

From: Dr. Ramendn S. Dewan,
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Date: 30 July, 1988

Sub: An appeal to save the Chakma, Marma, Tripura and other tribes
of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) from the total extermina-
tion by the Bangladesh Government.

Dear Rudy,

May I present to you the following information about the precarious
situation of the Jumma people (the people of the CHT):

1. A report of the Jumma Refugees now sheltered in the Tripura State
of India - sent by an Indian Observer on 28 June, 1988.
2. An article, "Fresh Chakma influx feared in Tripura", from the
Telegraph of 20 June, 1988.
3. A news, "Indo-Bangla talks on Chakma refugees", from the Times of
India of 9 July, 1988.
4. A piece, "Bangla assurance on Chakmas' return", from the Times of
India of July 11, 1988.
5. A news, "Talks on Chakma refugees fail", from the Times of India of
13 July, 1988.
6. An article, "Bangla envoy to meet Chakmas", from the Telegraph of
July 12, 1988.
7. A report, "Bangladesh envoy meets Chakmas", from the Telegraph of
July 12, 1988.
8. A news, "Chakmas set terms for going back", from the Telegraph of
13 July, 1988.
9. An appeal made on behalf of Jumma Refugees at a meeting of the
British Refugee Council Asia Committee on 5 July, 1988.
10. An Editorial response, "The Chakma Fact", from the Montreal Serai
of April, 1988.
11. An article, "Hope for the Hill Tracts ?", from the Survival
International News no. 20, 1988.
12. An appeal letter, "Appeal to save the Chakma", from the Seeds of
Peace of May, 1988.
13. A Piece, "On veut la terre mais pas le peuple !", from the Sans
Expressions Autochtones d'ici et d'Aujourd'hui of April, 1988.

A. THE JUMMA REFUGEE SITUATION

The Bangladesh armed forces and the Bangladeshi settlers combinedly
massacred the innocent Jumma people of over 100 villages within Matiranga,
Lakkhichari, Panchari, Khagrachari and Dighimala Upazillas (Sub-Districts)
in April and May, 1986, in order to colonise the Jumma villages and farm
lands with the people of the majority community of Bangladesh. This pogrom
resulted in about 5,000 deaths and the flight of some 50,000 Jumma Refugees
to the Tripura State of India. The humane Governments of India and Tripura
have given them shelter in 5 refugee camps at i) Takumbari (15502), ii)
Pancharam Para (9143), iii) Karbook (6584), iv) Silachari (4926) and v)
Kathalchhari (9225) and have been looking after them on humanitarian grounds.
Perhaps, it is important to point out that the Bangladeshi regime has denied
that these refugees are from Bangladesh. However, the compassionate inter-
national community has been forcing the Government of Bangladesh to re-
patriate and rehabilitate all the Jumma Refugees now camped in Tripura. In
spite of tremendous international pressure, the Ershad-regime is reluctant
to create a normal climate (in the CHT) conducive to the safe return of these
refugees.

In fact, the Bangladesh Government has not the slightest wish to take the Jumma Refugees back and to rehabilitate them in their ancestral villages and on their own farmlands. It often misleads the world by saying that it has taken all necessary measures to make the return of the refugees safe. For example, on four previous occasions the Bangladesh Government broke its promises to the refugees. It either abandoned them just after repatriation or herded them into concentration camps where the helpless Jumma Refugees had been tortured, raped, starved and murdered. They never got their own villages and agricultural lands back. Even they were not allowed to see the situation of their villages for themselves. On 11 and 12 July, 1988, a Bangladeshi delegation headed by the High Commissioner of Bangladesh to India, Mr. Farooq Ahmed Choudhury, held talks with the representatives of the Jumma Refugees at Sabroom town in Tripura to arrange the repatriation of the evacuees. The Refugee leaders submitted a 12-point charter of demands to him as a precondition to their repatriation. The main points of their demands are "durable peace on the basis of a political settlement" of the crisis in the CHT, withdrawal of the Bangladesh armed forces from the CHT, removal of the Bangladeshi settlers from the area to facilitate the restoration of farmlands to the refugees, and "the formation of a tripartite supervisory committee" to implement the repatriation and rehabilitation programme. The Bangladesh Government Delegation rejected these just demands obviously because it knows very well that the Ershad-regime is not genuinely interested to take the Jumma Refugees back. It came to the Jumma Refugees just to show to the donor countries that the Bangladesh Government is keen to repatriate these evicted people. The Bangladesh High Commissioner also discussed the matter with the Chief Minister of Tripura, Mr. Sudhir Ranjan Majumdar. When the former repeatedly assured the latter that "the condition in the Chittagong Hill Tracts was now conducive to the return of the refugees", the latter pointed out that "more refugees from the Chittagong Hill Tracts poured into the state in the past two months." The Bangladesh official delegation is fully responsible for the failure of the talks as it has refused to ensure the safety of the refugees and also the restoration of their ancestral villages and agricultural lands to them.

B. FRESH INFUX OF JUMMA REFUGEES

In April 1988, the Bangladeshi settlers in league with the Bangladesh security forces attacked many Jumma villages - i) Pujgang and ii) Jugalchari in Panchari Upazilla, i) Manikchari in Manikchari Upazilla, i) Golabari, ii) Harinath Para, iii) Bhaibon Chara and iv) Naran Khaiya Khamar Para in Khagrachari Upazilla, i) Boalkhali, ii) Baradam, iii) Baradam Khamar Para, iv) Hazachara, v) Pabla Khali and vi) Chota Hazachara in Dighinala Upazilla - and killed at least 40 Jumma men, women and children. A new refugee, Mrs. Shova Chakma (25) of Khamarpara reported that at least 20 tribals were murdered in her village alone on 28 April, 1988. These massacres have caused a new influx of Jumma Refugees into Tripura. On June 5, 1988, a group of 155 refugees checked into the Karbook refugee camp. By June 20, 1988, some 1,000 Jumma evacuees entered Tripura. Another group of about 1,000 refugees have been reported to be moving towards Tripura along "circuitous hilly routes to evade the Bangladesh security forces". The Islamic regime of Bangladesh is continuing the systematic extermination of the Jumma people with the highest degree of Islamic zealotry. So there is no security to the life and property of any Jumma people in Bangladesh and as a result, more and more Jumma people will be forced to seek refuge in India.

C. BRITISH HELP FOR THE JUMMA REFUGEES

The British Refugee Council Asia Committee (BRCAC) has responded to our appeal for help for the Jumma Refugees now camped in the Tripura State of India. Mr. Malcolm Rodgers, the Director of the BRCAC, kindly invited a Jumma representative to submit a report on the present situation of the refugees. In compliance with his advice, a memorandum on behalf of the Jumma Refugees was presented to the Chairman of the BRCAC, Lord Ennals, at a meeting held on 5 July, 1988. Both Lord Ennals and Mr. Rodgers have assured the Jumma representative that the BRCAC would give sympathetic con-

British humanitarian organization has raised the hope of the refugees for their survival because the Indian economy cannot afford to bear the burden of so many refugees for so long.

The Jumma Refugee problem has deliberately been created by the cruel regime of Bangladesh and like other refugee problems it is an international problem. Therefore, all members of the compassionate international community are urgently needed to share the burden of the Jumma Refugees. India, despite her many economic problems, has contributed much more than her due share to the cause of the refugees. For example, she almost alone has been taking care of such a huge number of refugees since April, 1986. The Jumma Refugees have lost every thing in Bangladesh. Now they need all basic necessary things. The quantity of basic requirements of such a big refugee population is so vast that it is simply impossible for India alone to meet all their basic needs. So the present relief supplies and other basic facilities are not adequate for the refugees. They need more food, clothes, medicines, water supply, medical facilities and educational facilities. The Jumma Refugees are appealing to all members of the international community to send relief supplies at their earliest convenience. Their help will not only improve the living condition of the refugees but it will also help dispel despondency and sheer uncertainty from the minds of these most helpless section of humanity.

