

**THE
CHITTAGONG
HILL TRACTS
OF
BANGLADESH**

THE UNTOLD STORY



THE CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS OF BANGLADESH : THE UNTOLD STORY

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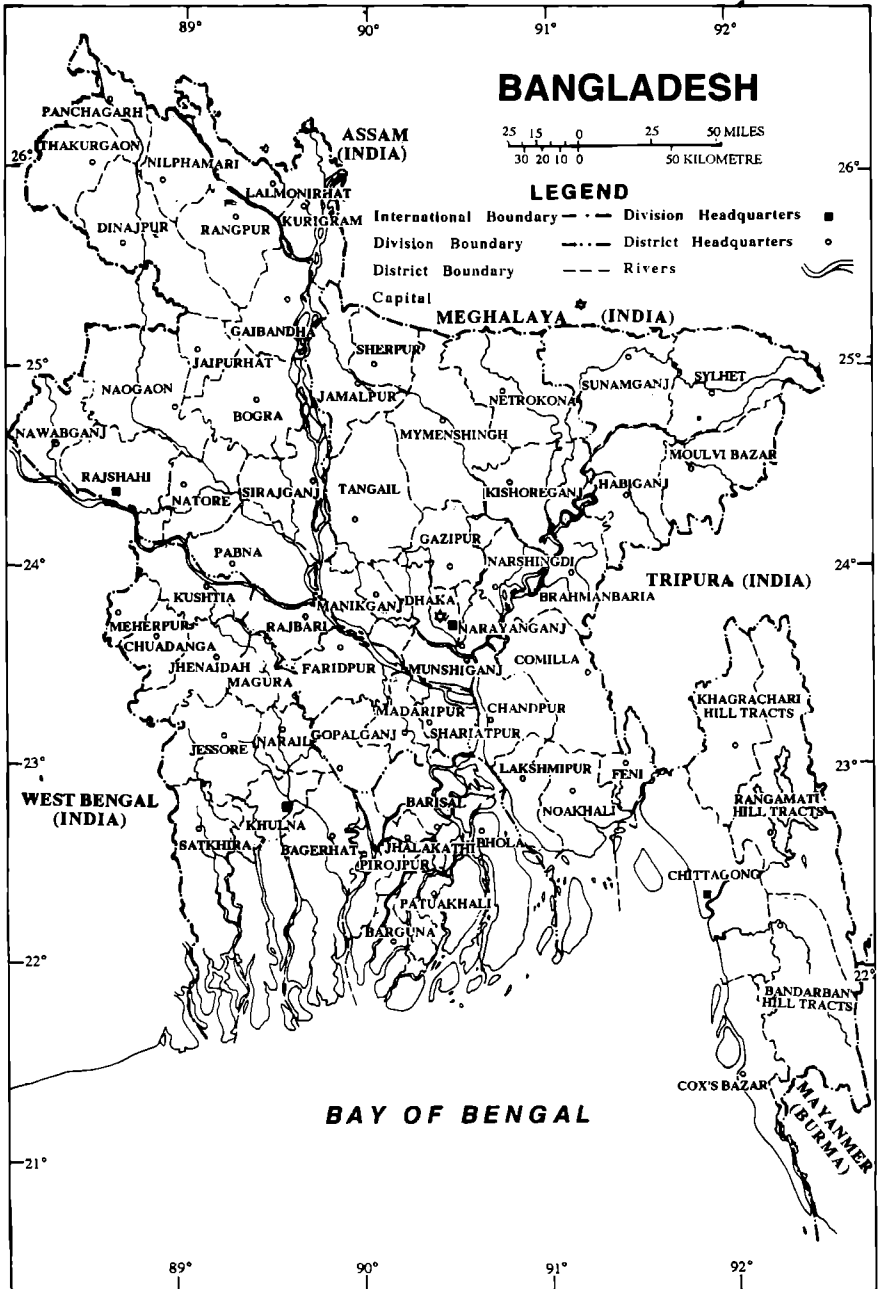
- First Edition** : **December 1992**
- Published by** : **Centre for Development Research,
Bangladesh (CDRB)**
55 Dhanmondi R-A, Road No. 8-A,
G.P.O. Box No. 4070,
Dhaka, Bangladesh
- Copy Right** : **Centre for Development Research,
Bangladesh (CDRB)**
- Cover Design** Samar Majumder
- Maps** Graphosman
- Computer Compose** Bishwajit Das
- Printed by** **Sheba Printing Press**
C.B. 110 (Old 64/66), Mohakhali
Dhaka

The views expressed in this book are those of the authors and
do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the
Centre for Development Research, Bangladesh (CDRB)

- Price** : **Hard Cover Tk. 160.00 (US \$ 8.00)**
Soft Cover Tk. 100.00 (US \$ 5.00)
[Postal charges extra]

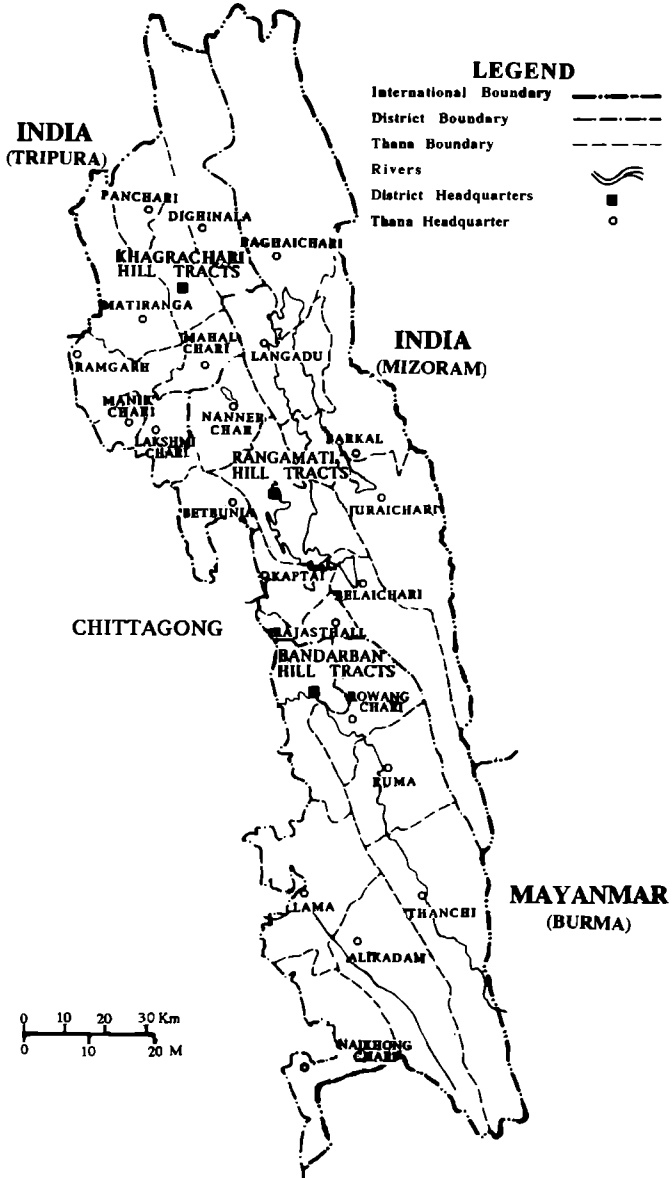
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CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS OF BANGLADESH

KHAGRACHARI, BANDARBAN & RANGAMATI DISTRICTS



Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

The problem in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh has often been misperceived. Some views from outside have tended to be simplistic. These have attempted to envision the problem merely as an ethnic insurgency sought to be met with the military might of a relatively new-born nation-state, itself struggling against massive poverty and underdevelopment.

In reality, however, the roots of the problem lie deep in the past—both recent and remote. It is a problem that sovereign and independent Bangladesh did not create. In fact the historic struggle for the emancipation of Bangladesh, victorious in blood and fire during 1971, was dominated by a conception of political and economic justice principally stimulated by a social democratic vision. The basic commitment of Bangladesh to a liberal social democratic system has found strong reaffirmation in the nineties. A representative democratic order exists in Bangladesh. In such a dispensation the resolution of the problem in the Hill Tracts cannot be and is not a function of armed might and sanguinary conflicts. On the contrary, the canons of this democratic polity encourage and compel resolution of problems of sub-national and regional minorities through the democratic political process of peaceful dialogue and cooperation.

The analysis presented in this book relates the largely untold story of origin and evolution of the problem in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh. It is important to bear in mind and appreciate that the

problem that Bangladesh faces in its Chittagong Hill Tracts is not unique in the present day world. The challenge posed by assertive regional minorities is a widespread phenomenon shared by numerous states — both developing and developed — of the world of our times. The problem of integrating them peacefully and equitably into the mainstream of national life through democratic participation is shared alike by many postcolonial developing and economically, technologically and industrially developed polities.

Many postcolonial states are multi-ethnic, multi-linguistic and multi-religious. They are driven not only by gaps between their modernized, western-educated, political elite and tradition-bound, illiterate, poor masses, but also by inter communal and sub-national conflicts. Both internal and external factors often prevent these relatively new nation-states from successfully resolving their ethnic-linguistic-religious conflicts. As a result autonomist or secessionist struggles ensue. There are many examples of such postcolonial struggles in Africa and Asia : Biafra, Kurdistan, Southern Sudan, Eritrea, Somalia, India's Nagaland, Mizoram, Assam, Kashmir and the Punjab, Pakistan's Sind; Myanmar (Burma)'s Karens, Kachins and Shans.

The first three among these have been decisively defeated by military or political and diplomatic manoeuvres while the others seem to have turned into protracted sanguinary struggles awaiting decisive resolution. Economically and technologically developed societies also have their share of such problems. In their cases even a strong cultural community and a high level of economic development do not spare them the travails of divisive ethno-cultural and religious conflicts. "Inherent patterns of irreconcilable values" of social, religious, political nature lead to a situation which fail to guarantee the creation of a feeling of national unity in such areas as Northern Ireland in U.K., and the Basque region in Spain. Such countries as France and Argentina also provide examples of persistent internal conflicts.¹

Turning back to postcolonial multi-ethnic democratic and modernizing states, one finds in India a veritable cauldron of

sub-national, sub-group aspirations seething and forcefully demanding to have, what they regard, an equitable share in national life.

A commentator ably cites V. S. Naipaul, the West Indies writer of Indian origin :

“In his book, **“A Million Mutinies Now”** (London, 1990) he argues that what is taking place in India is a million mutinies of sub-groups with thousands of sub-group identities, some of them ethnic, some religious, some linguistic, some caste. He thinks this is an important and dynamic development because it is a reflection of the fact that India has come of age and the dream of the Founding Fathers has begun to inspire all sorts of group identities who are now staking a claim for the national pie. He welcomes this also, because he feels that the Indian state is strong and that in time it will learn to manage these conflicts. In other words, his “mutinies” are based on socio-cultural factors but at the same time it is imperative that they fail. This failure is so important that he takes it for granted. The Indian Federal vision is the bedrock, but a little shaking up from vulnerable sections as well as ethnic groupings will make that state more dynamic and more responsive to the needs of its people.

