

From Dr. R.S. Dewan,  
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Date: 11 May 1985

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

Dear Friend,

May I present to you a copy of the report under the heading,  
'Bangladesh - Genocide in the Chittagong Hill Tracts - New Evidence',  
published by the London-based prestigious human rights organization,  
Survival International on 2 May 1985.

Survival International has now revealed more, detailed information  
about the government-directed massacres that occurred in Bhushanchara,  
Ujyangchari, Suguripara, Het Bharia, Gorasthan, Ludibashchara, Garjantali  
and Dhanubak areas within Barkal Thana in May and June 1984. These attacks  
were mounted 'by members of the 7th and 26th Bengal of 305 Brigade of the  
Bangladesh Army, members of the 17th Battalion of the Bangladesh Rifles,  
the Village Defence Party of the Barkal Rehabilitation Zone and also Muslim  
Bengali settlers of the same zone.' Most of the victims were women and  
children.

This great human rights body has also brought to light that  
Bangladesh army has been pursuing a scorched earth policy in the Gabachari  
area of the Subalong valley. During a monthlong operation, between 20  
September and 19 October 1984, the Bangladesh army burned down tribal  
houses, destroyed crops, took away harvests, and evicted people from their  
homes in six villages namely, Barkalak, Othyalchara, Harinhatpara,  
Mongchari, Shivrampara, and Bamer Subalong in the Gabachari region.

Survival International has also learnt that the situation of the  
tribal refugees currently resident in Tagalak Bak and Tibira Ghat camps in  
Mizoram State of India is far from satisfactory. 'Deaths have been  
particularly common among the young and aged members of the population and  
have been attributed to the scarcity of medicines and the meagre diet'.

This information is just the tip of the iceberg. The government-  
sponsored violence against the unarmed hill people is occurring everywhere  
in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. I shall be most grateful to you if you  
would kindly send an inquiry team to the CHT in order to investigate all  
genocidal crimes committed by the brutal regime of Bangladesh.

To

Mr. Rudolph C. Ryser,  
Chairman/Center for World Indigenous Studies,  
P.O. Box 911, Snoqualmie,  
Washington 98065, U.S.A.

Yours sincerely

*Ramendu Dewan*

BANGLADESH

GENOCIDE IN THE CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS

NEW EVIDENCE

SURVIVAL INTERNATIONAL

2 MAY 1985

In September 1984 Survival International issued an Urgent Action Bulletin (UAB/BAN/1b/SEP/1984 Bangladesh. Chittagong Hill Tracts: More Massacres) describing the escalating violence between the Bangladesh army and tribal resistance fighters defending themselves from the army-backed invasion of their lands by Bengali settlers. The Bulletin provided fresh details of the Government's genocidal policy to resettle the Chittagong Hill Tracts with members of the national majority Bengali population and eliminate the area's traditional tribal inhabitants. The policy, which has led to the death of thousands of tribal people and has made the survivors a minority in their own land, had been reported on in detail in a previous Survival International report **Genocide in Bangladesh "We Want the Land and not the People"** (Survival International Review 43).

According to several reports, received by Survival International between June and October 1984, several hundred tribal people, mostly innocent villagers, were killed in these renewed attacks on their settlements and several thousand refugee tribals abandoned their traditional lands and sought refuge in neighbouring Mizoram State in India (See also Survival International News 5,6 and 7).

Survival International wrote to the Bangladesh authorities in September 1984, urging them to investigate these human rights violations and end the invasion of tribal lands in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The Bangladesh authorities have failed to reply to these letters.

Survival International also wrote to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees urging him to seek means of bringing relief to the refugees, estimated at up to 18,000, who had fled to Mizoram State, India. In response to this request, the UNHCR approached the Indian authorities to enquire if they needed assistance in handling the refugee problem. The Indian government declined the offer, however, stating that it would "handle the matter on a bilateral basis as in previous years".

The Indian government's statement was far from reassuring, since in previous years refugees entering India from the Chittagong Hill Tracts have been forcibly returned across the borders where many have reportedly starved to death in the forests, deprived of their land and livelihood. Survival International therefore wrote to the Indian authorities requesting clarification of the manner in which they were dealing with the refugees. The Indian government has also failed to reply.