There will be no difficulty in sending relief supplies to the refugees through the Indian humanitarian organizations. The Humanity Protection Forum is an indigenous humanitarian agency in Tripura and it is well acquainted with the Jumma Refugee problem. This Forum is willing to cooperate with any international humanitarian organizations who would like to help the Jumma Refugees. It is able to carry out relief works on behalf of any humanitarian bodies.

D. THE 5TH DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE BANGLADESH GOVERNMENT AND THE JANA SAMHATI SAMITI

The just and impartial international community has compelled the Bangladesh Government to come to the negotiating table again. The 5th Dialogue took place on 19 June, 1988. It also ended without making any progress because still the Bangladesh official delegation refused to formally accept the Five Point Charter Of Demands. Perhaps, it is worth-recalling that on the four previous occasions (the four Dialogues were held on 21 October 1985, 17-18 December 1987, 24-25 January 1988, and 17-18 February 1988, respectively) the Bangladesh Government delegation also flatly refused to discuss formally the JSS's Charter Of Demands. Although the Bangladesh Government has accepted one of the JSS's proposals that the CHT crisis should be resolved politically, it is not interested at all in finding a political solution. It has rejected repeatedly all the just demands of the JSS and instead of finding a negotiated solution it is committing massacre after massacre of the innocent Jumma men, women and children. Clearly the Bangladeshi regime holds talks with the JSS in order to deceive the donor countries. It will continue to do so until the international community takes economic actions against it.

The JSS has tried again and again to solve the CHT crisis by peaceful and political methods. But all successive Governments of Bangladesh turned down its peace proposals and preferred a military solution to a constitutional solution. Therefore the JSS has been compelled to organise very reluctantly a resistance force, the Shanti Bahini, in order to defend our communities, land, culture and religions from the fanatic Bangladeshi invasion. The main targets of the Shanti Bahini are the military camps and army patrol parties because the Bangladesh armed forces are forcibly colonizing the Jumma villages and agricultural lands with the members of the majority community of Bangladesh. Every Bangladeshi colony has a military camp at the centre of the colony. This strategy is intended to shield the army men with the Bangladeshi settlers from the Shanti Bahini attacks. When a military camp is attacked by the Shanti Bahini it is quite likely that some Bangladeshi resettlers die in the cross fire. In fact, the Bangladesh Army dastards use the Bangladeshi resettlers as human shields to protect

The Shanti Bahini frequently attacks the military patrol parties. When a foot-patrol party is attacked by the Shanti Bahini, normally it surrenders its arms and ammunitions to the Shanti Bahini without a fight. If the Bangladesh Army patrol men surrender their arms and ammunitions, then the Shanti Bahini allows them to go back to their camps. After returning to their armycamp the Bangladeshi soldiers either attack the nearby Jumma villages or incite the Bangladeshi resettlers to start communal riots. The Shanti Bahini also attacks rivercraft used by the militarymen either to transport troops or to patrol water-ways. Normally it serves quit-notice to the Bangladeshi settlers at least one month before it launches attacks on any military camps. If the Bangladeshi settlers wish to go back to their native villages, then the Shanti Bahini helps them to leave the area. In fact, most of them want to go back to where they came from. But the Bangla Desh Army does not allow them to do so. These people had no idea about the scarcity of flat agricultural land in the CHT before they were brought into the region. The Bangladeshi regime promised to provide them with sufficient agricultural lands but after coming to the CHT they found that there was very little cultivable land which was not adequate even for the local Jumma people. They were surprised to know that the Bangladesh armed forces were asking them to forcibly occupy the Jumma villages and farmlands. The JSS has the right to expel all the invaders from the Jummland (CHT) and its armed wing, the Shanti Bahini will continue resistance activities until the Bangladesh armed forces and the Bangladeshi settlers are removed from the area.

In spite of tremendous international pressure, the brutal regime of Gen. Ershad has intensified military campaigns against the innocent Jumma people. Its aim is to seize the CHT for the members of the ruling community of Bangladesh by eliminating the indigenous Jumma people. This genocidal policy of the Bangladesh Government has created the Jumma Refugee problem. To achieve its aim the cruel regime of Bangladesh has unleashed a reign of terror in the CHT. The Jumma people are fleeing to India for their lives. They have no security in Bangladesh at all. State-terrorism and anarchy have taken the place of law and justice in the CHT. An extraordinary state of affairs is prevailing in the region. In these extremely hostile circumstances the Jumma Refugees fear to go back to Bangladesh. Therefore, they will have to stay longer in Tripura. Now their survival totally depends on the kindness and help of the international community. I appeal earnestly to you to take care of the Jumma Refugees.

Please accept my high regards.

Yours sincerely

To

Dr. Rudolph C. Ryser,
Chairman of the Center for World Indigemous Studies,
P.O. Box 82038, Kenmore, Washington 98028,
U.S.A.

Ramendu

N.B.

The address of the Humanity Protection Forum:

Mr. Bhagya Chandra Chakma,
Secretary-General, Humanity Protection Forum,
Jagatpur, Abhoynagar, Agartala - 799 005,
Tripura, India.

A REPORT OF THE JUMMA REFUGEES NOW SHELTERED IN THE TRIPURA STATE OF INDIA - sent by an Indian observer on 28 June, 1988.

TABLE - I

NUMBER OF REFUGEES ON ETHNIC BASIS						
Name of Refugee camp	Period	No. of Refugees Ethnicwise				Total no. of Refugees
		Chakma	Tripura	Marma	Santhal	
Takumbari	Jan. - May 1988	13849	1491	162	-	15502
Pancharam Para	Jan., Feb., Apr., May, 1988	8258	608	277	-	9143
Karbook	Jan., 1988	5474	848	231	31	6584
Silachari	Feb. - May 1988	4130	469	327	-	4926
Kathalchari	Jan. - May 1988	440	3329	5456	-	9225
Grand Total -		32151	6745	6453	31	45380

TABLE - II

BIRTH & DEATH OF JUMMA REFUGEES

Name of Refugee camp	Period	Total no. of Refugees	Name of Ethnic Group					
			Chakma		Tripura		Marma	
			Birth	Death	Birth	Death	Birth	Death
Takumbari	Jan. - May 1988	15502	84	49	35	6	6	4
Pancharam Para	Jan., Feb., Apr., May, 1988	9143	26	30	-	-	-	-
Karbook	Jan., 1988	6584	9	7	-	-	-	-
Silachari	Feb. - May 1988	4926	54	22	3	2	4	1
Kathalchari	Jan. - May 1988	9225						
Grand Total -		45380	173	108	38	8	10	5

		Total	
Santhal Birth	Santhal Death	Birth	Death
-	-	125	59
-	-	26	30
-	-	9	7
-	-	61	25
-	-	98	109
-	-	319	230

TABLE III

RATE OF BIRTH AND DEATH OF JUMMA REFUGEES

Name of Refugee camp	Name of Ethnic Group	Total no. of Refugees	Total Birth		Total Death		Period
			Birth	%	Death	%	
Takumbari	Chakma	13849	84	0.60	49	0.35	Jan. - May 1988
	Tripura	1491	35	2.34	6	0.40	
	Marma	162	6	3.70	4	2.46	

Pancharam Para	1	-	-	1	-	-	
Karbook	2	2	-	4	1	20	
Silachari	2	-	7	9	-	-	
Kathalchari	2	2	-	4	1	30	

are inadequate for diseases such as Malaria, Diarrhoea, Typhoid,*

* Dysentery etc. Major cases are referred for treatment to the G.B. Hospital in Agartala, the capital of Tripura State.