This is an extraordinary thesis. When put forward by Naipaul it sounds politically very naive. But I will argue that this is the thesis of liberal, social democratic and even Marxist scholarship over the last decade. We have supported ethnic, class, caste and regional movements demanding autonomy because pluralism is the other face of democracy especially in multi-ethnic and multinational society. But in this support of causes, there was one assumption which kept the argument together; any of these movements at any given time must fail in themselves if democracy is to survive. The movements can pressurise the state or force a change of government so that a more enlightened one takes control of state power, but very few of us envisioned the success of the movements in their control

of a very centralised new state. I do not think that in pursuit of democracy we ever thought that the post-colonial order would collapse, to be replaced by a fragmented continent with ethnic fiefdoms.²

The many potential “ethnic fiefdoms” haunt many postcolonial states like a tenacious spectre. These pluralistic societies still remain what Rupert Emerson called “not nations in being but only in hope”.³

Many of their internecine conflicts of ethno-cultural or religious nature reflect the tragedy of the complex problems of nation-building in the face of massive poverty, illiteracy and low political culture. On account of resource constraint and underdeveloped politics, their sub-national groups are marked by uneven development. This is the result, in part, also of the failure of their development strategies borrowed from the capitalist West or the now-defunct socialist Soviet Union without realistic adaptation to their own socio-cultural and economic contexts. These intra-mural failures of the ruling elite at political development through institution-building for resolution of the internal ‘centre-periphery’ conflicts, were and still are transformed into external conflicts leading to regional, and sometimes, global instability. Thus insurgencies in India’s Punjab and Kashmir tend to become regional problems. Assam, Mizoram or Nagaland of India taking to warpath against their own centre become process spilling over into neighbouring Bangladesh. Similar experiences of cross-national ethno-political spillovers across Indo-Sri Lanka and Indo-Napalese frontiers act as threats to both national and regional peace and stability.

There is also an important external dimension to these problems. It issues from the inability or unwillingness of the developed components of the international order to recognize the limits of pluralism. Should pluralism be equated with fragmentation?

This brings us to “another flashpoint where there will be confrontation between the changing world order and socio-cultural issues at the national level”. It is the “pursuance of international human rights strategy in a unipolar world”.

“For years human rights groups have been pushing for international scrutiny of domestic non-compliance of well-accepted international norms of human rights. The problem was not a major one when international NGOs were engaged in this type of exposure with a certain amount of detachment and professionalism. However, the moment human rights became part of bilateral and multilateral negotiations among governments it presented a different scenario. In a unipolar world, the bilateral, multilateral intervention, usually enacted through cuts in foreign aid, does not place such a benign face on this type of construction. The SAARC declaration and the declaration by the Chinese governments are examples of the discomfiture this type of bilateral scrutiny causes at the state level. On the other hand, though many NGOs and non-state actors are often the first to welcome this kind of international action, in the long run, in a unipolar world this type of intervention may cause a serious reversion to the 1950’s era of expansionism and intervention.

To avoid the manipulative use of human rights, either by errant nation-states or by western bilateral agencies, it is important that international machinery is set up which is objective, interventionist but representative of all world actors to implement human rights at the international level and within nation-states. Unless this independent body is set up, the next decade may witness a perversion of human rights issues as it is used to serve political interests of states”.⁴

Strident and runaway pluralism in our transitional times has tended to create a tangled web of political turbulence, ethnic minority aspirations, interdependence and security. There is increasing awareness of the complexity of the emerging problem. It is appreciated that this is a world in flux, experiencing “a diplomatic revolution that mirrors the revitalization of national political institutions in many countries. Fundamental changes promise greater personal freedom and more dynamic societies, but also bring new challenges and greater uncertainty in international relations”.⁵

The complexities of a world in which there is the threat of a collision between interdependence and ethnic and sub-national consciousness reaching a feverish pitch, are recognized. As the newly-appointed, sixth United Nations Secretary-General, Boutros Ghali observed while addressing the first-ever Security Council Summit meeting on 31 January 1992 :

“The narrow nationalism that would oppose or disregard the norms of a stable international order and the micro-nationalism that resists healthy economic or political integration can disrupt a peaceful global existence. Nations are too interdependent, national frontiers are too porous and transnational realities in the spheres of technology and investment, on the one side, and poverty and misery, on the other — are too dangerous to permit egocentric nationalism”.

“The explosion of nationalities which is pushing countries with many ethnic groups towards division, is a new challenge to peace and security Nationalist fervour will increase **ad infinitum** the number of communities claiming sovereignty, for there will always be dissatisfied minorities within those minorities that achieve independence. Peace, first threatened by ethnic conflicts and tribal wars, could then often be troubled by border disputes”.

“The United Nations will have to adopt a new strategy to respond to the irredentist claims of ethnic and cultural communities or their calls for autonomy”.⁶

It is against this total backdrop of developing internal situation and evolving international trends and tendencies that the problem of the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh needs to be viewed for a correct ision. That is the essence of the endeavours manifest in

o tell the story like it is. The effort is to tell the whole course, includes that what has largely remained untold.

The following chapters include (II) Historical Perspective upto 1971, (III) Geography, Economy and Composition of the Population — Socio-Cultural and Ethnic Features : Recent Development Efforts, (IV) The Regulation of 1900 : Its Significance and Impact, (V) Insurgency, (VI) Government of Bangladesh (GOB) Responses, 1972-1992; and (VII) Conclusion.

The second chapter (Historical Perspective upto 1971) contains a description and analysis of the historical evolution of the Chittagong Hill Tracts from the early times of which records exist. It brings to focus the important fact that as elsewhere in the vast South Asian subcontinent, in this area also, those who live and claim to be dominant inhabitants, are not the **original** inhabitants.

South Asia, like the United States of America in relatively recent times, is a melting pot since the ancient times. The original inhabitants of this subcontinent some of whom built the five-thousand years old Indus Valley civilization were replaced, three millenniums ago, by the Aryan invaders moving in from the west. The new-comers erected a philosophically rich but basically agrarian society dominated by Vedic principles. In course of time outsiders such as the Sakas, the Huns, the Greeks, Turkomen-Afghans (Pathans) and the Mughals invaded, conquered and ruled this vast land-mass for considerable periods of time only to be part, without losing their basic religio-cultural identities, of the rich and diverse mosaic of a multi-ethnic, multi-ethno cultural and linguistic civilizational heritage.

There was only one exception. The British colonial rulers who held sway over the subcontinent from the late eighteenth to nearly the middle of the twentieth century, remained true externals. They came, ruled and exploited and left without being a part of the land, leaving behind a mixed legacy of colonial modernization and imperial exploitation.

As in the entire subcontinent, so also in Bengal the movement of ethnic, linguistic and religious groups relentlessly took place in processes that were principally peaceful and gradual and voluntary.

The Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh is a relatively small area in which this subcontinental drama has found its reflection. As the following chapter underscores, in this area, unlike the South Asian subcontinent, there was even no **original** inhabitants. This land with its fascinating hills and jungles, lush green valleys and numerous rivers and streams, sprawling over the South-eastern part of Bangladesh was nevertheless so inhospitable that it remained barren and unpeopled for long.

Records show that it was not until the 15th to the mid-nineteenth centuries that some tribals, the Kukis being the earliest, moved into the area from regions now in present-day Myanmar (former Burma) and the Tripura region (now a part of postcolonial India). In time, among the 13 tribes of Sino-Indian descent the Chakmas became more numerous and dominant. These tribes speak a wide variety of dialects while the language of the Chakmas who constitute the largest community is heavily influenced by the Chittagong dialect of the Bengali language. Political developments in the region are comprehensible with reference to its economic links with the plains. Exchange of the agricultural products between the two sides had a long tradition and consequently, the rulers around the Hill Tracts used to fight for its political power by using the trade connections. On account of its geographical location, with easy access from Chittagong, the rulers perched in power over the plains, would find themselves in advantageous position to make territorial claims over the hills. This was one of the main causes of strains in the relations between the hills and the plains.

The Chittagong plains, punctuated by hills and jungles forming the same ecological environment as of the CHT, had long been a bone of contention between three local centres of power : the Kingdom of Arakan to the south, the Kingdom of Tripura to the north and Bengali rulers to the northeast. During the late 17th century the Arakanese and Tripura influences were shattered by the Mughals. The stabilisation of Mughal power in the plains of Chittagong was followed by an expansion of the wet-rice cultivation areas to the east. The regular battles between the Chakmas and the Mughal forces gave rise to Chakma military might which was successfully contained by the

Mughals by means of a peaceful settlement providing the Chakma military ruler control over the trade between the hills and the plains on payment of a fixed amount of cotton to Mughal agents. The Bengali movement into the CHT dates back to the 17th century when braving the natural disadvantages, a small number of Bengalis made their abodes in the inhospitable terrain of the region on invitation of the Chakma Chief.

British colonial rule impacted on the area in varied manners. The rulers established sway over the area and in 1860 separated it from the district of Chittagong to form the separate district of Chittagong Hill Tracts.

The British rulers, in order to contain the turbulent situation in the area created by inter-tribal conflicts, tightened the administrative belt by promulgating the "Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation 1900" (discussed and analysed in details in Chapter IV).

During the postcolonial era, after the departure of the British from the subcontinent in 1947, certain mainstreaming and modernizing measures by the successor-government of Pakistan affected the tribal people of Chittagong Hill Tracts in various ways. A section of them perceived these development and modernizing efforts as detrimental to their interests.

However, some of these socio-economic development efforts of the pre-1971 Government had positive impact on the life of the tribal people. Thus the spread of education benefitted all of them in general and the Chakmas in particular and "by 1970 the rate of literacy among them shot upto more than 50 per cent. Consequently political consciousness also developed among (their) literate sections who began to harbour new hopes and aspirations that contradicted not only the Pakistani rule but also their age old feudal traditions".

The following chapter (III) further traces the analytical details of the growth of embryonic political organizations with Marxist contents and overtones. It also shows how the confusion among a section of tribal leaders and some of their followers as to their stand on the Liberation

War of Bangladesh during 1971 created apprehension and doubt and schism between the Bengalis and some sections of the tribal people. This further complicated the ethnic problem with a long historical genesis --- a problem that the new-born state of Bangladesh inherited at independence. Thus from the beginning Bangladesh, like most of the developed and developing countries, faced a residual problem of full and peaceful integration of approximately 0.5% of population who happened to be members of different ethnic tribes, into the mainstream of national life (There are tiny group ethnic minorities and tribals in some areas other than the Chittagong Hill Tracts).

Chapter III (Geography, Economy and the Composition of the Population — Socio-Cultural and Ethnic Features : Recent Development Efforts), dwells in elaborate details on the physical features, topography, climate, soil, administration, land, demography, of the Chittagong Hill Tracts and ethnic features, cultural traits, religious practices, rites and rituals etc. of the tribals in the region.