Survival International has now received more, detailed documentation concerning some of the massacres that occurred in the Bhushan Chara area at the end of May 1984, as well as evidence that the Bangladesh army has been pursuing a scorched earth policy in the Gaba Chari area. Further information received by Survival International indicates that the situation of the refugees currently resident in Mizoram State, India, is far from satisfactory.

### ATTACKS ON TRIBAL VILLAGES

According to the information received by Survival International, an attack was made on the 31 May 1984 on the tribal villages of the Bhushan Chara Union and the adjacent villages in Barkal Thana. The villages submitted to this attack for which Survival International has detailed information are the following:

Ludibash Chara  
Ujyang Chari  
Suguri Para  
Het Bharia  
Gorasthan  
Bhushan Chara  
Garjan Tali  
Dhanu Bak

TABLE 1.

#### RECORDED VICTIMS OF MASSACRE OF 31 MAY 1984

No.	NAME	AGE	SEX	VILLAGE	FATE
1	Anuruddha Chakma	82	M	Suguri Para	Killed
2	Nila Mohan	45	M	Suguri Para	Killed
3	Hangsa Kumar	17	M	Suguri Para	Killed
4	Bali Mohan	38	M	Suguri Para	Killed
5	Sneta Kumar	23	M	Suguri Para	Killed
6	Samat Kumar	45	M	Suguri para	Killed
7	Sneha Kumar	35	M	Suguri Para	Killed
8	Bimal Kanti	10	M	Suguri Para	Killed
9	Mukta Kumar	8	M	Suguri Para	Killed
10	Urangya	5	M	Suguri Para	Killed
11	Nanda Kumar	1	M	Suguri Para	Killed
12	Gopal Shanti	8	M	Suguri Para	Killed
13	Surja Mala	8	F	Suguri Para	Killed
14	Swarna Mani	6	M	Suguri Para	Killed
15	Anil Kanti	4	M	Suguri Para	Killed
16	Langdi	68	F	Suguri Para	Killed
17	Kala Bi	61	F	Suguri Para	Killed
18	Sneta Lata	35	F	Suguri Para	Killed
19	Padma Mala	15	F	Suguri Para	Killed
20	Nila Mukhi	33	F	Suguri Para	Killed
21	Jida Rani	13	F	Suguri Para	Killed
22	Krishna Mala	3	F	Suguri Para	Killed
23	Chanchala	1	F	Suguri Para	Killed
24	Bidya Dhari	38	F	Suguri Para	Killed
25	Daya Devi	2	F	Suguri Para	Killed
26	Sayandari	15	F	Suguri Para	Untraced
27	Chandra Mala	17	F	Suguri Para	Untraced
28	Padma Kumar	10	M	Suguri Para	Bullet wound
29	Buddha Lata	23	F	Suguri Para	Bullet wound

(cont.)

TABLE 1 (Cont.)

30	Dalam	35	M	Het Bharia	Killed
31	Bhadra	14	M	Het Bharia	Killed
32	Chitta Ranjan	51	M	Het Bharia	Killed
33	Maratwa	6	M	Het Bharia	Killed
34	Muratya	2	M	Het Bharia	Killed
35	Prasanna Kumar	2	M	Het Bharia	Killed
36	Maratwa	2	M	Het Bharia	Killed
37	Aliu Pudi	62	F	Het Bharia	Killed
38	Indu Mala	32	F	Het Bharia	Killed
39	Chaya Rani	10	F	Het Bharia	Killed
40	Bana Lata	37	F	Het Bharia	Killed
41	Kiyana	11	F	Het Bharia	Killed
42	Chinta Devi	47	F	Het Bharia	Killed
43	Arati	22	F	Het Bharia	Killed
44	Maya Sita	8	F	Het Bharia	Killed
45	Dhumani	8	F	Het Bharia	Killed
46	Hira Mukhi	5	F	Het Bharia	Killed
47	Milabwa	8	F	Het Bharia	Killed
48	Dina Mohan	54	M	Gorasthan	Killed
49	Rameswar	29	M	Gorasthan	Killed
50	Akkhay Chand	25	M	Gorasthan	Killed
51	Amar Chand	35	M	Gorasthan	Killed
52	Kala Puna	30	M	Gorasthan	Killed
53	Nishi Mohan	45	M	Gorasthan	Killed
54	Sadhana	16	M	Gorasthan	Killed
55	Khokan	3	M	Gorasthan	Killed
56	Bachchu	10	M	Gorasthan	Killed
57	Nayandini	26	F	Gorasthan	Untraced
58	Mangal Chandra	59	M	Bhusan Bak	Killed
59	Sadhan Chandra	29	M	Bhusan Bak	Killed
60	Priya Ranjan	17	M	Bhusan Bak	Killed
61	Jyotirmoy	16	M	Bhusan Bak	Killed
62	Teneya	49	M	Bhusan Bak	Killed
63	Nagari	27	F	Bhusan Bak	Killed
64	Langdi	47	F	Bhusan Bak	Killed
65	Samar Bi	14	F	Bhusan Bak	Killed
66	Taru Lata	17	F	Bhusan Bak	Untraced
67	Pahr Bi	17	F	Bhusan Bak	Untraced
68	Mati Lal	62	M	Garjan Tali	Killed
69	Sanatan	48	M	Jarul Chari	Killed