TABLE - VI

EDUCATIONAL ARRANGEMENT FOR THE JUMMA REFUGEE CHILDREN

Name of Refugee camp & no. of Refugees	No. of Schools	Type of Schools		No. of Teachers		Total no. of Teachers	No. of Students	
		Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary		I	II
Takumbari 15502	7	6	1	111	21	132	2460	914
Pancharam Para 9143	2	1	1	24	14	38	740	220
Karbook 6584	2	1	1	16	10	26	560	120
Silachari 4926	2	2	-	19	-	19	435	185
Kathalchari 9225	1	1	-	18	-	18	600	150
Grand Total	14	11	3	188	45	233	4795	1589

Students Classwise										Total no. of Students	No. of Black Boards
Primary level				Secondary level							
III	IV	V	Total	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	Total		
595	482	329	4740	264	258	137	108	84	851	5591	11
140	80	60	1240	100	90	95	-	-	285	1525	-
95	82	50	907	168	130	125	-	-	423	1330	-
96	78	-	794	-	-	-	-	-	-	794	7
30	28	25	833	-	-	-	-	-	-	833	5
956	750	464	8518	532	478	357	108	84	1559	10073	23

REMARKS: 1. Takumbari - Out of 7 schools, only one secondary & two primary schools receive Government help. Seven teachers of the two primary schools and all the teachers of the secondary school are given Honorarium of Rupees 100/- per month. The rest four primary schools are not given help from the Government. Nor are one hundred and four primary school teachers of these schools given any Honorarium. These four schools are totally being run by the Refugees with their own utmost efforts.

2. No grant of text books, exercise note books, pens or pencils for the school children in all Refugee camps for the year, 1988, has been. The students urgently need the above-mentioned items.

TABLE - VII

SUPPLY OF DAILY RATIONS PER HEAD FOR THE JUMMA REFUGEES

Name of Refugee camp	No. of Refugees	Rice Quantity in gms.		Pulse Quantity in gms.		Edible Oil Quantity in mls.		Salt Quantity in gms.		Chilli in Paise
		Adult	Minor	Adult	Minor	Adult	Minor	Adult	Minor	
Takumbari	15502	400	200	50	25	5	2.5	15	7.5	15
Pancharam Para	9143	400	200	50	25	5	2.5	15	7.5	15
Karbook	6584	400	200	50	25	5	2.5	15	7.5	15
Silachari	4926	400	200	50	25	5	2.5	15	7.5	15
Kathalchari	9225	400	200	50	25	5	2.5	15	7.5	15

Dry Fish in Paise	Chira (Rice-flakes) in gms.	Gur (un-refined Sugar) in gms.	Powdered Milk * in mls.	Fire wood	Cash in Paise	Vegetable	Remarks
30	25	10	200		20	-	The supply of daily rations is anomalous. *Powdered Milk is meant for children.
30	25	10	200		20	-	
30	25	10	200		20	-	
30	25	10	200		20	-	
30	25	10	200		20	-	

TABLE - VIII

CLOTHES FOR THE JUMMA REFUGEES			Remarks: No clothes for the Jumma Refugees have been supplied in 1988.
Takumbari	-	Nil	
Pancharam Para	-	Nil	
Karbook	-	Nil	
Silachari	-	Nil	
Kathalchari	-	Nil	

TABLE - IX

UTENSILS FOR THE JUMMA REFUGEES			Remarks: No utensils have been supplied to the Jumma Refugees in 1988.
Takumbari	-	Nil	
Pancharam Para	-	Nil	
Karbook	-	Nil	
Silachari	-	Nil	
Kathalchari	-	Nil	

XXXXXXXXXXXX

THE NATION

Fresh Chakma influx feared in Tripura

From Shekhar Datta

Karbook (South Tripura), June 19: Tripura is likely to be burdened by a fresh influx of Chakma refugees from the Khagrachhari district of Bangladesh's Chittagong Hill Tracts in the wake of severe reprisals by security forces and plainland resettlers.

According to latest reports from across the border, as many as 1,000 tribal refugees are moving towards the Indian border, many in south Tripura following largescale communal riots in the Manikherri, Bualcherri and Mohalcherri areas of the Khagrachhari district.

At least 40 persons were killed in the riots. Sources said the 1,000 Chakmas have taken to circuitous hilly routes to evade the Bangladesh security forces and the BSF personnel.

The 155 tribal refugees, who checked into the Karbook refugee camp of south Tripura on June 5, are yet to get rations, though they have been formally cancelled in the camp register. They are passing their days in semi-starvation.

The supervisor of the Karbook camp said he had been pressured by the inmates to enrol the new refugees on June 13 but was "under instructions" from the district magistrate of south Tripura to persuade and push them back.

The camp management committee, comprising senior refugee leaders, is collecting small quantities of rations from the meagre quota provided to the old refugees for the latest entrants.

Sources said about 500 refugees had entered Tripura in the last week of May, following largescale communal riots at Khamarpara in Khagrachhari district in late April. Except those who entered Karbook camp, the remaining refugees have fanned out in the forest areas of Raina valley and are subsisting only on jackfruit and other uneatables.

Shova Chakma, (25), who entered Tripura in the last week of May, said she was forced to come in the wake of the Khamarpara massacre on April 28 in which at least 20 tribals were killed by plainland resettlers. Shova said, Rampant corruption among a

section of the refugee officials has made living conditions unbearable at the camps. The refugees are supposed to get rations normally at 10 days' interval, but the camp officials deliberately delay it by two to three days. They also deprive the refugees of their legitimate quota forcing them to live on semi-starvation.

For the past two months, the supply of dry fish and chilly has been discontinued and even the quantum of mustard oil has been reduced. The corrupt officials and a section of the mobile task force (MTF) sell these items to merchants at Natunbazar and Jatnbari markets.

The health and sanitary conditions in the Karbook camp have been deteriorated resulting in regular deaths of children because the camp is never visited by doctors. A doctor visits the Takumbari camp once in a while, but he refuses to attend to patients in the sheds. The situation has reached such a stage that on June 13 a Chakma woman, Tahiti Chakma (25), had to be taken to Natunbazar on an improvised bamboo carrier for child birth.

The refugees are also being exploited by local contractors in collaboration with camp officials and the mobile task force personnel on duty. The contractors take the refugees of the condition of starvation and send them to work on a daily wage of only Rs 2 to Rs 5, though the normal wage for such labourers is Rs 25 to Rs 30.

Any protest is met with threats from camp officials, MTF personnel and the contractors. Since the refugees cannot move out of the camps without the permission of MTF personnel and camp officials, they get a fair share of the booty from the contractors by forcing the refugees to work at such a poor rate.

On several occasions the refugees have also been beaten up by drunken MTF personnel.

The chief minister, Mr Sudhir Ranjan Mazumder, said "Several thousand refugees have already returned to Bangladesh and at present there are 45,972 refugees in the six South district camps."

THE TIMES OF INDIA
BOMBAY, SATURDAY,
JULY 9, 1988, PAGE 15

policy.

Indo-Bangla talks on Chakma refugees

The Times of India News Service
AGARTALA, July 8: Indian and Bangladesh officials will meet at Sabroom in South Tripura on Monday to chalk out plans to send back the Chakma tribals refugees to the Chittagong hill tracts of Bangladesh. The meeting, which is a fall-out of the discussions the union minister, Mr P.V. Narasimha Rao, had with the Bangladesh President, Gen H.M. Ershad, last year, will discuss threadbare the plans to repatriate the 44,956 refugees in India.