It also discusses and analyses the economic and industrial development efforts for the CHT area undertaken by the Government of Bangladesh during the latter half of the seventies on a massive scale. Spectacular development has been achieved in such diverse fields as road-building, telecommunication, rural electrification, agriculture, construction of buildings, cottage industry, water supply, livestock and tourism since the launching of massive development programmes initially, by the government from 1976 under the leadership of the *Shaheed*⁷ President Ziaur Rahman. It is also noted that the Government has been consistently ensuring development of education and employment for the tribal people. As a result there have been significant increases in the number of educational institutions and students in the tribal areas. Quota reservation for tribal students in higher institutions of learning, including technical institutions, is helping the process of educational development of the tribal people. Reservation of government jobs for the tribal people also ensure their fair and equitable share in national employment.

Chapter IV (The Regulation of 1900 : Its Significance and Impact) examines the historical background of the introduction of the Regulation of 1900 and its significance and impact on the tribal people and the texture of their relationship with the people of the plains.

Troubles in the region emanating from raids on the plains by Kukis and other tribes during the late nineteenth century made it necessary for the British to further tighten their administrative belt in the area.

“The result was the Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation, 1900, which marked the district as an “Excluded Area” necessitating a new set of laws and rules under provision 18 of the Regulation. This administrative step and the Regulation have been identified by the agitating tribals as moves to safeguard their exclusiveness and special rights and privileges. In fact, the Regulation, a product of superb British administrative ingenuity was a double-faced fiat. On the one hand, it secured British administrative and financial interests; and on the other, it clocked some very harsh provisions under the surplice of so-called protection of tribal rights and privileges” (Chapter II).

The Regulation conferring the status of “Excluded Area” to the CHT slammed the door on regular interaction between the ethnic groups and the Bengalis living in the adjoining plains. The objective of the Regulation had also an incipient political dimension.

It precluded spread of anti-colonial activity in the strategically important hill tracts. The tribal people who are by nature introvert and conscious of their socio-cultural distinctiveness were satisfied finding the British rulers in the role of their ‘well-wishers’, although the Regulation replaced age-old self-government by colonial administration under a thin guise of indigenous institutions. Besides, it gave a legal framework to the isolation of the hills from the plains, not only through the instrumentality of ban on influx of outsiders, but also an administrative and taxation structure which was different from the collectorate Zamindari system in the rest of Bengal. As an anti-colonial surge engulfed the whole of India the cautious British rulers tightened measures against entry of non-tribal people into the CHT designating it

as a totally excluded area from 1935 to 1947. This was aimed at formally cutting off all political links between the hills and the province of Bengal and thus blocking the spread of the anti-colonial nationalist freedom movement from the plains to the hills.

The analysis in chapter IV examines the various amendments and modifications and application of the Regulation. It takes note of the fact that the 1900 Regulation “have assumed an important role in the political statements of the tribal people”.

The Government in its eagerness to sincerely protect and preserve the equitable rights of the tribal people by generally respecting the spirit of Regulation by a loose interpretation of the section 36 of the Constitution of Bangladesh which gives constitutional rights to the citizen of Bangladesh to live anywhere in the country, subject to reasonable legal bars in public interest. This section, it was argued by some quarters, made the restrictions on settlement in the CHT (as stipulated in the Regulation of 1900) legally inapplicable.

“But the government abandoned this plain interpretation of section 36, and began controlling movement into the CHT by restricting land grants, an indirect way of limiting freedom of settlement. This was taken a step further in the 1989 laws, which gave the new district council a veto on transfers of land to new settlers. All sides agree on some extent of restrictions on land rights in the CHT. Restrictions could take the form of continuing the legal effect of parts of the 1900 regulations or could be accomplished in other ways ” (Chapter IV).

Chapter V of the present work, traces the growth of the problem in the Chittagong Hill Tracts as it assumed the dimensions of insurgency in post-liberation Bangladesh. It is aptly observed, “At its birth .. Bangladesh had already inherited an incipiently politicized ethnicity that has its immediate origins in the mid sixties. In fact, by 1972 ethnicity in CHT, ostensibly under Chakma leadership, had become sufficiently politicized to create a periphery -- challenging — centre like syndrome”.

The story of the escalation of the autonomist demands of politicized ethnic groups in the CHT into forms that were deemed potentially disruptive by the government in 1972 is related in fascinating details.

Evidently the national moment of Bangladesh had coincided with the arrival of the moments of vocal section of the Chakmas, trying to assert their perceived right to a manifest, distinct identity. The Prime Minister (in 1972) faced the strident demands of some tribals with a call in favour of subsuming such parochial ethnic aspirations under a broader nationalism to facilitate national integration.

The leaders were infuriated and rejected the call. Seeing the fiasco that attended constitutional attempts to get their voices heard and demands met the tribal leaders had been simultaneously preparing for political and even military mobilization to challenge the government of Bangladesh. The result was the formation on 15 February 1972 of the **Parbatya Chattogram Jana Sanghati Samiti (PCJSS)** [The Chittagong Hill Tracts People's Solidarity Association] as a political front, with M.N Larma as the head. Other prominent tribal leaders including those from RCP (Rangamati Communist Party) also joined the body. On 7 January 1973, **Shanti Bahini (SB)** an armed wing was added to PCJSS.

“The four-point charter of demands was, to all intents and purposes, an articulate demand for outright autonomy for a distinct and separate tribal entity. Much later, with the backing of strong political and military mobilization, this demand assumed the character of an independence movement for a **Jummaland** (meaning the land of the **Jumiyas** or **Jhumiyas**). M. N. Larma and his brother Shantu Larma were found exhorting tribal nationalism with the slogan of “Jummaland”.

“The records relating to the beginnings of the insurgency is not clear; but it seems SB first began its armed insurgency some time in the beginning of 1975. SB ambushed a police patrol near Subalong, a place located 12 kilometre (7.46 mile) northeast of Rangamati town. Taking up of arms against state is a high crime under section 121 of Bangladesh Penal Code. However, the Bangladeshi government is not on record as having reacted seriously to this first incident of taking up arms by some tribals.

With the political change-over in mid-1975, M.N. Larma went underground and crossed over to India to lead the armed insurgency” (Chapter V).

The ideology and organizational structure of the insurgents, their manpower and weapons, nature, character and structure of leadership are discussed in detail. The political, and economic threats to the security and integrity of Bangladesh posed by the Insurgency are described and analysed elaborately. The discussion also focuses on how, normal life in CHT is disturbed, disrupted and even threatened by the ubiquitous guerilla operations of SB (Shanti Bahini), the artificial creation of a small number of malcontents of a single tribe, malcontents empowered by foreign links and also (enraged) by the unavoidable counter-insurgency operations of security forces.

The transborder security dimension of these ethnic conflicts engineered by a small disgruntled elements of a single tribe is also discussed. Reported involvement of neighbouring India is examined.

Chapter VI contains an analytical enunciation of the responses of the Government of Bangladesh to the problem in the Chittagong Hill Tracts from the period 1972 to 1992.

It correctly notes “On account of the misperception and failure of appreciation by sections of the tribals, the Government of Bangladesh’s response, has not, so far, been able to fully resolve the complicated problem. This is not because the Government of Bangladesh lacked any sincerity or commitment, but mainly because the tribal insurgents did not fully comprehend and appreciate the substantial benefits of the measures undertaken. It is also true that because of certain constitutional and political constraints the Government of Bangladesh could not go all the way in meeting the demands of the insurgents”. It notes further that “for the sake of objectivity, however, it should be admitted that the problem almost burst upon the Government of Bangladesh at a time when it was preoccupied with the most pressing business of putting the house in order after a nine-month long sanguinary war of liberation. As this business proved difficult and time-consuming the Government of Bangladesh response evolved slowly, and thus failed to keep pace with

a rapidly unfolding insurgency. Nevertheless, the successive regimes at Dhaka perceived the problem in their own way and sought solutions accordingly. In the process, either the policy of the previous regime continued or new dimensions were added to it. But, to date, the problem awaits complete resolution and has cost the Government of Bangladesh a great deal of its scarce resources”.

After detailed examination and analysis of the responses of the Government of Bangladesh it is concluded that these reveal the sincerity and depth of commitment of Bangladesh and its government to evolve a just and peaceful solution of the problem.

It is further noted “Despite a definite, positive impact of these responses on the people, both tribals and non-tribals, the problem has remained festering because of insurgency of the **Shanti Bahini**, who receive overt and covert patronisation and assistance from the Indian authorities”.

As pointed out earlier, Bangladesh, like most other developed and developing countries struggling with the residual problem of integration of ethnic minorities in the mainstream of national life, has given priority attention to the problem in its Chittagong Hill Tracts.

Like other democratic societies including the United States of America (in recent times facing the resurgent violence of ethnic minorities such as the Black Americans erupting in the recent race-riots in Los Angeles), the United Kingdom (fighting a protracted insurgency in Northern Ireland), democratic Bangladesh, despite its massive poverty and economic, technological and industrial underdevelopment, openly air and articulate these internal problems and mount all possible political efforts to solve these. Naturally, in a democratic polity solutions are sought within the confines of constitutional framework and the dynamics of the democratic political process. This is a process that Bangladesh conducts within the social democratic fabric. But the task before Bangladesh (as before other developed and developing national-societies in similar situation) is “made more difficult by the fact that many of the groups making this assertion (of the distinctiveness of their ethnic or cultural identities) and many who are leaders of these

movements have values, concepts, methods or structures which are anathema to the social democratic paradigm”.⁸ Their extreme separatism is “often posed at the end of gun” threatening to violate and actually violating the peaceful socio-political processes of a democratic society even though such a society may and has adopted constructive and positive policies and programmes to accelerate the pace of socio-economic development of minority groups and to ensure their peaceful integration in the national life — an integration based on the principle of unity in diversity.

Indeed “the actors involved in what are termed these (ethno-cultural) “little wars” are often motivated by values other than those linked to a social democratic order”.⁹

This is the crux of the problem in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh. That it is so, is being increasingly appreciated by the world at large. Thus Lord David Ennals, Chairman, Asian Committee of the British Refugee Council (BRC) on his visit to Bangladesh during May 1992 told the press that the so-called **Shanti Bahini** was comparable to the Irish Republican Army (IRA). He also strongly condemned the raids by the **Shanti Bahini** which kill innocent people, both tribal and non-tribal, and gravely disrupt peace and security in the area. Lord Ennals further observed that the **Shanti Bahini** and IRA were aided and assisted by forces beyond the borders and had international implications.¹⁰

The untold story of the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh is sought to be related in this volume so that there is wider and objective understanding and comprehension of the essence of the problem : the complex challenge that a democratic society faces from extreme and mindless violence engineered by a foreign linked few, even though the vast majority of the concerned ethnic minorities opt for and participate in the peaceful, democratic process of solving the problem.

The endeavour also encompasses an objective analysis of the sincere and continuing efforts of the nation to solve the problem in a democratic, peaceful and equitable manner thru democratic local self governing institutions (which have generated the participation of the overwhelming majority of the tribal people) despite the anti-democratic and terrorist violence of a handful of misguided armed men.

