

From Dr. R.S. Dewan,
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Date: 28 Sept. 1984

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

Dear Sir,

May I present to you the following evidence regarding the
genocidal policy of the Bangladesh Government against the indigenous
nationalities of the CHT.

1. A copy of the Paper, "Damned for Progress. About the Perversity
of State and Nation-Building in Bangla Desh. The Chittagong Hill
Tracts Case", presented by Dr. Mey to the International Conference
held in Canada.

Dr. Mey has thoroughly investigated the social, political and
economic condition of the people of the CHT. His work has revealed the
Government's secret programme of systematic extermination of the tribal
people. The Government often seeks foreign aid for the development of the
indigenous people of the CHT. This aid is never used for the benefit of the
local people. The Government spends this money either for the armed forces
or for the outsider Muslim Bengali settlers. For example,

- i). The Swedish financed forestry project. It "turned out to aim at
the ruthless extraction of timber in the hills. The Swedish
development agency pulled out of the project because Bangla Deshi
authorities refused to guarantee and safeguard the interest of the
tribal people."
- ii). The UNICEF sponsored drinking water supply programme. It "benefitted
only army camps and Joutha Khamar settlements (Joint Farming),
Bengali colonies and urban areas."
- iii). The WHO organized malaria eradication project. It "was meant to
protect army personal."
- iv). The Asian Development Bank assisted livestock and fisheries
programme. It "benefitted only Bengali newcomers to the district."
- v). The Australian-aided road building programme. It "had two objects:
1. to facilitate swift army movements in the hills,
2. to enable Bengali settlers to push deep into the district." The
Australian Government stopped this scheme because the Bangladeshi
regime was using these roads for the said purposes.
- vi). The Asian Development Bank financed Joutha Khamar project. The
official label, the Joutha Khamar (joint farming), is just a
euphemism for dreadful words, concentration camp. Tens of
thousands/-

thousands of tribal plough-land farmers have been herded into concentration camps and their farmlands have been seized for the outsider Muslim Bengali settlers. Torture, rape, starvation, lack of medical care, and even murder are commonplace in concentration camps. Life in the Joutha Khamar under the Bangladesh army is so horrible that when the Bangladesh Government proposed to set up another one at Ghagra, near Rangamati, the local tribal people simply left their ancestral homes and fled to nearby areas. Now the Muslim Bengalis have occupied their villages and farmlands.

The Bangladesh Government is totally dependent on foreign aid. It receives huge financial help from developed countries and also from international organizations such as (a) the World Bank, (b) the Asian Development Bank, and (c) the International Development Association. I believe that if the foreign aid is suspended then the repressive regime of Bangladesh will be compelled to reverse its anti-tribal policy and to restore the birth-right of the indigenous people of the CHT. I shall be most grateful to you if you would kindly take all appropriate measures in order to suspend all foreign aid to Bangladesh until the rights of the tribal people are fully restored.

The tribal people of the CHT are being persecuted by the fundamentally hostile Bangladeshi military junta because they are ethnically, religiously and culturally different from the Muslim Bengalis. They are as helpless as a child and they need all kinds of protection of the civilized world as a child needs care of parents. I fervently appeal to you to protect the defenceless people of the CHT from the violent Muslim Bengalis invasion.

Yours sincerely

Ramendu Awan

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