The South Tripura district magistrate will lead the Indian delegation, while the deputy commissioner of Kargachari in the Chittagong hill tract will lead the Bangladesh delegation, which will have 11 tribal leaders also on it.

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THE TIMES OF INDIA
BOMBAY, WEDNESDAY,
JULY 13, 1988, PAGE 3

sity, New Delhi.

Talks on Chakma refugees fail

AGARTALA, July 12 (PTI): Talks between the Bangladesh high commissioner, Mr Farooq Ahmed Chowdhury, and the Chakma refugee leader today failed with the refugees demanding "durable peace on the basis of a political settlement between the Bangladesh government and the Shanti Bahini guerillas" and the formation of a tripartite supervisory committee in case they return home.

The 50,000 refugees from the Chittagong hill tracts, now sheltered in five camps in south Tripura, submitted a 12-point memorandum to the high commissioner.

THE TIMES OF INDIA, BOMBAY,
MONDAY, JULY 11, 1988, PAGE 9

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Bangla assurance on Chakmas' return

AGARTALA, July 10 (PTI).

THE Bangladesh high commissioner in India, Mr Farooq Ahmed Choudhury, today assured the Tripura chief minister, Mr Sudhir Ranjan Majumdar, that necessary efforts to ensure early return of the Chakma refugees in Tripura to Bangladesh would be made "in right earnest."

Official sources said here that Mr Choudhury and a counsellor of the Bangladesh mission, Mr Akram-ul-Qadir, met the state's chief secretary, Mr Iswari Prasad Gupta, at the chief minister's secretariat this morning. Mr Choudhury and Mr Qadir arrived here yesterday.

The Bangladesh envoy said he would be joined by a delegation of 11 tribal leaders and three officials from Bangladesh's Chittagong hill tracts tomorrow at the border town of Sabroom from where they would then proceed to the Chakma refugee camps. The delegation would hold detailed discussions with the refugee leaders at

the five evacuee camps, all located in the state's south district.

The high commissioner informed the chief minister that the Chakma king, Raja Debashish Ray, would also join the delegation and that Bangladesh had decided to utilise his services for "confidence-building" amongst the refugees to expedite their early repatriation.

The talks were held in a "very cordial atmosphere" and Mr Choudhury repeatedly assured Mr Majumdar that the condition in the Chittagong hill tracts was now conducive to the return of the refugees, the sources said.

Mr Majumdar pointed out that while the repatriation process had been delayed more refugees from the Chittagong hill tracts had poured into the state in the past two months.

About 46,000 Chakma refugees have been sheltered in five camps in south Tripura since the influx began in April, 1986, due to the fresh outbreak of insurgency in the 1,3000-sq km Chittagong hill tracts in south-east Bangladesh.

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THE TELEGRAPH
CALCUTTA, INDIA,
JULY 12, 1988.

THE TELEGRAPH

Bangla envoy to meet Chakmas

12.7.88

From Our Correspondent

Agartala, July 10: The Bangladesh high commissioner to India, Mr Farooq Ahmed Chowdhury, has assured the Tripura government that he will try his best to ensure the early repatriation of the nearly 50,000 Chakma refugees now sheltered in various camps in the state to the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

Mr Chowdhury, who arrived here yesterday, with a councillor of the Bangladesh mission, Mr Akram-ul Qadir, met the chief minister, Mr Sudhir Ranjan Mazumdar and the chief

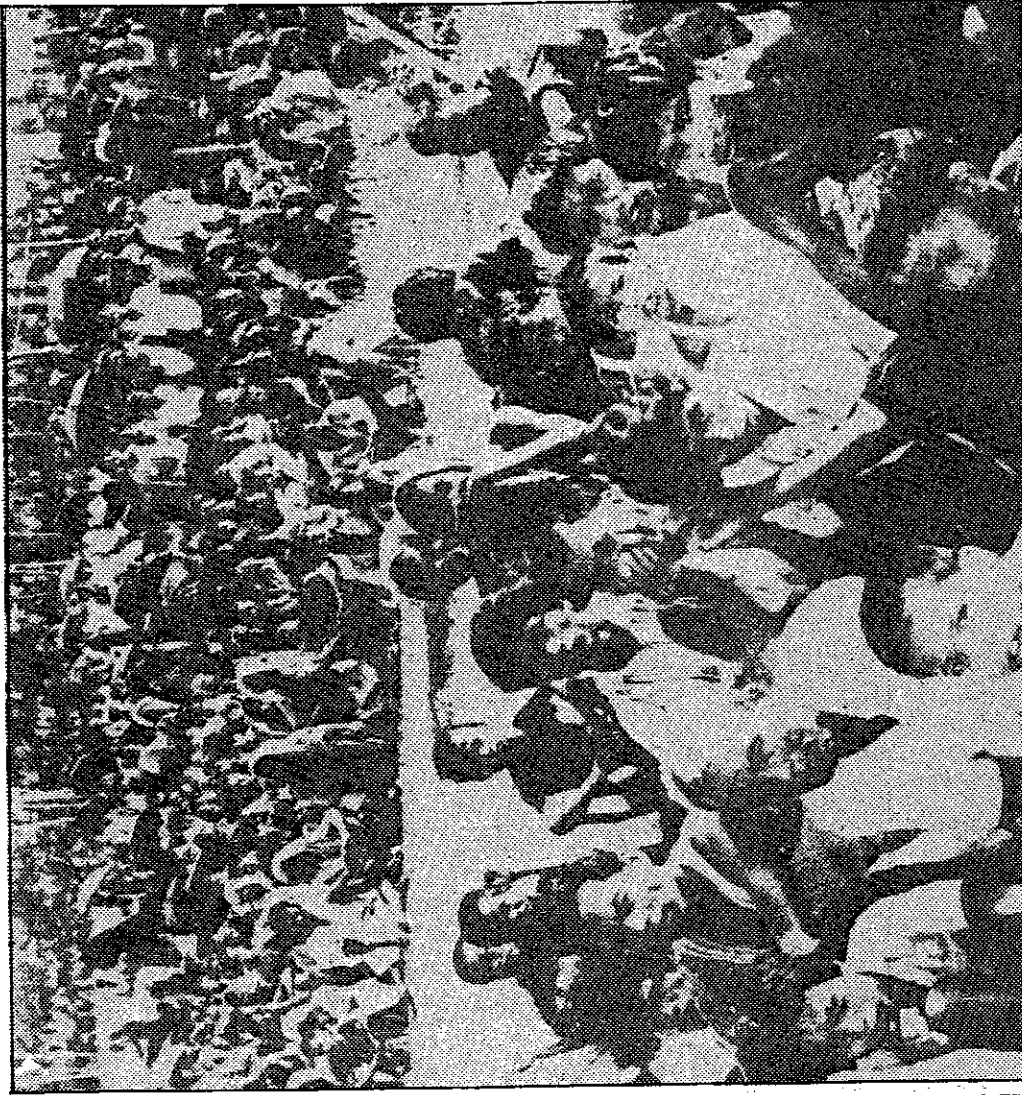
secretary, Mr I.P. Gupta, today. During the discussions Mr Chowdhury said that the conditions in the Chittagong Hill Tracts were now conducive to the return of the refugees. He guaranteed adequate rehabilitation measures and security on their return to their homeland. The refugees have been staying here for over two years since April 1986.