NOTES

1. R. E. Scott, "Nation Building in Latin America", in K. W. Deutsch and W. J. Foll— (ed.) **Nation Building**, (New York : Atherton Press, 1963), p. 74.
2. Radhika Coomeraswamy, "**A New Social Imagination for a Changing World Order**", paper presented at International Seminar on 'South Asia in the Changing World Order', Indian Council for South Asian Cooperation, Delhi, 7-9 May 1992, pp. 8-9.
3. Rupert Emerson, **From Empire to Nations**, (Cambridge : Harvard University Press, 1960), p. 94.
4. Radhika Coomeraswamy, "A New Social Imagination", pp. 10-11.
5. **Notes for Speakers**, a UN publication published by the Under Secretary General for Public Information DPI/1237 June 1992-15 M, p. 7.
6. **Ibid**, pp. 7-8.
7. **Shaheed** means Martyred.
8. Radhika Coomeraswamy, "**A New Social Immagination**", p. 6.
9. **Ibid** p. 8.
10. Full text of Lord David Ennals' interview with **The Daily Star**, Dhaka (weekend, Friday May 22, 1992) is placed at **Appendix I**.

Chapter II

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE UPTO 1971

An important factor in the context of explorations of tribal society and culture pertains to historicity. This comes up more forcefully when we try to account for changes in such a society over a long period of time. Historical events form an important background in the analysis and interpretation of changes in a society. Unfortunately, however, in the absence of dependable relevant sources, the history of the land now termed the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) is either incomplete or mostly inaccurate. Nevertheless, in the recent past attempts have been made, albeit scattered and piecemeal, to reconstruct the history of the CHT people. The information thus gleaned is fairly comprehensive.

The inhospitable topography insulated the region from outside until about the fifteenth century and prevented any large-scale contact with the plain land. This factor also explains the lack of serious historical studies on this region in the past. Only the hill tribes, which now number about thirteen, inhabited the rugged terrain. Most of the tribal people moved in to this land from areas now in Myanmar (former Burma) during the period from the 15th to the mid-nineteenth centuries. The tribes belonging to the Kuki group were the earliest to settle, and the Chakmas came much later. Physical insulation and socio-cultural exclusiveness over the centuries created a psyche amongst the tribals that has ever remained a constant factor in their political consciousness militating against any flow of non-tribals into the region. Of course, this is the case with any tribal society.

Historically, origin of the CHT problem that the Government of Bangladesh (GOB) has been facing for about two decades may be traced to the Mughal period. Possibly to keep the awesome Mughal power at bay the Chakma Chiefs used Muslim names themselves; such as, Rattan Khan (1673), Jalal Khan (1715-25) and Shermust Khan (1737-58). There is, however, no clear evidence to suggest that they had been converted to Islam or there had been any serious proselytising attempt by the Muslim preachers. Starting in 1666 the Mughal influence began to be felt in CHT; and it increased more and more as time passed by. This was also the time when the Bengalis from Chittagong made their appearance in CHT, not as intruders, but as invitees of the Chakma Chiefs. Some daily necessities e.g. dried fish, chicken, salt, tobacco, molasses, black cloth, were not available in the hills. Jalal Khan approached the Mughal administrator of Chittagong and requested him to permit Bengali merchants to trade in these merchandise with the tribal people. In return, he undertook voluntarily to pay an annual tribute to the Mughal authorities. The tribute paid to the Mughal government came to be designated as **Kapas Mahal**. In 1724, Jalal Khan refused to pay the tribute. Consequently he was attacked by the Mughal Dewan Kishan Chand a Hindu, defeated; and had to flee to Arakan, where he died afterwards. By 1737, Chief Shermust Khan yielded to the Mughal authority. Under the influence of the Mughals a new administrative post designated as Dewan had been introduced in the Chakma tribal administration; and continued up to 1900.

The Chakma Chiefs had opened doors of CHT to the Mughals with a commercial motive, but by the mid-eighteenth century ended up yielding to the superior Mughal authority. Thus, in place of a trading partner, they had to accept a political superior. It appears that, payment of annual tribute, although agreed to voluntarily, subsequently found to be galling to the Chakma Chiefs. Coupled with this, military defeat dealt a further blow to their exclusive identity consciousness and complacency. However, nothing could be done as they had neither the power nor means to challenge the superior Mughal authority, but in retrospect, it seems that the hatred against the plains people remained built into their psyche and got transmitted through generations, to be manifested in later years under certain specific circumstances.

In 1760, the area was ceded to the British East India Company by Mir Qasim Ali Khan, the Nawab of Bengal. The establishment of British control over the area went through an uneventful process as the local administration was not interfered with. The East India Company remained happy with the tax-money paid by the tribals. But in 1777, Chief Sherdaulat Khan (1765-82) stopped payment of taxes. The East India Company, retorted by sending in troops to occupy the area. The move failed but the war thus ensued went on intermittently until Jan Bakhsh Khan, Sherdaulat's son and successor, had to submit to Warren Hastings in 1785. It is interesting to note that Jan Bakhsh had precipitated the crisis by prohibiting the entry of plains people into the area; and he was compelled to rescind the decision and to submit to the English only when supplies of necessaries from the plains were stopped. But the rule of Rani Kalindi (1832-1837) witnessed the beginning of administrative interference by the Company.

The consolidation of British authority over the area was hampered by the occasional inter-tribal conflicts thereby creating general law and order situations. Largely out of administrative exigency the area was separated from Chittagong in 1860, named Chittagong Hill Tracts District; and vested with all the paraphernalia of a district administration. But in 1891, with the annexation of the Lushai Hills the status of the district was reduced to that of a sub-division. The predatory raids by Kuki and other tribes created a turbulent situation for the English authorities and necessitated a further administrative belt-tightening. The result was the Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation, 1900, necessitating a new set of laws and rules under provision 18 of the Regulation. Also under the Chittagong Hill Tracts (Amendment) Regulation, 1920, CHT was retained as exclusive responsibility of the Governor General assisted by the Executive Council as an excluded area. This administrative step and the Regulation have been identified by the agitating tribals as moves to safeguard their exclusiveness and special rights and privileges. In fact, the Regulation, a product of superb British administrative ingenuity was a double-faced fiat. On the one hand, it secured British administrative and financial interests; and on the other, it cloaked some very harsh provisions under the surplice of so-called protection of tribal rights and privileges. A detailed discussion on such and other related aspects of the Regulation is avoided here as the same has been done in the chapter that follows.

As the partitioning of the subcontinent became imminent the tribals, especially the Chakma elite, were caught in a confused situation. While some of them were in favour of inclusion into Pakistan, a more prominent section amongst them, was in favour of union with India; their reason being the non-Muslim demographic character of CHT. It is reported that Kamini Mohan Dewan and Sneha Kumar Chakma even made overtures to such Congress high-ups as Mohatma Gandhi, Acharya Kripalini, Rajendra Prasad, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee and Sardar Ballav Bhai Patel. These Congress leaders are on record as having sympathised with such a demand of the CHT tribals, and a Congress delegation was also sent to Rangamati to make an on-the-spot appraisal of the situation. But as things turned out, union of CHT with India became an impossibility. Therefore, in 1946, the tribal Chiefs formed "The Hillmen Association", and proposed a princely state status for CHT at par with neighbouring Tripura, Koochbihar and Khasia; and with which they also proposed a confederation to be under the administrative control of the central government of India. But this move also failed; and by 16 August, CHT became a part of Pakistan. But before this could happen, Sneha Kumar Chakma, in desperation, had hoisted the Indian flag at Rangamati on 14 August. At the same time, the Marmas, who claimed descent from the same stock of people as those inhabiting Burma (Myanmar), had hoisted the Burmese flag at Bandarban.

In considering the present political agitation and armed insurgency in the area, this factor of accession to Pakistan needs to be taken into consideration. And, because of such background, the loyalty of the tribals to the Pakistani rulers always remained suspect. They would also become suspect during the Bangladesh liberation war, but this time for their reported siding with the Pakistani Junta.

An overview of Pakistan Government's policy **vis-a-vis** CHT shows that this policy was formulated under the impact of two major determinants : a lack of comprehension of the tribals and eagerness for mainstreaming of the area according to a typical Western model of nation-building.

One of the earliest moves by the Pakistan government was to ban the **Jana Samity** (People's Association). This was the only tribal

political organisation; but their leaders including Sneha Kumar Chakma, were held responsible for the Indian flag raising incident at Rangamati. To avoid arrest and possible persecution Sneha Kumar Chakma fled to Tripura, became a member of the Tripura State Assembly, and later died there.

The first administrative act of the Pakistan government was to repeal the Chittagong Hill Tracts Frontier Police Regulation of 1881 and thereby to absorb the local police force into the East Pakistan Police. Given the built-in antipathy to the new rulers the tribals viewed such an act as the beginning of a planned policy to dent their separate identity. In 1955, a move by the Central government to abrogate the special status of CHT as provided for in the Regulation, 1900 was successfully thwarted by the tribals. The 1956 constitution, the first of Pakistan, retained the "Excluded Area" status of CHT and the Regulation, 1900; but the provision relating to the powers of the High Court was amended. For the first time, however, the tribals were given right to franchise. The new constitution and the new political right had some sort of stabilising impact on the CHT situation.

But the old problems assumed new dimensions during the regime of Ayub Khan (1958-1969). The new constitution promulgated by Ayub Khan in 1962 changed the administrative status of CHT from the "Excluded Area" to that of "Tribal Area". And, by a constitutional amendment of 1963, which came into effect in 1964, the special status was altogether abolished. But the Regulation, 1900 was kept operative; and the tribals of CHT continued to enjoy some of the privileges under this special law. But during these years most of the provisions guaranteeing a special status of the tribals were gradually modified by various measures in an apparent bid to end the feudalistic arrangements and modernize and mainstream the tribal people into the national life. Immediately after independence a large number of refugees coming from India were rehabilitated in some areas of CHT. For understandable reasons these refugees were not welcome to the tribals. In 1965, the High Court of East Pakistan declared Rule 51 of Regulation, 1900 as **Ultra-vires** of the constitution, and as a result, the Deputy Commissioner could not expel any non-political person from CHT. Moreover, an amendment to rule 34 gave non-tribals having resided in

the area continuously for fifteen years property rights. This was interpreted by the tribals as a serious blow to their special status.

Alongside legal and administrative changes affecting the status of CHT there were other developmental measures that also harmed tribal interests. The Government of Pakistan undertook such measures for utilising the two major natural resources of CHT as forestry and hydroelectricity. In 1950, a paper mill was established at Chandraghona. The Karnafuli Multipurpose Project, began in 1957 and completed in 1963 (with U.S. financial and technical assistance), built a dam across the Karnafuli river to produce hydroelectricity. The artificial Kaptai Lake thus created for the purpose submerged an area of about 1036 square kilometre (400 square miles). The submerged area includes 54,000 acres (21853.04 hectares) of settled and cultivable land. About 10,000 farmer families and 8,000 **Jhumiya** families totalling more than 100,000 persons were affected by the flooding. The government's hastily drawn rehabilitation plan was neither envisaged earlier nor properly executed. Five thousand six hundred and thirty three families were rehabilitated by unreserving a portion of Kassalong reserved forest, who received three acres of inferior land which on average was half of their original holding. Four thousand five hundred families who could not be allocated land of comparable quality were brought under a special rehabilitation programme involving the establishment of mixed plantations on inferior soils. Despite all such improvised measures about 1,500 **Jhumiya** families were left out of the scheme. Moreover, the government effort for creating alternative job opportunities, such as fishing and horticulture, was not successful. On top of everything, the estimated total money of Rupees 280 million allocated for rehabilitation purpose was also not made available by the central government. It is reported that only Rupees 20 million were released for the purpose. Considering all aspects of the problem thus created by the project it was clear that the socio-economic life of a sizeable number of tribals was disrupted with a massive impact. As a result, a large number of tribals, mostly Chakmas crossed over to India.

