakma (25). All the properties including the cattle were looted. Many people were taken away who did not come back home even today.

On Sept. 28, 1980 army attacked the Mogh village Betbania with heavy arms. One Mong Kya Sein was killed in the firing and Chui Chau and Mrah Sjai were taken away by army. No trace of the two persons.

On October 11, 1980 army attacked 3 Chakma villages Gula-chari, Chotamahaprun and Choudhuripara Killing many people. The houses were set on fire after looting. One hundred Cattle were taken away.

On October 14, 1980 army again attacked the villages Baghari-chari and Hazachari and looted the properties of the villagers including 200 Cattle.

On October 31, 1980 army arrested 141 Chakma and Mogh tribals including students of Khagrachari, Perachara and Kamal-chari High Schools. They were beaten mercilessly and were released later on.

The Bangladesh army posted at Harina launched an operation upon the Chakma tribals inhabiting in the Harina valley under Barkal P.S. The army burnt down all from December 15, to December 17, 1980 the houses in the area having a population of 50000 people. Twelve thousand people left for Mizoram, India for shelter and rest took shelter in deep jungles without food and winter clothes.

The Bangladesh Army Commanders Pressing hard for a military solution of Ctg. Hill Tracts. General Ziaur Rahman, President of Bangladesh also was not keen for a negotiated settlement. So General Zia decided to have legal sanction for a mass genocide in the Parliament. That is why Govt. introduced a new bill in Parliaments in December 1980. The Disturbed Area Act of 1980 to legalise mass genocide in the hills.

This Act provides the persons in uniform and local administrative officers to make arbitrary arrest and open fire on any body engaged in any unlawful activity. Unlawful activities are broadly defined as including any action prejudicial to the Sovereignty or territorial integrity or security of Bangladesh or the maintenance of public sector. Police and defence forces would be authorised to enter any premises to conduct a search, destroy any house believed to be hiding explosives or ammunition and confiscate property. Application of these sweeping powers could not be Challenged in Court.

This heinous design of the Govt. was however rejected by opposition of the people all over the world.

In the months of September and October 1981 Bangladesh army colluded with muslim settlers let loose a reign of terror destroying all the villages of Matiranga, Belchhari and Tabalchhari areas under Ramgarh P.S. Five hundred Chakma, Mogh and Tripura tribals were killed and the rest crossed over to Tripura in India. These refugees numbering 18000 were sent back by India to C.H.T. without proper negotiation and Bangladesh Government violated many points after taking back the refugees. It is reported that the tribal lands forcibly taken by the muslim settlers were not handed over to them and Bangladesh Govt. did take no action in this regard.

On November 25, 1982 the army arrested 3 boys of Betchari under Mahalchhari P.S. including Kamajya Chakma (25). They were beaten mercilessly and were released later.

On 26 June 1983 the Bangladesh armed forces started combing operation in the area of Panchhari Police Station and entered the villages—Golakpatimachara, Maichyachara, Tarabanchari, Logang etc. to search out young people: The young men fled their villages for fear of death. The repression of the Army gradually came to a climax. During the nights of 26 and 27 July they surrounded the village and arrested 12 people including Mr. Birendra Kumar Chakma (65), a Union Council Member; Mr. Jyotirmoy Dewan (33), Head Master of Taraban Primary School and his colleague Mr. Lalan Bihari Chakma (27). Hot water was poured into the eyes of Mr. Jyotirmoy Dewan to destroy his eyesight. The whereabouts of Mr. Lalan Bihari and others are still unknown.

On 11 July 12 people of 2 families (7 members), (5 members) in the village of Golakpatimachara were shot dead. There were 3 women and five 2-6 year old children among them.

On the night of 9 August, 10 people including Mr. Juddha Chandra Chakma (55), Head Master of Tarabanchara Primary School were picked up and they are still missing. On 10 August, 100 houses in the Maramaichyachara village were burnt to ashes. 120 houses in the Jedamachyachara village were set on fire same day. 10 people including the son of Mr. Jaraknulhab (30) were arrested. They are also still missing.

On 11 August 150 houses in the village of Logang were burned down and a few innocent people were taken away. Their whereabouts could not be traced yet. The Bangladesh Army entered the village of Tarabanya same day and indescribably oppressed the innocent villagers. The Muslim settlers, who accompanied the Army, hacked 50 people including Mr. Surendra Tripura (40) and his wife (37) to death, and looted all properties of the villagers. They lifted two/three 4-5 year old children up bodily by their limbs and smashed them to the ground. Ven. Bodhipal Bhikkhu, the Head Monk of the Banavihar Buddhist Temple in the village of Jedamachyachara was beaten same day and he

came (to Agartala, Tripura, India) as he could not bear military oppression anymore.

14. Offence.

What is the Offence of the tribal people of C.H.T ?

Why do they suffer persecution and annihilation ?

Their offence is that they ethnically belong to MONGOLOID RACES and not BENGALLEES, and their religious faith is other than ISLAM. Their language, culture, social-system, economy, habits and internal administrative setup are also quite different from that of the Bengalee Muslims. Extreme religious fanaticism and racialism of the Bengalee Muslims of Bangladesh are devouring these helpless, defenceless and wretched people.

15. Appeal.

The Tribal people of Ctg. Hill Tracts make a fervent appeal to the world conscience, the humanitarian people, world democratic countries and the humane societies of the world :

To intervene and save the life and entity of the ethnic national minorities of Chadigang (Ctg. Hill Tracts) from their imminent and final extinction,

To help monetarily the oppressed tribals living in jungles without food and clothes for fear of the atrocious hands of the Bangladesh army,

To stop all aids to the Bangladesh Govt. as the same is being utilized to suppress the ethnic national minorities in Chadigang (Ctg. Hill Tracts).

Yours

1. Bhabatosh Dewan
Chairman

2. Priti Kumar Chakma.
Secretary General.

Jana Sanghati Samiti.
(The United People's party,
Chitagong Hill Tracts.)

Dated the Ctg. Hill Tracts.
the 18th January 1984