A spokesman for the Tripura government said that Mr Chowdhury and Mr Qadir had left for the Sabroom subdivision in south Tripura. They will be met there tomorrow by a delegation

Picture on Page 4

PTI adds: According to officials here this is the most high-powered delegation from Bangladesh to have ever visited the refugee camps since the last effort at repatriation of the refugees failed in January 1987 due to their reluctance to return.

Mr Mazumdar has been formally invited to visit Bangladesh, an official spokesman said here this evening. The spokesman said that the invitation was conveyed to him by Mr Chowdhury, when he met the chief minister this morning today.



Chakma refugees waiting for registration at an evacuee camp at Korbook in South Tripura district. (PTI)

12.7.88. PAGE 4

THE TELEGRAPH

IN BRIEF**Bangladesh
envoy meets
Chakmas**

Agartala, July 11 (UNI): The Bangladesh high commissioner in India, Mr Farooq Ahmed Choudhury, visited five refugee camps in Amarpur and Sabrum today. Mr Choudhury had discussed the issue of repatriation of about 45,000 Chakma tribals of Bangladesh with the Tripura chief minister, Mr Sudhir Ranjan Majumder, here yesterday. He is scheduled to return to Dhaka by road through Ramgarh.

THE TELEGRAPH
CALCUTTA,
INDIA

JULY
12,
1988

JULY
13,
1988

**Chakmas set
terms for
going back**

12.7.88
From Our Correspondent

Agartala, July 12: The Bangladesh government's efforts to persuade the Chakma refugees to return to their homeland failed today. The Bangladesh high commissioner to India, Mr Farooq Ahmed, received a 12-point charter of demands from the refugees who have asked for autonomy for the Chittagong Hill Tracts, withdrawal of armed forces, restoration of land, and a political solution to the problem, as a precondition to their repatriation.

An 11-member delegation to the Chakma refugee camps, led by a former Chakma leader, Mr Debasis Roy, faced angry demonstrations everywhere.

RESPONSE**THE CHAKMA FACT**

In January 1988, Serai carried an article on Bangladesh indigenous peoples who are being subjected to human rights violations at the hands of the government of Bangladesh.

Some readers expressed concern that the violations included "forcible conversion to Islam". They held that Islam does not preach such practices, and were affronted by this statement. It is not our policy to fall prey to media fads vis-à-vis particular religions and their adherents at certain historical periods. Our primary commitment rests with the defense of minority rights - be they the rights of Muslim minorities in India or Hill Tract people in Bangladesh.

Unfortunately, what we stated has been documented by reliable sources. Among those who have criticized the role of the Bangladesh government about violations such as the above in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, are Amnesty International, the well known international human rights organization, Survival International of London, as well as the International media, including the Globe and Mail in Canada. The organizations do not represent any partisan religious interests.

The specific violations of human rights dealt with, include the desecration of Buddhist temples, forcible eviction of tribals from their land, the introduction of lowland settlers with the help of the army, forcible marriage of tribal women to the settlers etc.

Serai thus stands by what it has stated in the previous issue. It does not wish to criticize Islam, rather it wishes to criticize the government of Bangladesh which has played a less than desirable role in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

We quote below some of the statements that have documented these developments.

Statement by Aggavansa Mathera, Chakma Buddhist monk from Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) to UN Economic and Social Council, Commission on Human Rights, Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, Working Group on Indigenous Populations, Geneva, 29 July - 2 August 1985.

The statement documents attempts by various Bangladeshi governments to pursue a policy "designed to Bengalise and to Islamise the CHT", including looting, desecration and destruction of Buddhist places of worship, detaining, torturing and murdering of monks. Tribal girls are kidnapped, raped and made pregnant by the Bangladeshi soldiers. They occupy the Buddhist places of worship forcibly and revile the monks and slaughter cows on their saffron robes, smearing the image of the Buddha with blood.

Official documented government policy encourages all military officers stationed in the CHT to marry tribal girls with a view to assimilating the indigenous people. The Bangladesh armed forces kidnapped thousands of tribal women and forced them to become Muslims and to marry Bengalis. "Sukrabala Chakma, 18...was taken away from her home at gunpoint by the Bangladesh Reserve Police of Bhaibonchara police camp on 7 August 1984. She was forced to become a Muslim and to marry a Bengali policeman from Comilla against her will.

In a series of papers presented on Human Rights in the CHT, Amsterdam, 11 October 1986, pp. 67-68, the following was stated:

".....the present rulers of Bangladesh are bent on Islamizing the CHT by eliminating the non-Islamic indigenous people at any cost. By 1984, about 185,000 tribal people....died as a result of the Bengali invasion of CHT....hundreds of Buddhist temples have been plundered and destroyed, hundreds of monks have been raped, abducted and forcibly converted to Islam."

In Serai, we are aware that it is possible to allege that these documents are not true. However, the magnitude of the violations and the recent admission by the Bangladeshi government of the orphanisation of almost 100 Chakma children who finally made it to a refugee camp in France after months of denial about their very existence, point to the authenticity of these incidents. Serai will not embark on any tirade against any religious group. We will however, miss no opportunity to nail the policies of any government that violates minority rights - be it the Indian government for the massacre of Muslims in Meerut, or the treatment of Chakmas by the Bangladeshi government.

AN APPEAL MADE ON BEHALF OF JUMMA REFUGEES AT A MEETING OF THE BRITISH REFUGEE COUNCIL ASIA COMMITTEE.

Office of the British Refugee Council
Asia Committee.

Bondway House,
3/9 Bondway, London SW8 1SJ,
Great Britain.

5th July, 1988.

Honourable Chairman and Members of the British Refugee Council Asia Committee,

With your kind permission I would like to introduce myself. My name is Ramendu Shekhar Dewan. I am a member of the Chakma community of the Chittagong Hill Tracts region of Bangladesh. It is a great privilege to be allowed to put in the Jumma Refugee case before this august body.

The genocidal policy of the Bangladeshi regime has resulted in the Jumma Refugee problem again and again. All successive Governments of Bangla Desh have tried relentlessly to destroy the indigenous people (Jumma people) of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) in order to populate the area with the members of the majority community of Bangladesh. The methods of destruction employed are murder, torture, rape, wholesale burning of Jumma villages, looting, forcible eviction, relocation of Jumma people in concentration camps, desecration and destruction of non-Muslim prayer houses, forcible conversion of the Jumma people to Islam, and torture and murder of non-Muslim priests. Perhaps, it is worth-noting that the Bangladesh Government has depopulated hundreds of Jumma villages by applying all such brutal techniques and then resettled over half-a-million Bangladeshi settlers in the area.

On the Bangladesh Government's order, Col. Golam Helal Morshed Khan (Brigade Commander, 203 Brigade, Bangladesh Army, Khagrachari), Lt. Col. Ismat Ahmad Chowdhury (Commanding Officer, 19 East Bengal Regiment, Zonal Commander, Panchari Zone), Major Shajahan (Second in Command, Panchari Zone, known as the Butcher of the Kaokhali or Kalampati Massacres of 25 April, 1980) and Mr. Golam Sarwar (Deputy Commissioner of Khagrachari District) master-minded the massacres in Matiranga, Lakkhichari, Panchari, Khagrachari and Dighinala Upazillas (Sub-Districts). On 30 April 1986, the Bangladesh armed forces in league with the Bangladeshi settlers began these massacres and continued the genocidal campaign for about a month. The invaders raided over 100 villages, looted and burnt houses, abducted and raped women, desecrated and destroyed non-Muslim places of worship, tortured and murdered non-Muslim priests, and killed atleast 2,500 innocent Jummas most of whom were old people, women and children. About 2,500 Jummas are still missing. Some 50,000 Jumma people sought refuge in the Tripura State of India. After depopulating the area, the Government of Bangladesh allotted the Jumma villages and agricultural land to the Bangladeshi settlers.