But alongside such a negative aspect of government policy there was also a positive one. The British rulers did not do anything to develop the backward tribal society. And, the tribal ruling elite, feudal in

character, had no compulsion to develop their own people thereby jeopardising their hold over them. Between 1958 and 1968 a large number of primary schools and some high schools were established in CHT. The Chakmas were mostly to benefit out of this spread of education; and by 1970 the rate of literacy among them shot up to more than 50 percent. Consequently, political consciousness also developed among the literate section of this transitional society who began to harbour new hopes and aspirations that contradicted not only the Pakistani rule but also their age-old feudal tradition.

The yearnings of the newly educated segment of the tribal society found expression in some embryonic political organisations. There are at least four early instances of rudimentary political organisation in the tribal society. **Chakma Jubo Samity** (Chakma Youngmen's Association) was formed in 1915, and in 1920, **Parbattya Chattogram, Jono Samity** (Hill Tracts People's Association) was launched. Lack of leadership and organisation proved too strong impediments to allow these small bodies to develop into full-blown organisations. In 1950, under the changed circumstances, another move to float a political body under the name "**Hill Tracts People's Organisation**" aborted. But the subsequent moves by the educated Chakma youths would bear fruit. In 1962, they formed **Pahari Chatra Samity** (Hill Students Association). Considering the overall socio-political context in CHT these youths had become easy converts to Marxist political philosophy.

The next step in forming a full-fledged Marxist political organisation was taken on 16 May, 1970, when four tribal student leaders launched the Rangamati Communist Party (RCP). Two of these leaders were Manabendra Narayan Larma (M N Larma) and his younger brother Jotindriya Bodhipriya Larma (J. B. Larma). Both had their graduate/postgraduate education at the University of Dhaka. M N Larma came to prominence as he was the first tribal student leader to go to jail for participation in the anti-Ayub mass movement in 1969. Both later took up teaching as profession in CHT and also organised an association namely "**Hill Tracts Teacher's Association**".

RCP had to operate underground as there had been a government ban on communist parties. By the time the liberation war started in 1971 RCP had a fairly widespread underground base.

The 1970 general election that preceded the liberation war returned M N. Larma and A S Prue Chowdhury as independent candidates to the East Pakistan Assembly; and Tridiv Roy, the Chakma Chief to the National Assembly. Despite the presence of such elected representatives amongst them, the tribals could not take a clear and quick decision as to the side they would choose in the liberation war. The confusion was confounded as the mainstream Awami League leadership never showed any enthusiasm in bringing the tribals into the war effort. Even during the early days of the war participation by some over-enthusiastic tribal youths was cold-shouldered by the Awami League leadership. But elders like K.K. Ray, Charu Bikas Chakma and Mong Pru Chai Chowdhury went over to India and joined with the liberation forces. Among those who sided with Pakistan were the families of the Chakma and the Bhomong Chief. M. N. Larma remained neutral. But the tribal population in general remained confused and non-committal. Some of the tribal youths managed to join the liberation war, but more were inducted by the Pakistan military into what came to be known as Civil Armed Forces, a body to collaborate against the war of liberation of Bangladesh. At the same time, the Chakma Chief Tridiv Roy travelled to the United Nations as a member of Pakistan delegation despatched to launch anti-Bangladesh propaganda.

The role of Tridiv Roy and that of some youths in the Civil Armed Forces gave some of the freedom-fighters of Bangladesh enough reason to label sections of tribal society as an anti-liberation element. Consequently, even during the liberation war the tribal habitations of some villages in Matiranga were reportedly torched by the freedom-fighters. As the liberation war drew to a close by December 1971, it was alleged that excesses were committed by the freedom-fighters at Panchari and Dighinala. In the wake of such allegations the tribal members of the Civil Armed Forces, who had fled to deep forests immediately after the surrender of Pakistan army, gradually reappeared and regrouped to become the nucleus of the tribal armed organisation **Shanti Bahini**, which would emerge in a couple of years' time.

Thus at independence Bangladesh inherited a tribal problem that had a long historical genesis and to which greedy action of some for the tribals and emotionally charged reaction of some of the freedom fighters added further complexity.

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Chapter III

GEOGRAPHY, ECONOMY AND COMPOSITION OF THE POPULATION – SOCIO-CULTURAL AND ETHNIC FEATURES: RECENT DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS

Name

The area was named the “Hill Tracts of Chittagong” in the year 1860, when by the Act XXII of that year the hilly and forest tracts to the east of the Chittagong district were withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the civil, criminal and revenue courts and offices of the regulation district and placed under the control of a Superintendent of the Hill Tracts directly under the supervision of the Commissioner (Head of the Administrative Division).

Location

The Chittagong Hill Tracts, now comprising three districts, are situated between 21°25' and 23°45' North latitudes and between 91° 45' and 92° 50' east longitude. It has a total land area of 13,181 square kilometres (5,089 square miles) ¹ and is by surface the largest district ² in Bangladesh. The districts comprises seven main valleys formed by the Feni, Karnafuli, Chengi, Myani, Kassalong, Sangu and Matamuhuri rivers and their tributaries, and numerous hills, ravines and cliffs covered with dense vegetation (trees, bush, creeper jungles etc.) which are in complete contrast to most other districts of Bangladesh, which consist mainly of plain alluvial lands.

The three hill districts are bounded on the north by the Indian State of Tripura; on the west by the Chittagong district; on the south by Burma (Myanmar) and on the east by the Burmese Arakan Hill Tracts and the Lushai Hills.

Physical Feature and Topography

The topography of the districts is featured by a mass of hill, ravine and cliffs originally covered with dense bamboo trees and creeper jungle, but now bare in many places. The mountains are steep and difficult of ascent; they rise in tapering masses and are very narrow at the ridge. The elongated summits of the range fall away at the two extremities and it is only here and there along the ranges that there occurs any material difference in the height. The highest hills are Keckradong (4034 feet) to the east of the districts and Pyramid Hill (3016 feet) in the same quarter.

The hills in the districts run from south in a north-westerly direction. The relative relief ranges from 1000-2000 feet above sea level in the north to 1500-2900 feet in the south. In the north, the three major valleys of the southward flowing rivers, the Chengi, the Myani and the Kassalong, have flat floors, 4.88 to 6.50 kilometres (3 to 4 miles) wide and together provide the largest area of contiguous flat and fertile land in the district. In the south, hill slopes are steeper, absolute elevations are higher and the general relief is more rugged as compared to the north. Consequently there are smaller areas of flat land in the south. These are mostly in the Raingkheong, Sangu and Matamuhuri valleys, but most of them are less than half a mile wide.

Climate

Total annual rainfall throughout the districts varies generally between 85 and 120 inches, rising sometimes to 150 inches in the far south.

The northern part of the districts, which contains most of the flat land, receives the lowest amount of rainfall in the area. In Khagrachari,

Mahalchari and Dighinala thanas,³ (sub-districts) the total amount of rainfall is about 100 inches. In the average year, approximately 80 per cent of the rainfall occurs during May to September. Much of this rainfall comes in torrential downpours that erode the topsoil on the hills, but do not infiltrate the soil deeply. Rainfall during the seven months of drought period is not only very low, but also highly unreliable and unpredictable.

The maximum and minimum temperatures vary between 95.1° F and 50.3°F, but the excessive moisture renders the heat particularly trying and exhausting.

The prevalent wind during the rains and the hot season is found to come from the south-west. In the cold season this generally comes from the north. At the commencement and breaking-up of the rains, violent storms of thunder and lightning occur.

Soils

According to the Forestal Report,⁴ the soils in the area can be classified into seven categories. The most important ones are clay loam, sandy loam and silty clays. The most extensive is silty clay loam which covers 67 per cent of the total area. Almost all the soils have low inherent fertility. All the non-alluvial soils and some of the alluvial soils show coarse-textured surface material, and the water-holding capacity of most of the extensive soils is very low.

Districts and Thanas (former Upazilas) [sub-districts]

The Chittagong Hill Tracts region covers a total area of 13,181 square kilometres (5,089 square miles) and divided into three administrative districts : Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban. The entire CHT region has been divided into 25 Thanas (former Upazilas) (sub-districts) : 1. Panchari, 2. Khagrachari, 3. Dighinala, 4. Matiranga, 5. Manikchari, 6. Ramgarh. 7. Laxmichari , 8. Mahalchari, 9. Rangamati 10. Barkal 11. Baghaichari, 12. Longadu, 13. Naniar Char, 14. Kawkhali, 15. Rajesthali, 16. Kaptai, 17. Belaichari, 18. Juraichari,

19. Naikhongchari, 20. Ali Kadam, 21. Lama, 22. Thanchi, 23. Ruma, 24. Rawangchari, 25. Bandarban.

Land Capability

The Forestal Survey classified the land capability of the district by taking into account slope and other terrain characteristics, the water retention capacity and fertility of soils. Five classes of land were distinguished according to land capability.

A and B class lands are mostly agricultural lands and used for paddy cultivation. Most of the C and D class comprise unclassified forests and green vegetation.

The system of land capability classification adopted by Forestal uses five classes, the limitations in use becoming progressively greater from Class A to D.

Class A Lands have few limitations and are capable of use for a wide range of crops. They vary in slope from 0 to .5 per cent and are not normally susceptible to erosion. The soils are deep, easily worked and hold water well. The use of inorganic and organic fertilizers is necessary to maintain productivity but other intensive management practices are unnecessary. Irrigation is a recommended practice on those lands.

Almost all areas of paddy land are included in this group. The predominant soil is the Karnafuli series and also to a large extent the Mogachhari series. Isolated patches of Class A land occur also in other soils but are not extensive.

Class B lands have moderate limitation which reduce the choice of crops or require certain conservation practices to reduce deterioration. Such practices are easy to apply. The limitations of Class B lands may include slopes upto 20 per cent and moderate susceptibility to erosion. Clean cultivation is not recommended and the use of fertilizers/manures is necessary.

Class B areas are associated with non-dissected high and low 'bumpy' lands with the Teiabil series predominant. Irrigation may be possible in places and the use of terracing is usual on the slopes.

Class C lands have severe limitations which reduce the range of crops or require the adoption of special, intensive conservation practices. Limitations may include slopes upto 40 per cent, high susceptibility to erosion, low moisture holding capacity and a shallow plant rooting zone. This class includes high 'bumpy' lands of the Hazaribak series. Soils are well drained or excessively drained : very susceptible to drought in the dry season and because of their sandy nature may present problems for terracing. Clean cultivation is not recommended for these lands and terracing is essential but may only be possible in areas of deeper soils. Fertilizers/manures are necessary to maintain or increase productivity.