The attacks resulted in 69 deaths and two people wounded. 25 of those killed were of thirteen years of age and younger, there were a number of babies among the victims. Five members of the population remain untraced, all young women of 15 to 26 years of age.

TABLE 2.

## ANALYSIS OF CASUALTIES

	ADULTS		MINORS		TOTALS
	MALES	FEMALES	MALES	FEMALES	
KILLED	24	14	13	11	62
WOUNDED	-	1	1	-	2
UNTRACED	-	5	-	-	5
TOTALS	24	20	14	11	69

According to the information received by Survival International, the attack was mounted by members of the "7th and 26th Bengal of 305 Brigade" of the Bangladesh Army, members of the 17th Battalion of the Bangladesh Rifles, the Village Defence Party of the Barkal Rehabilitation Zone and also Muslim Bengali settlers of the same zone.

Earlier reports received by Survival International indicate that this assault on the tribal villages of the Bhushan Chara Union and neighbouring communities was but one among several attacks made by the Bangladesh armed forces on tribal people in the Chittagong Hill Tracts during May and June of 1984.

## . SCORCHED EARTH

Since then the army has followed up its attacks on tribal communities by pursuing the scorched earth policy that has characterised its activities in tribal areas for several years (see also Anti-Slavery Society Report 1984 *The Chittagong Hill Tracts*; International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs 1985 Document 51 *They are Now Burning Village after Village Genocide in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh*).

Between 20 September and 19 October 1984, the Bangladesh army carried out a monthlong operation in the Gaba Chari area, a hilly region inhabited by tribal, slash-and-burn cultivators on the Subalong river. Houses were burnt, crops were destroyed, harvests taken and people evicted. The villages reported to have been destroyed in the operation are listed in Table 3.

TABLE 3.

**VILLAGES DESTROYED BETWEEN 20.9.84 AND 19.10.84  
IN THE GABA CHARI REGION**

No.	VILLAGE	No of families	No of Houses Burnt	Estimated crop loss (quintals)
1	Bar Kalak	12	11	201
2	Othyal Chara	28	28	276
3	Harin Hat Para	23	4	420
4	Mong Chari	31	11	650
5	Shivaram Para	80	14	895
6	Bamer Subalong	5	5	36
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>2478</b>

**SITUATION OF THE REFUGEES IN MIZORAM STATE, INDIA**

The attacks on the tribal communities of the Bhushan Chara area resulted in a flood of refugees, variously estimated at 10 to 18,000, attempting to find refuge in Mizoram State in India. Recent information received by Survival International suggests that about 4,100 of the refugees, who fled the Bhushan Chara massacres, were settled in two camps in Mizoram State. The other refugees were reportedly, forcibly repatriated by the Mizoram administration into Bangladesh. Allegedly they have taken refuge in the upland forests of the Tracts. Their fate is not known.