These massacres are just a few of countless massacres committed by the Bangladeshi tyrants. The Bangladesh Government has never stopped the systematic extermination of the CHT people. For example, on 28 April 1988, a group of Bangladeshi settlers in collusion with the Bangladesh security forces attacked the Harina Para village adjacent to the BDR (Bangla Desh Rifles) camp at Khagrachari. The Bangladeshi miscreants burnt down 14 homes and hacked three Jummas who were left for dead. One of the victims, Mr. Arabindu Chakma died on the spot and the other two - Miss Ittugi Chakma and Mr. Taranga Mohan Chakma miraculously survived the serious head injuries. When the villagers complained to Col. Syed Ibrahim about the inaction of the local security forces, the Bangladeshi Officer said - "It is more than enough that you are still alive". Then the villagers showed him the injured people as evidence of the attack. Rather than taking actions against the culprits, Col. Ibrahim blamed the helpless Jummas by angrily saying - "I don't believe you, you are making a mountain out of a molehill".

The conscience-keepers of the mankind such as the Anti-Slavery Society, Survival International, Amnesty International, International Work Group for

Indigenous Affairs, Gesellschaft für Bedrohte Völker, Buddhist Peace Fellowship, Partage avec les Enfants du Tiers-Monde, International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the Chittagong Hill Tracts Organizing Committee of Holland and so on requested the Governments of India and Tripura not to repatriate the Jumma Refugees to Bangladesh because they were convinced that the refugees would not survive the violence of the Bangladesh armed forces. Similarly the compassionate people of India and all political parties of India appealed to the Indian Government to keep the refugees until the situation in the CHT became normal. The benign Government of India respected their request on humanitarian grounds and assured them that it would not send the refugees back to Bangladesh against their will.

Initially the Bangladesh Government denied that the Jumma Refugees were from the CHT. However, under tremendous pressure from the civilized world the regime of Bangladesh has been compelled to admit very reluctantly that only 29,920 out of 50,000 refugees were Bangladeshi citizens. As the international pressure continued to grow against the Bangladesh Government, Gen. Hossain Mohammad Ershad had no other alternative but to recognise all Jumma Refugees as Bangladeshis. He also admitted all the atrocities committed by the Bangladesh Security forces against the Jumma people.

Now the Ershad-regime is dragging its feet on the repatriation of the Jumma Refugees. It is not willing to create a climate in the CHT congenial to the return of the refugees. For instance, the Bangladesh Government does not want to remove the Bangladeshi settlers from the Jumma villages and farm lands. Naturally the Jumma Refugees wish to get back their ancestral farm lands and villages. More over they cannot be rehabilitated unless their native villages and agricultural lands are vacated by the invading Bangladeshi settlers. The Bangladeshi regime has refused to withdraw its armed forces from the CHT. These occupation forces have been deployed to disposses the Jumma farmers of their lands and to protect the Bangladeshi colonies. The Bangladesh Government terrorism will not stop so long these oppressive forces remain in the area. In these circumstances there is no safety not only to the refugees but also to any Jummas who are still living in the CHT. The recent spate of new refugees in Tripura has justified the fears of the Jumma Refugees that their return to Bangladesh will not be safe at all. An Amnesty International report has accused the Bangladeshi regime of its failure to establish responsibility for the atrocities committed by the Bangladesh security forces. It clearly indicates that the Jumma Refugees will be in great danger if they go back to Bangladesh.

In fact the Government of Bangladesh has no intention to rehabilitate the Jumma Refugees after their repatriation. History shows that the regime of Bangladesh either abandoned the refugees or herded them into concentration camps in spite of assurances that their ancestral villages and farm lands would be returned to them. So the Jumma Refugees cannot rely on whatever assurances the Ershad-Government gives them because it does not keep its promises and it does exactly the opposite of what it says. The refugees believe that they will be safe in the CHT if their repatriation and rehabilitation are supervised by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Committee of the Red Cross. They demand that the following measures should be taken to ensure their safe return and proper rehabilitation: i) Removal of all Bangladeshi settlers from the CHT, ii) Withdrawal of all Bangladesh armed forces including the non-Jumma police force from the CHT, iii) Establishment of the Jumma police force in the CHT, iv) Adequate financial help for the rehabilitation of the refugees in their ancestral villages and on their agricultural lands, and v) Implementation of the Refugee Rehabilitation Programme under the supervision of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The humane Governments of India and Tripura have given the Jumma Refugees shelter at i) Karbook (7001 refugees), ii) Silachari (5021), iii) Takumbari (15997), iv) Pancharam Para (9699), and v) Kathalchari (10630). India is making all possible efforts to save the lives of these refugees. She has been providing them with food, clothes, drinking water, medical facilities and even educational facilities. The Indian humanitarian

organizations - Ram Krishna Mission, Viswa Hindu Parishad, Shishu Kalyan Samiti and Bhikshu Samiti - have supplied the refugees with clothes and blankets. A French humanitarian agency, Partage avec les Enfants du Tiers-Monde (of which Madame Danielle Mitterrand is the Chief Patron and Monsieur Pierre Marchand is the Director) has brought 72 Jumma refugee orphans to France and put them under the care of their foster parents. It also sends relief supplies to the Jumma Refugee children through an Indian children welfare body, Shishu Karuna Sangha. The International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (Copenhagen) has also raised funds from the Scandinavian humanitarian organizations for the Jumma Refugee children. Perhaps, it is important to say that the Bangladesh Government pushed these refugees to the brink of death. Fortunately the great kindness of India and humanitarian agencies has saved their lives.

To look after so many refugees for so long costs a huge sum of money. India has already spent over 100 million rupees for the refugees. She has many problems of her own and she cannot afford to keep such a large group of foreign displaced people for many years. The refugee problem is an international problem and it is the responsibility of the international community to take care of the Jumma Refugees. As the Bangladeshi regime is not interested in meeting the genuine demands of the refugees, they will have to stay longer in India. So the Jumma Refugees are facing the prospect of uncertainty. Now their hopes lie in the sympathy and help of the international community.

The charity of the British people is a legend. Even Her Royal Highness Princess Royal Anne has dedicated herself to the cause of children all the world over. In keeping with this great British tradition, the prestigious humanitarian organization, British Refugee Council has saved the lives of millions of refugees throughout the world. The great kindness of the British people has encouraged me to appeal for help for the Jumma Refugees to your great organization. I shall be most grateful to you if you would kindly take care of the Jumma Refugees now camped in the Tripura State of India.

The Jumma Refugees need all kinds of help. They need food, clothes, more drinking water facilities and more medical facilities. The children need better diet and more educational facilities. Vocational training to the refugees will enable them to cope with the situation better when they go back home. They will have to begin their lives from scratch as they have lost everything in Bangladesh. The greatest benefit of your help is that the Jumma people will be able to survive the extremely violent Bangladeshi invasion.

Your relief works for the Jumma Refugees may be carried out through the Indian humanitarian organizations. For example, the Humanity Protection Forum is an indigenous organization in Tripura. It has a long experience of dealing with Jumma Refugees in Tripura. In fact this organization has been helping the Jumma Refugees since 1947.

Thank you, Honourable Chairman, for giving me the great honour of submitting my statement at this important meeting. Thank you, all Honourable Members of the Committee for listening patiently to my prayer for help.