Class C-D lands : This is a complex class of soils which cannot be readily classified under C or D. The inferior Hazaribak soil is predominant.

Class D land have very severe limitations which restrict the choice of crops and require very careful management if used for agriculture. Conservation practices are difficult to apply. Slopes usually exceed 40 per cent, erosion is prevalent, moisture holding capacity is low and soils are shallow. Clean cultivation should not be practised and terracing is difficult. Forest plantation may be the most economic use for this class.

According to the McDonell Report,⁵ about 28 per cent of the total area of the districts is under Reserved Forest which is generally unavailable for agriculture, and only about 100,000 acres (40,468.60 hectares) or about four per cent of land are under paddy cultivation, most of which are in the northern valleys. The area under banana, pineapple and other horticultural crops was estimated to be about 30,000 acres (12,140.58 hectares) or about 1.2 per cent of the total area. Fruit and vegetables in kitchen gardens occupy about 0.7 per cent of the total area.

Most of the A and B class lands lie in Chengi, Myani and Kassalong valleys. Fragmented areas of class A land are found in the Manikchari

thana and Guimara union of Matiranga thana, and in narrow and scattered valleys to the west of Rangamati, south of Chandraghona, around Bandarban, and to the north of Alikadam. These findings led the Forestal⁶ Survey/Study to identify the three northern valleys as the areas with the highest potential for development.

The Three Northern Valleys

The three northern valleys of the rivers Chengi, Myani and Kassalong are bordered to the east and the west by their respective watersheds and the Kassalong Forest Reserve, to the north by the Bangladesh-India border and/or the Kassalong Forest Reserve and to the south by the high-water level of lake Kaptai.

Thus this block includes the catchment areas of the Chengi and Myani rivers; and the western part of the Baghaichari Thana in the Kassalong valley, covering the three Union Parishads (Councils) of Baghaichari, Khedemara and Rupakari. In the south the area includes the thana (Police Station) of Mahalchari and the mouza of Myanimukh. Physical boundaries coincide throughout with administrative ones.

Horticulture Development Board Settlements

There are Horticulture Development Board settlements and a nursery in the following mouzas :

- In the Bandarban area J.L. 337 Balaghata
- In the Lake Kaptai area J.L. 347 Barunchhari
- In the Lake Kaptai area J.L. 98 Kachukhali
- In the Lake Kaptai area J.L. 114 Balukhali

All components of these focal points are under the Horticulture Development Board. They are representative for a good many of other places in so far as they comprise **in nuce** most of the problems which the Horticulture Development Board is at present faced with.

It has become apparent that the Horticulture Development Board and the farmers are being increasingly concerned about the cropping at present being undertaken on the 5 acre (2.02 hectare) holdings which each farmer has on the Board's mouza settlements. These holdings were first established in 1969 and their number increased annually until 1972 in cooperation with the BADC. During the period 1973 to 1976 approval was not given for continued development. A new scheme started in 1976 with the requirement that each holding should plant the following crops over a 3-year period :

- pineapple 1.50 acres (0.61 hectare)
- cashew 1.00 acre (0.404686 hectare)
- seedless lemon 0.25 acre (0.10 hectare)
- guava 0.50 acre (0.20 hectare)
- jackfruit 1.00 acre (0.404686 hectare)
- banana 0.25 acre (0.10 hectare)
- miscellaneous fruit 0.50 acres (0.20 hectare)

Demography

Demographically little change is marked in the Chittagong Hill Tracts for the period from 1760 to the end of the 19th century. In 1760 the population was roughly estimated to be about 100,000. In the 1892 Census, the population was returned as 107,286. Immigration restrictions and high mortality account for this stationary position. The percentage of population growth was increasing from the beginning of the twentieth century. It is estimated that of the total population of the picturesque jungle-land 4,98,595 are tribals and the remaining are plainsmen. The tribal population is divided into as many as 13 tribes, of whom the numerically superior ones are Chakma, Marma and Tripura.

It is well known that corresponding to the geological division of the hills into terrains of sometimes steep-sided hillocks and broad river valleys the ethnic groups have chosen different habitats. The Chakmas,

Marmas and the Tripuras are valley-loving groups, while Khumi, Mro, Lushai, Bawm, Khyang, Pankhu, Tanchangya, Chaak, Murung and Riang are living on the ridges of the hills. Most of the tribal people migrated from areas now in Burma between the 15th and the mid-19th centuries.

In 1991 population was 967,420 and in 1981 it stood at 708,456, while the percentage of increase in the population in the area during the 10 years works out at 36.55.

Size, Density and Growth

The 1974 census estimates the population of the CHT at 508,000 which was only 0.67 per cent of the population of Bangladesh. The density of population within the districts (the then) was the highest in Ramgarh — at that time a sub-division (448.07 square kilometre i.e., 173 square mile) which comprises most of the Chengi and Myani valley. It is estimated that Chengi, Myani and Kassalong valleys supported about whole of the population of the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

The population enumerated in 1961 in the district was 385,000, implying a rate of growth of population of 2.2 per cent over the period 1961-74. The rate of growth of population in the CHT is lower than that of the rest of Bangladesh where the population has been growing at the rate of 2.6 per cent per annum during the same period.

The growth rate of population in the Chengi and Myani Valleys and Kassalong Rehabilitation Zone are exceptionally high compared with the district as a whole. In Khagrachari and Mahalchari thanas which form most of the Chengi valley, the annual average growth rate of population during 1961-74 was 3.29 per cent. Similarly in Baghaichari, Dighinala and Langadu thanas which are on the Myani and Kassalong valleys the rate of growth of population was 4.76 per cent during 1951-1961 and 2.61 per cent during 1961-74.

DENSITY OF POPULATION
Per square mile / Per square kilometre

	1951	1961	1974	1981	1991
Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT)	57	75	100	147	190
"	(22)	(29)	(39)	(54)	(74)
Bangladesh	761	922	1286	1567	1884
	(294)	(356)	(497)	(605)	(728)

Source : *Statistical Yearbook of Bangladesh, 1982.*
Preliminary Report Population Census 1991.

Age Composition and Life expectancy

An analysis of the age distribution of population indicates that the proportion of children (less than 15 years of age) is lower in the CHT compared to that of the rest of Bangladesh. The children formed about 42 per cent of the total population in the CHT whereas they were nearly 50 percent in the country as a whole. The proportion of elderly population (over 60) is, however, the same as the national average.

The age composition of the population suggests a low rate of natural increase in the CHT, because the higher the growth the larger is the proportion of younger population. This is so in spite of the fact that the ratio of women in the reproductive age groups (15 to 45) is larger in the CHT than in Bangladesh as a whole. This observation implies that the fertility of the women in the CHT is low.

Ethnic Features

The tribals are short in stature with a distinctive Burmese, Thai or Mongolian appearance. Chakmas are known as Thek to the Burmese and Tui-Thik to the Kukis. The Chakma tribesmen are scattered through the CHT, but a majority of them live in Rangamati district. In 1901 there were 44,329 Chakmas, but their number increased to 124,762 in 1951. Tangchangyas migrated from Arakan in 1881 during the period of Chief Dharam Baksh Khan and took up their abode on hill tops. The majority of the Moghs who prefer to call themselves Marma occupy Bandarban district. In 1901 the total strength of Marma was 31,900. In 1961 their

number rose to 65,880. Tripuras came from Tripura State of India and settled in the alluvial river valleys of the northern hill tracts. The Bawm, a chin group, left the Chin hills in upper Burma sometime in the year 1800. The Mro and Khumi, Chin groups too, had to leave their settlements on the Kolanda due to the Chin expansion in the early 19th century. The majority of them live still in northern Arakan. The Khyang came from the Chin Hills too. The Chhak migrated from upper Burma (Myanmar) and were settled by Arakanese kings in the areas of Akyab in the southern hill.

The Ethnic Groups

The different tribes belonging to the Kuki group appear to be earliest arrivals in the area now known as the Chittagong Hill Tracts. They yielded to and were driven to the north-east by the invasion of the Chakmas who had gained settlement in the southern portion of the district of Chittagong, but who, during the time of the Burmese wars, were ousted by the Marmas from Arakan and were forced to enter the Hill Tracts. They finally settled in the central and north-eastern portions of the Hill Tracts, while their former possessions were absorbed by the Marmas.

The tracts are at present inhabited by 13 tribes, each speaking its own distinct dialect. The three principal tribes are Chakmas, Marmas and Tripuras. In addition, there are Mros, the Kukis, the Khyangs and the Pankhos, all forming the Kuki group of the inhabitants of the tracts, and 6 other tribes.

Nothing could be further from the truth than to describe the inhabitants of the Chittagong Hill Tracts as 'primitives'. The very fact that most of them are Buddhists and have a family structure similar to the Hindus is enough to prove that they have been for long under the influence of advanced societies.

The Hill Tracts tribesmen are ethnically different from the settled populace in Bangladesh. They have closer links with Tribals of the vast region that extends from Tibet to Indo-China. They are short in stature, have black hair, prominent cheek-bones and narrow eyes, features that are generally known as typical of the 'Mongoloid type'.

**THE TRIBALS ARE DIVIDED INTO A NUMBER OF
DIFFERENT GROUPS OF VARYING
SIZE, ORIGIN, AS SHOWN BELOW**

Main Name	Alternative Names	Groups
1. Chakma	Thek, Tui-thek	Arakanese groups
2. Marma	Magh, Mogh, Maramgri,	Bhyya
3. Tripura	Tipra, Tip (p) era	Tripura groups
4. Tanchangya		
5. Riang		
6. Murong	Murang, Mrung	
7. Lushai		Kuki groups
8. Panku	Panko, Pakhin, Pankho	
9. Bon	Bonjugi, Bom, Bangogi, Banjogi	Mizo
10. Chak		
11. Khumia	Kumi	
12. M'ro	Mrung, Mru	
13. Kyang	Khayengs, Khanegas, Sho, Khuan	

The most important tribes are the Chakmas, the Marma (Moghs) and the Tripuras and they account for nine-tenths of the population.

The following two tables show first the total percentage of population of different tribes in the Chittagong Hill Tracts; and then the valley-wise breakdown of this population:

- Chakma	67.45%
- Tripuras	12.88%
- Mogh	7.78%
- Others	1.45%
- Bengalis	10.46%

Tribal population as percentage of total population :

- Chengi Valley	:	90.7%
- Myani Valley	:	94.3%
- Kassalong Valley	:	80.0%

**DISTRICTWISE POPULATION OF CHT FOR 1991
(UNADJUSTED)**

Zila		1991						
Sl. No.	Name	Household	Population			Size of HH	Literacy rate (All age)	Sex Ratio M:F
			Male	Female	Total			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.	Khagrachari	71,249	179,737	160,358	340,095	4.76	20.00	112.1
2.	Rangamati	78,008	217,383	180,330	397,713	5.06	28.72	120.5
3.	Bandarban	45,944	125,046	104,566	229,612	4.97	19.61	119.6

Source : *Population Census, July 1991, BBS.*

The Chakmas are a Mongoloid race, probably of Arakanese origin, though they have intermarried largely with the Bengalis. They are divided into three sub-tribes of Chakmas, Doingnak and Tungjainah.