Those refugees who were allowed to remain in India have been settled in two camps in the Demagiri sub-division of Lunglei District. They arrived between 2 and 16 June 1984. The camps are named as Tibira Ghat and Tagalak Bak. According to the information made available to Survival International, the refugees receive 1 kg of rice and 1 kg of wheat per week. Half rations are issued to those under fourteen years. Small quantities of dahl, salt and cooking oil have also been provided. Limited supplies of medicines are available at the camps but must be paid for.

The total number of refugees received into the camps in June was 4,119. Due to the bad conditions in the camps where death rates have been very high, the actual number of refugees is now rather less, 4047. Deaths have been particularly common among the young and aged members of the population and have attributed to the scarcity of medicines and the meagre diet. No provisions have been made to supply the refugees with clothing, meat, fish or fresh vegetables. Nor has cash been supplied.

TABLE 4.

## SITUATION OF REFUGEES IN TAGALAK BAK CAMP, MIZORAM STATE

VILLAGE OF ORIGIN	Bhanu Dak	Chota Harina	Dhumba Talang (1)	Firti Chara	Haja Ghara	Bhalu-kya Chari	Dhumba Talang (2)	Kuki Chara	TOTALS
No. OF FAMILIES	71	49	40	60	17	75	34	24	370
Nos. M	222	158	142	184	53	217	107	79	1162
F	213	160	129	189	49	179	115	87	1121
Total	435	318	271	373	102	396	222	166	2283
Deaths M	13	10	6	9	-	13	7	8	66
F	20	7	5	8	3	15	7	1	66
Total	33	17	11	17	3	28	14	9	132
Births M	4	6	3	4	-	3	2	3	25
F	7	1	2	1	3	-	1	1	16
Total	11	7	5	5	3	3	3	4	41
Present Strength	413	308	265	361	102	371	211	161	2194

TABLE 5.

## SITUATION OF REFUGEES IN TIBIRA GHAT CAMP, MIZORAM STATE

VILLAGE OF ORIGIN	Garjan Tali	Het Bharia	Goras- than	Jarul Chari	Bhusan Bak	Bairaqi Para	TOTALS
No. OF FAMILIES	59	58	97	53	50	1	318
Nos. M	161	140	297	170	188	1	957
F	162	136	319	186	155	1	956
Total	323	276	616	356	343	2	1916
Deaths M	6	8	10	16	8	-	48
F	14	10	11	11	3	-	49
Total	20	18	21	27	11	-	97
Births M	3	2	6	4	1	-	16
F	3	6	3	3	1	-	16
Total	6	8	9	7	2	-	32
Present Strength	309	266	604	336	336	2	1853



## CONCLUSIONS

Evidence continues to accumulate that the Bangladesh government and armed forces are pursuing a genocidal war against the, mainly Buddhist, tribal minorities of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The war has the aim of clearing the area for settlement by non-tribal Muslim Bengalis from the overpopulated lowlands of Bangladesh.

Entry into the area by all foreigners is strictly controlled and no journalists are allowed access to the region. Attempts by human rights organisation to send official investigative missions to the region have been rebuffed. The Bangladesh government denies the existence of a special problem in the Chittagong Hills. In a submission to the Working Group on Indigenous Populations in 1983, the official Bangladesh delegate claimed that "the entire population of the territory which now comprises Bangladesh has always been and still is one people - the Bangladesh nation.....Bangladesh is a country with a homogenous population". Similarly in response to Survival International's submission of its report, **Genocide in Bangladesh "We Want the Land and not the People"**, the Bangladesh High Commission in London wrote that "the question of any discrimination, relocation or decimation of any tribe or ethnic minority within Bangladesh, does not arise".

The root of the problem in the Chittagong Hill Tracts is the Bangladesh government's refusal to acknowledge the tribal peoples' rights to their traditional lands. The government has repealed the **Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation of 1900**, which prohibited the sale of tribal lands to non-tribals, and will neither acknowledge the ownership rights of slash-and-burn cultivators, nor respect the rights of tribals with fixed holdings and standing crops.

Bangladesh is a signatory of the International Labour Organisation's **Convention 107 on Tribal and Indigenous Populations**, the terms of which it is blatantly violating. The Government is also a signatory of the United Nations **Convention on Genocide**. Its failure to take any action against the perpetrators of the current policy of extermination of the tribal peoples of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, is a direct contravention of the convention's first four articles.