(R.S. Dewan)

N.B. :

1. The detailed reports about the Jumma Refugees attached herewith are: i) "Statistical Data of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Refugees now camped in the Tripura State of India till 30 April 1987", compiled by Jumma activists, and ii) A report, "Killing, arsoning, tortures, arrests & communal riots against the innocent Jumma people by Bangladesh Army & Bengali Muslims in the Chittagong Hill Tracts", sent by the Jana Samhati Samiti on 10 May 1988.
2. Address of the Humanity Protection Forum: Jagatpur, Abhoynagar, Agartala-799 005, Tripura, India.

M. Bhagya Chandra Chakma.

For the Akawaio and Pemon Indians the gold rush has proved a mixed blessing. While some of the more wealthy and enterprising of them have managed to set up as independent miners and maintain their self-respect, most have joined the mines as low-paid wage labourers, economically and sexually exploited in the ramshackle mining towns. Meanwhile geological surveys reveal future mining prospects even further south — on the Upper Orinoco, the Ventuari, and west of the Caura — menacing the survival of more vulnerable and isolated Indian peoples. There is an urgent need for the Government to adopt a policy that will acknowledge the rights and interests of the Indians in these areas and ensure that they are socially and medically prepared for the future that faces them.

But the Venezuelan Government's previous record in this area is not encouraging. In 1988 the State bauxite-mining company, Bauxiven, expects to begin production from their mine at Los Pijiguaos. Yet, after five years of preparation, the local Panare people have still not got their lands titled to them, and promised and much-needed measures to protect the Indians have not been implemented.

Last year, the Indonesian Government announced major cuts in its funding for the programme and misleadingly stated that fewer migrants would be moved in future. The World Bank made much of these statements to placate critics such as Survival International which had strongly criticised the programme as it involved the takeover of tribal lands. But it is now clear the Government and the Bank are sustaining the flow of settlers by encouraging them to move at their own expense.

Survival International has once more called for an end to this 'aid' until the Indonesian Government revises its policy towards the tribal peoples.

■ BANGLADESH ■

HOPE FOR THE HILL TRACTS?

At last there seems to be hope that the Bangladesh government may curb its army's brutal and genocidal attacks on the tribal peoples in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, who are resisting the takeover of their country by Bengali settlers.

In September, 1987, the President of Bangladesh appointed a National Committee to look into the situation. The Committee has reported to the press that the Government's 'revised intention is to protect the ethnic, cultural and religious

their substantive participation in the running of the local Government and development programmes'.

The Committee promised among other measures that further settlement of non-tribals in the hill tracts would be banned, and that lands 'illegally and fraudulently' taken from the tribals would be handed back. While rejecting a demand by the tribal peoples for the withdrawal of the Bangladesh armed forces from the region, the Committee pledged to 'ensure that the army will not interfere in tribal affairs in any way'.

But in conversation with Survival International, spokespeople for the tribal peoples have warned that these statements have only been made to placate the Government's overseas critics. The actual situation in the hill tracts remains as bad as ever. Gross violations of human rights continue to be reported from the region including unlawful killings, torture, rape, arbitrary arrest, imprisonment without trial, burning of villages, looting, eviction of people from their land, forced relocation of people into 'co-operative villages',



Anti-Slavery Society

Wounded tribesman from the Chittagong Hills, where the people are resisting takeover by Bengali settlers. After years of terrible violence, the rights of the tribes may at last be recognised by the Bangladesh Government.

desecration of Buddhist temples, forced conversion to Islam. Since April 1986 a further 48,000 tribal refugees have fled their lands and are now living in miserable camps in the Indian State of Tripura.

Nevertheless, the mere fact that the Government is finally admitting the need for policy change and is promising to restore the tribal peoples' rights to their



COMMENT

MINING AND TRIBAL PEOPLES

'We do not want any of these coal companies or uranium companies on our land at all. We are not against economic development. Nobody wants to live in poverty. But we want to control the development of our land.'
(*Jimmie Durham, International Indian Treaty Council*)

The greatest threats to tribal peoples often originate, as we know, not among their immediate neighbours but in London or Tokyo, New York or Geneva. This is true above all of the threats caused by the discovery of minerals or oil within their traditional territories.

Of all the dangers to tribal peoples today, this is probably the hardest to resist, because of the enormously high financial stakes involved, and because even in those states where the land rights of tribal peoples are accorded some legal recognition, rights over the subsoil are generally not included. In this context more than any other the connection between the first world and its financial institutions and the fate of tribal peoples is manifest. The search for deposits, whether of gold or oil, is set in motion by first world consumer demand, and channelled by multi-national companies. During the last decade the process has been intensified by the third world debt crisis.

Often, the most destructive effects of mining or oil drilling on tribal peoples come not from the operations themselves, which affect only a limited area, but indirectly, from the huge and expensive infrastructure — roads, railway, airstrips, power lines — which services them. This opens up to settlers and others areas of country which they could not have penetrated by their own resources, and in default of legal protection the indigenous peoples are soon overwhelmed and dispossessed.

Indigenous peoples should be accorded the right either to veto mining on their land, or if they so wish, to become partners in its benefits. For the world must choose which is ultimately the more valuable — these people, their cultures, and their traditional systems for the wise management of natural resources and protection of the environment, or short-term financial gain for the very few.

Appeal to Save the Chakma

Survival International has recently published a report on the ever-deteriorating situation in the CHT. Despite of the government restriction on the entry of foreign journalists and delegations of human rights groups to the area and in spite of the government suppression of any information about the plight of the Jumma people, **Survival International** has been able to gather evidence of systematic genocide of the CHT people committed by the security forces of Bangladesh and the Bangladeshi settlers. "These include descriptions of the following human rights abuses carried out by the Bangladesh Army:- unlawful killings, torture, rape, arbitrary arrest, imprisonment without trial, burning of villages, looting, forcible eviction of people from their land, forcible relocation of people into 'co-operative villages (in fact concentration camps)', desecration of Buddhist temples and forcible conversion to Islam"

The unscrupulous regime of Bangladesh has ignored repeated appeals from the entire civilized world to halt genocide of the Jumma people. Deeply alarmed by the Bangladesh Government's complete disregard for human rights, **Survival International** has given a clear picture of what is going on in the CHT to the compassionate international community. This conscience-keeper of the mankind wrote: "Despite the difficulties of verifying allegations of human rights abuses in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, independent testimonies appear to substantiate the claim that gross violations of the human rights of the tribal peoples of the Chittagong Hill Tracts continued during the first part of 1987. In spite of repeated appeals from the international community to halt these abuses and to control the activities of the security forces, the Bangladesh Government has continued to deny that human rights violations are occurring in the Hill Tracts".... "Similarly, the Government has continued to

ignore the claims of the tribal peoples of the Hill Tracts to their rights to their lands and to a degree of autonomy that will allow them control over their own development. Rather than revise its policy towards the tribal people in the Chittagong Hills, the Bangladesh authorities have sought to lay all the blame for the disturbances on the Shanti Bahini"

Once again **Survival International** has reiterated its concern at the continuing reports of human rights abuse in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.... In a letter to the Bangladesh President, *General Ershad*, **Survival International** has urged that the National Committee give detailed consideration to the question of land ownership, to ensure that modifications are introduced into the law to give full recognition to the customary systems of land tenure. It has also "urged that the Government takes all possible steps to ensure that the tribal peoples are given a decisive voice in the administration and development of the Hill Tracts". It is, perhaps, worth-noting that **Survival International** made a fervent appeal to the *Indian Government* to keep the Jumma refugees in Tripura until their safe return to the CHT could be guaranteed. The compassionate *Government of India* has responded to its appeal and to the earnest appeals made by other human rights groups. But the Bangladeshi regime has neither removed the Bangladeshi settlers from the CHT nor has it withdrawn its armed forces from the region and thus it has failed to create a favourable condition for the safe return of the Jumma refugees to their ancestral homeland.