The Marmas are, for the most part, descendants of the Arakanese. They were uprooted by the Burmese (who overran country in 1784) and were given shelter in the territory now constituting Bangladesh. They are divided into three sections. The Jhumia or cultivators of Jhums (tracts for slashing and burning cultivation), the Rohang or Arakan Marmas and the Burma or Rajbansi Marmas.

The Tripuras came from the Hill-Tripura which was their home. This tribe is divided into two classes, the Purana or Tripura proper and the Jamatiyas. The following sub-casts or sects are met within the

Among the smaller groups are the Banjogi, the Pankho and the Lushai who appear to be the descendants of the oldest inhabitants of the area.

**TRIBAL HOUSEHOLD AND POPULATION IN BANDARBAN,
KHAGRACHARI AND RANGAMATI ZILAS, 1991 AND 1981^a**

Zila	House hold					
	Census 1991			Census 1981		
	Total	Tribal	Non-Tribal	Total	Tribal	Non-tribal
Bandarban	45,944	21,517	24,427	31,055	15,981	15,074
Khagrachari	71,249	33,369	37,880	47,574	29,753	17,821
Rangamati	78,008	42,271	35,737	52,070	29,280	22,750
Total	195,201	97,157	98,044	130,699	75,014	55,685
	Population					
	Census 1991			Census 1981 ^b		
	Total	Tribal	Non-Tribal	Total	Tribal	Non-tribal
Bandarban	229,612	108,473	121,139	161,987	89,503	72,484
Khagrachari	340,095	164,799	175,295	265,590	172,880	92,710
Rangamati	397,713	225,323	172,390	280,879	177,075	103,804
Total	967,420	498,595	468,825	708,456	439,458	268,998

- a. Household and population figures of 1991 are provisional. These may slightly change when processing of all documents are completed.
- b. Statistical Pocket Book of Bangladesh 1989, BBS.

The Bawm and the Pankho claim to be of common origin sprung from two brothers, and in language, custom and habit, they exhibit great similarity. These tribes are undoubtedly off-shoots of the Lais who occupy the Chin Hills between the Tashon country in the north and Zau country in the south. The tribal influence of the Lais extends from the Burma (Myanmar) boundary on the east to the Lusahi country on the west. The Lais undoubtedly, in the old days, were inhabitants of Arakan. Another small group is the Khyang. Principally, they live on the spurs of the hill range which separate the Chittagong Hill Tracts from Arakan. They call themselves Sho and are closely allied to the Chins. They are extremely shy, preferring to remain in the most inaccessible places. The tribe has no sub-castes or sects.

The Mro (Mrug), another group, usually live on the tops of the hills where they often fortify their villages and are regarded as the true aboriginals of the District.

The Mrung and the Tripura seem to have the same origin, although they are now classified separately. The Tripuras migrated slowly from the Hill Tripura in the north. The Mrung, according to legend, were captured by an Arakanese king who brought them southward forcibly.

All these smaller groups have tended to intermingle, so that they cannot be classified properly as tribes but only as ethnolinguistic groups. On the other hand the Marmas, the Chakmas and the Tripuras are numerous enough and sufficiently organized to warrant being called tribes.

The word 'Kuki' is merely a generic term, coined by the plainsmen, in the remote past to designate all the inhabitants of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, other than those belonging to the Chakma, Marmas and Tripura groups.

The Chakma tribe has been affected by Bengali influence more than any other of the tribal groups. Like the Marmas, they tend to live in the valleys and plains.

From the very beginning, the so called Kuki tribes were a constant source of trouble to the newcomers. They raided them on occasions. Records show that the Mro indulged in head-hunting as late as the very end of the last century. The most recent of the peaceful arrivals in the area are the Bengalis who have settled into most of the market towns and large villages where they have built their homes and mosques. The immigrant settlers are mostly from Chittagong and Noakhali. In 1928 the arrivals from the plains formed only 4% of the total population.⁷ In 1974 their percentage had risen to 19%.⁸

The Tribals live in villages, very few of which have more than five hundred inhabitants. They have very fine houses which are made entirely of bamboo with a *manchan* (platform) floor raised some six feet above ground.

In front of the house is a verandah which is divided into two by a mat partition for the use of the males and females respectively. In the front of the verandah is a big open space or raised platforms, used for various household purposes. Small compartments may be erected on this for the storage of grain, cotton or household effects, but as a rule the grain is stored away from the house for safety in case of fire.

A rough step-ladder gives access to this outer space and forms the entrance of the houses. This space will generally be enclosed with a bamboo wall three to four feet high to prevent small children from falling over. The back verandah of the house is also used for storage purposes, while the front is used by the men to sit in and for the women to weave in.

Dress

The dress of the Tribals is basically similar and varies only slightly with the tribes. Chakma women wear a long skirt made of a rectangular piece of blue cloth with a red stripe, that they wrap around the body and tuck in at the waist. To this, they add a breast band and white turban. The men wear dhoti, coat and white turban.

The language of the Chakma and Tanchangya is an archaic dialect variant of Chittagong Bengali written in corrupt Burmese character. There are 28 religious books of the Chakma, all of which are in Pali. They are nominally Buddhists, adhere to the *Theraveda* form of Buddhism practiced in Arakan and other parts of Burma and have Hindu and Buddhist personal names. The Tripura are Hindus and speak a Tibeto-Burma language akin to Kachari, but without script. They exhibit some traits of Bengali Hindu religion, claim Hindu caste status and have personal names of Bengali Hindu origin. The Marma tribesmen are Buddhists, and use a Burmese dialect like the plainsmen of Arakan and are close to the Mizos who are not socially different from the Marma. Mogh is a dialect of the Arakanese written in Burmese character. The Riang and Murong in their religious and social life imitate the pattern set by the Tripuras. The rest of the tribes speak different Assam-Burma (Myanmar) tongues of their own.

The outsiders in this district speak Bengali and English. The search for identity, brought about by the modern times, has produced differentiation and estrangement between the tribes. For instance, the educated Tripura try to demarcate their cultural traits from the Chakmas and identify themselves with the greater Hindu culture which emanated from the Tripura state of India, since they believe their ancestors originated from that area. Again in certain M'ro villages, Buddhist shrines and limpo (pagan sacrificial posts) exist side by side; M'ro headmen, though Buddhists, are reluctant to talk about the function of the limpo. The Lushai and Panku who adopted Christianity as a result of Baptist Missionary activities changed radically in many aspects of culture.

**TOTAL POPULATION OF CHT
(AS PER 1981 CENSUS)**

Sl. No.	District	Total Population	Muslim	Hindu	Buddhist	Christian	Others
1.	Rangamati	280,879	86,260	14,255	175,131	4,528	705
2.	Khagrachari	265,590	80,351	46,808	136,968	637	826
3.	Bandarban	161,987	64,458	3,697	73,888	13,495	6,449
Total		708,456	231,069	64,760	385,987	18,660	7,980

Source : *Statistical Pocket Book of Bangladesh 1989, BBS.*

**NAMES AND POPULATION OF TRIBALS ESTIMATES
AS PER 1991 CENSUS**

Sl. No.	Name of Tribe	Bandarban	Rangamati	Khagrachari	Total
1.	Bawm	6,429	549	-	6,978
2.	Chak	1,681	319	-	2,000
3.	Chakima	4,163	157,385	77,869	239,417
4.	Khumi	1,150	91	-	1,241
5.	Khyang	1,425	525	-	1,950
6.	Lushai	226	436	-	662
7.	Marma	59,288	40,868	42,178	142,334
8.	Murong	21,963	38	40	22,041
9.	Pankho	99	3,128	-	3,227
10.	Tanchangya	5,493	13,718	-	19,211
11.	Tripura	8,187	5,865	47,077	61,129
12.	Mro	-	126	-	126
13.	Rakhain	-	70	-	70
14.	Shaotal	-	-	253	253
15.	Others	229	174	102	505
Total :		110,333	223,292	167,519	501,144

Source : *Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, (BBS),
Government of Bangladesh.*

OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF POPULATION 1981

District	Agriculture		Non-Agriculture		
	Cropping	Non-cropping	Manufacturing	Business	Others
Rangamati	50685	5939	5480	9326	35539
Khagrachari	58627	1424	841	5658	23969
Bandarban	40986	4615	847	3920	15776
Hill Tracts Region	150298	11978	7168	18904	75284
Bangladesh (in 000)	14012	460	1005	2622	5520
Hill Tracts Region as % of Bangladesh	1.07	2.60	0.71	0.72	1.36

Source : *Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS)*

TRIBAL CULTURE OF CHT

1. The Chakmas

Most of the Chakmas live in the Rangamati district. Flat-nosed Chakmas are comparatively fair in complexion. The short-statured Chakmas have Mongoloid features in their appearance. During the Mughal rule in India, the Chakmas used to be followers of the Muslims. Their chiefs used to adopt Muslim names like Belal Khan, Jabbar Khan, Jalal Khan, Sher Daulat Khan, Jan Baksh Khan and the like.

It was from the time of Rani Kalindi, wife of Raja Dharam Baksh, that the Chakmas became Buddhists as a whole. The Chakmas claim to be the descendants of Lord Buddha, whom they call 'Shak' (Shakyamuni).

The Chakmas are Buddhist. They hold religious rites for success in social life, getting well from illness, good crops, having children, salvation from sufferings in hell and the like. These special worships and rites include Chungulung, Chakrabujya, Thummington, Tangon-Utsarga, Dharmaka'am or Jadi, Hajar Bati, Hehiya, Nabannya, Vaadya, Thhanmana, Dhhanfong and Ganga Puja. The priest is called 'Rari' (Rawdi). Each worship is centred round one or more gods and

goddesses. Gods and goddesses include parameswar, parameswari, ganga, biatra, thhan, challowadey, bajampati, lakshmi, kali, bhhot, rakhawal, thammang, chekkong, magni, shiji, baradam, kalizandur, anesha, laujjya, thakur and hatya. The Chakmas have as many as 28 religious books. All the religious books are written in 'Pali' language. Rawdis or the Thakurs read out from these books during various worships. Most of the Religious books contain stories with a moral or advice. The Chakmas are divided into some 150 communities or sub-communities. These are mostly Patriarchal in nature, and are characterized by a strong fraternity. Intra-community marriage, however, is not permissible.

Chakmas live in an agrarian, self-reliant society. They do all their day to day work by themselves, from Agriculture to weaving clothes.

The comparatively educated Chakmas wear shorts, trousers, pajamas and the women wear sari, shalwar, kamiz. The illiterate women wear Pinons and use 'Khadi' for binding breasts. Young girls use 'Phool (flowered, designed) Khadi', while others use ordinary Khadi.

The Chakmas burn the bodies of their deads. A 'Sradha' (religious rite following cremation) is held after the expiry of the seventh day of death of a man or a woman.