I fervently appeal to you to send an inquiry delegation to the CHT to investigate all human rights violations committed by the brutal Government of Bangladesh against the unarmed Jumma people. I believe this action will force the Bangladeshi regime to stop its genocidal activities in the CHT. I would also like to request you to take care of the 50,000 Jumma refugees who have taken refuge in the Tripura State of India. They need your help for their survival.

Ramendu Sewan

The Foundation of the Thai Nuns Institute: A Contemporary Female Movement within Theravada Buddhism

The total number of Thai nuns today is approximately 70,000. They live in different monasteries around the country. Some enter nunhood because of their

personal problems; but some choose the ordination because of their strong faith in Buddhism. Nevertheless, most Thai nuns generally lead their lives at will. Though they are ex-

QU'EST-CE QUE LE QUATRIÈME MONDE?

Le monde, est un ensemble de communautés, de peuples et de nations indigènes dispersés sur tous les continents et les îles de la planète. Réunis à l'intérieur du Conseil Mondial des Peuples Indigènes, ce quatrième monde est caractérisé par de nombreux intérêts communs:

Un souci de maintenir un contact privilégié avec la nature.

Un système de valeurs en rupture complète avec celui notre monde moderne.

Une résistance à la disparition de leur culture et de leur entité.

Dans tous les numéros de "Sans Réserve" on retrouvera des articles sur ce "nouveau" monde: le Quatrième Monde.

BANGLADESH

SANS RESERVE
EXPRESSIONS AUTOCHTONES D'ICI ET D'Aujourd'hui
VOL. 1, NO. 1, AVRIL 1988.

COMMUNICATIONS AUTOCHTONES
3575, BOUL. SAINT-LAURENT, SUITE 513,
MONTREAL, QUEBEC, CANADA H2X 2T7.

Sommet des grands

RÉSISTER AUX CRIMES OFFICIELS

"Je peux dire en toute confiance que c'est le Canada et non notre peuple que l'histoire viendra juger et que c'est le Canada et non mon peuple qui devra répondre de ses actes au banc des accusés."

Penote Ben Michel
porte-parole Innu (Montagnais)

C'est à Toronto que se réuniront du 19 au 21 juin 1988 les chefs d'Etat du Canada, des Etats-Unis, du Japon, de l'Allemagne fédérale, de la Grande-Bretagne, de la France et de l'Italie.

L'Alliance pour l'action non-violente (AANV) vous invite à ce propos à une "enquête

préliminaire" puis à un véritable "tribunal international" pour juger ce qu'elle décrit comme étant des "crimes contre l'humanité, crimes économiques et crimes contre l'environnement", effectués par les sept "Grands".

D'après M. Philippe Duhamel, membre de l'AANV, la preuve

de ces méfaits est "nulle part aussi flagrante que dans le cas des peuples traditionnels attachés à la terre, les populations autochtones".

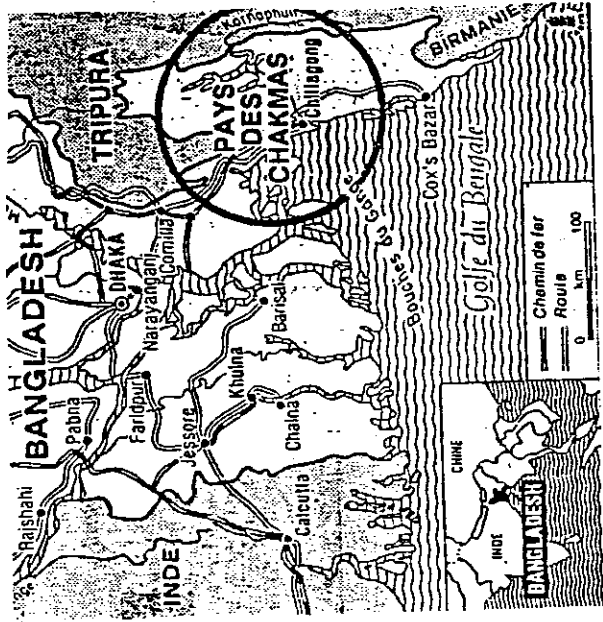
Des membres des premières nations viendront donc témoigner autant lors de l'"enquête préliminaire" à Montréal (du 2 au 6 mai), que

lors du "procès" qui se tiendra à Toronto.

Les personnes intéressées à participer à la campagne de l'AANV peuvent téléphoner au (514) 525-0765 ou encore écrire au C.P. 381, Succ. "E", Montréal, H2T 3A7.

D'après un texte de l'AANV

ON VEUT LA TERRE MAIS PAS LE PEUPLE!



ne pouvaient s'installer sur leur territoire.

La situation des Chakmas a changé suite à l'indépendance du Pakistan en 1947 et aussi la création du Bangladesh en 1971. Les Chakmas revendiquaient que leur nation devienne une partie de l'Etat indien. Mais en 1947 Sir Cyril Radcliffe (président de la commission des frontières) a décidé arbitrairement de le céder au Pakistan. En 1960, 40% des terres cultivables furent recouvertes par la construction d'un barrage hydro-électrique. Ce projet causa le déplacement de 100 000 personnes. Dans cette période, le gouvernement pakistanais a lancé une politique de colonisation permettant au peuple majoritaire, les Bengalis, de s'installer dans la région. En 1961, 60 000 autochtones furent déposés de leur terre de façon à permettre l'installation des colons Bengalis.

Face à la répression systématique, les Chakmas ont fondé un parti politique, le "Jan

Sanghat Samittee" avec une section armée, le "Shanti Bahini", pour résister à la colonisation et permettre la survie de leur communauté.

La répression s'accroît

Le Bangladesh accélère présentement le processus de colonisation et commet de nombreuses atrocités contre les populations civiles. Amnistie internationale a décrit plusieurs exemples de massacres, exécutions sommaires, tortures, viols et emprisonnements sans procès perpétrés par l'armée et les milices. Des observateurs militaires britanniques participent à l'entraînement de ces troupes. Des temples bouddhistes et des villages entiers ont été rayés de la carte, la population étant reléguée dans des "hameaux stratégiques". Ces hameaux sont de véritables isolateurs. Le nombre des personnes tuées avancé par les autorités religieuses s'élève à 185 000 personnes.

En 1947, les peuples indigènes

constituaient 98% de la population des Chittagong Hill Tracts. Aujourd'hui ils ne sont plus que la moitié du total. Présentement, le Chittagong est une zone placée sous administration militaire et est fermée aux journalistes étrangers. Les autorités du Bangladesh, tout en niant toute forme de violence ou de discrimination, traitent les Chakmas de "mécéants". Mais les paroles d'un militaire, "nous voulons la terre, mais pas le peuple", illustrent la politique gouvernementale.

Daniel Berman

Qui sont les Chakmas

Les Chakmas sont le plus important des 12 groupes autochtones de la région, regroupant 600 000 personnes. Sous le colonialisme anglais, ces peuples étaient administrés par des règlements distincts des autres régions de l'Inde. Les Chakmas bénéficiaient de l'autonomie entière sur leur langue, leur culture et leur religion. Les peuples non-autochtones

A Montréal, le "Comité d'appui aux peuples autochtones du Bangladesh" cherche à sensibiliser les canadiens sur la situation. Le comité revendique une aide humanitaire aux réfugiés vivant aux Indes et exige que l'aide canadienne au Bangladesh soit conditionnelle au respect de la personne. On peut contacter ce groupe au 3480, rue McTavish Montréal H3A 1X9