Their staple foods include rice and alcohol. They make alcohol themselves by way of fermentation of rice. Apart from these, their delicacies include pork, poultry birds, fish and deer. Their 'puja' (Worship) is never complete without alcoholic drinks.

2. The Marmas

The Marmas sometime referred to as Moghs live mostly in and around Bandarban. Some of the Moghs also live in Cox's Bazar and in Khepupara of Patuakhali district where they are known as Rakhines.

The Moghs prefer to be called 'Marmas' because they believe there is no race called the Moghs They consider it a name given by the Bengalis.

The term 'Mogh' stands for the Arakanese pirates, who used to perpetrate oppression on the Bengalis at one time. The Marmas are fair-complexioned and their nose is slightly flat. They are medium-statured and have a lot of similarities with the Burmese. They also belong to the Mongoloid group. Their religion is Buddhism. Although the comparatively educated among them fully follow Buddhism, the illiterate section still practice Animism. Their religious book is called 'Khaduttiang' and their priests are called Rawdi'.

The Marmas are also divided into many communities, and intra-community marriage is prohibited. Women do most of the works, including agriculture, although their social system is Patriarchal. They weave clothes and make cigars, apart from agricultural activities. They produce enough clothes and cigars to export after meeting their own requirements. Both Marmas men and women like to be cleanly dressed. The women are comparatively more 'fashionable'. Both men and women wear 'lungis'. The women are known for their varieties of hair-do. Women also wear varieties of necklaces made of beads and shells. Marma women wear full-sleeve blouses which are called 'eniggyi'. The menfolk wear a turban called 'Goungboug'.

The Marmas are very much hospitable and helpful to others. In Bandarban, one can see water-filled pots on the Machang (platforms) along both sides of the road. The water is kept for the thirsty passersby.

They burn the bodies of their dead. Beating of drums and firing gunshots immediately after the death of a Marmas is a must. They think that such loud noise help drive away the evil gods and goddesses.

The Marmas are a amusement-loving race. They love to sing and dance. They dance and sing even during the burning of the body of their dead.

3. The Murong

The Murong's who came over from Arakan in Burma a few hundred years ago, concentrate in and around Bandarban district of CHT.

The Murongs practice Animism as religion. They call their Creator 'Turai'. They have two other gods, namely, Oreng and Sungtiang. These gods are worshipped at different times of the year, when pigs, poultry birds and pigeons are sacrificed in the name of the gods.

The Murongs do not have any religious book. Murongs believe that a 'Bull', which was sent by God Turai to carry the Religious book for the Murongs, had eaten up the book on the way. Eversince the Murongs hold a special festival called 'Nasyat Pa', in which a bull is ceremonially killed. The Murongs then boil the meat and eat. The tongue of the bull is considered to be very sacred, because it was with this tongue that the bull had eaten up the religious book, which was written on banana leaves. The Murongs also hold two more religious festivals, namely, 'Kumlang' and 'Champua'. Champua is observed through cutting of banana leaves in deep forest, because it was on the banana leaves that their religious book was inscribed. Songs and dance are an integral part of all Murong festivals.

The Murongs don't have any priesthood. The Murongs perform all worships and conduct marriage ceremonies themselves.

The Murongs depend on **Jhum** cultivation. Murong women are very hard working. They not only do the Jhum cultivations, but also help the menfolk in the gathering of fuel wood from the forests. Jhum harvests are enough for them to see the year through. The only thing the Murongs have to buy from outside is 'salt'. Since they do not have to worry much about a livelihood, they can afford to spend most of their time in frolicking and amusement. Hard working Murong men and women are usually healthy.

The Murongs dress scantily. The men wear 'Nengti' (loin clothes), while the women wear a one-piece cloth called 'Wanglai'. The Murongs keep the upper part of the body bare even during the chilly winter. Both men and women wear ornaments, mostly made of silver and various kinds of beads.

The staple food of the Murongs are rice and wine. They also eat dogs, tigers, pigs, goats, deer, cow, poultry birds etc. When a Murong

dies, the body is kept in the house for seven days before burning it by the river bank. During these seven days sessions of songs and dance are held continually. Nobody weeps or laments the death. This practice is known among the Murongs as 'Chehrang'. The Murongs have a verbal language but no alphabets.

The Murongs live on the tops of hills, in houses erected on 'machangs' platforms. They don't use any kind of beds or pillows. They are yet to come in touch with the modern way of life and wish to continue their primitive way of life.

4. The Tripura

The 'Tripura' or 'Tipra' live throughout the whole of the Chittagong Hill Tracts in a scattered manner. The name 'Tipra' originates from the words 'Top' (which in Sanskrit means 'river') and 'Pra' (which means the confluence). Together 'Topra' means the people who used to live in the confluence of rivers. The Tipras are Hindus by religion. But their way of life is different in many ways from that of the caste Hindus. These difference are marked in their Puja and other socio-religious festivals. Their worships include Tuibuk, Maa, Tuimaa, Mailung Maa, Hakama, Khulumoru, Burasha, Matai, Changramu, Kalaiya Garoya, Bishchini Shamunga, and the like.

Tuibuk Mass and Tuimaa relate to worship of goddess Ganges. Mailung Maa is the worship of the goddess of crops. Hakama is the worship of the goddess of forests. Burasha is the worship of the god of Jhum, and the like. It is a must to sacrifice pigs, buffaloes, poultry birds etc. during worship. Every Puja is conducted by an 'Ajai, or 'Achai'. Songs and dances are held centering every puja. 'Garoya' happens to be their most important puja worshipping of such gods and goddesses as Kartik, Ganesh, Mahadev, Gouri etc.. The Tipras 'Bishu' festival is known in the Indian State of Assam as 'Biha' festival. This festival continues from seven to twenty one days. 'Bishu' is the national festival of the Tipras.

The Tipras are divided into various communities (Dafas). As many as 36 such 'dafas' have been identified. Like in the case of caste Hindus,

intra-dafa marriage is not permissible. In the case of a marriage, the girl has to be found from a different 'dafa'.

The Tipras also belong to the 'Mongoloid' group and are medium-statured.

The Tipras have a treasure of various fairy tales, folk tales and 'palagans', such as Rauin, Bauni, Kochuk, Ha Sikam Tannai, Langiraja Na Au Bunnai, Sit Aang By mandar Kang Glang and Siai To Kutung etc. Each of the tales has a morale.

Like other tribals, the Tipras also believe that all the rivers, lakes and cannals were at one time human beings. It is for helping Mankind that they sacrificed their lives to become rivers, lakes, springs and canals.

Both Tipra men and women take part in Jhum cultivation. They cultivate 'Karpas' variety of cotton. They produce adequate cotton to meet their requirements as well as export the surplus. They don simple clothes, which they themselves produce. The men wear a turban called 'Khaban' and Dhuti. The women put on, like the Chakmas 'pinons', a dress called 'Ring-nai' and Khadi (for wearing around the breasts). Both men and women wear silver earrings. necklaces made of beads and shells are favourite to Tipra women.

The Tipras also like to build their houses at high places on the hills. These houses are called 'Nok', and are built on Machangs (platform).

The Tipras burn their dead. The body is removed from the house immediately after death. A chicken is killed and this, along with some rice, is kept beside the body. They believe that the soul of the dead will eat those. A 'Sradha' festival is held after the expiry of one month since the death of a Tipra. They have a verbal language called 'Hillami'(Kagbarak), but do not have any alphabet.

5. The Kuki

The Kukis live throughout the Chittagong Hill Tracts in a scattered manner. They concentrate in such areas of Bandarban district as Modhu,

Thhanchhi, and Roma. The Kukis have migrated from Tripura Hill Tracts, Assam and the Lushai Hills about two hundred years ago.

The Kukis believe that the name of their Creator is 'Pathian'. Everything has been created under His order. He stays in the sky. He happens to be the main god of the Kukis. They have many more gods and goddesses. They believe that all the stars, the sun and the moon, rivers, hills and mountains and trees are kept going by one or the other gods or goddesses. Otherwise, these would not have been going and alive. That is why they worship all these, considering them to be gods and goddesses. Thus, anthropologists believe, the Kukis are believers in Animism.

They have one or the other festival throughout the year. Their main puja is held in July in the name of Pathian — their Creator. It is called 'Cha Pui Chollai'. In this Puja, first of all a pig is sacrificed in the name of Pathian. On that day poultry birds are sacrificed and served as part of the festival menu in every Kuki household. Songs and dance are arranged at the place of the Puja (worship).

The Kukis also hold 'Arem' puja at the time of sowing seeds. This is held in April. On the day of the puja, a dog is scarified at the forest in the western side of every Kuki village. A pig is sacrificed in the forest in the north of the village. After this groups of youngmen visit these places — singing and dancing. After the singing and dancing everybody assembles at one place, where the meat of the dog and the pig is cooked. The cooked meat is sacrificed in the name of god Arem in the deep forests. The Kukis believe that god Arem is the protector of crops. Women are not allowed to take part in the puja.

Pigs, dogs, goats, poultry birds etc., are considered essential ingredients of every puja.

Marriage ceremonies and pujas are conducted by 'Thempus'. Thempus exert great influence on the Kuki society, because they are believed to have spiritual mastery.

Kukis are divided into ten communities and each community is named after its ancestors. Intra-community marriage is prohibited. Apart from Jhum crops, they eat the meat of the hunted animals like tiger, deer, elephant, cow, goat and poultry birds.

Both Kuki men and women wear long hairs and have a fascination for various types of hair-do. Both sexes wear silver earrings and iron armlets.

The Kukis make their own clothes and other essential things of day to day life. Men wear 'nengti' (loin cloth), while the Kuki women wear a slightly improved variety of clothes than the Murong women. They tie their bustline with Khadi.

They build their houses on top of hills and mountains. Some also build houses on trees.

The Kukis bury their dead. They build a hut on the grave of the dead. Boiled rice and pork is sacrificed in the name of god 'Khabhingri' in this hut. After three days of the death a ceremony is held beside the hut, in which a 'goyal' (a species of wild bull) is killed. Songs, dances and other sorts of amusement are arranged during this ceremony, because the Kukis believe that this would make the god Khabhingri happy, who in turn, would keep the soul of the dead happy.

Kukis have a language of their own, but no alphabet. Kukis neither try to learn others' language nor allow anybody to learn theirs.

6. The Lushai

Since they used to live in the Lushai hill area, they are called Lushais. They came over to the Chittagong Hill Tracts some one hundred and fifty years ago. They mostly concentrate in the Sajek Valley area, although they live in other places also.

The Lushai are fair-complexioned, flat-nosed and narrow-eyed. They are short statured. They belong to the Mongoloid group. They are believers in Animism, the educated ones among them are taking to Christianity.

The Lushais call their creator 'Pathian'. They believe that Pathian has created everything and that he is almighty, he does not harm anybody. It is the evil gods and goddesses that harm people. Among the evil gods and goddesses Ram Howai and Tui Howai are the chief ones. They move about on the land, and in the water, respectively. In order to remain free from the wrath of Ram Howai and Tui Howai, the Lushais regularly worship them. The Lushais worship the evil gods and goddesses with greater fervour than their Creator, because the latter does not harm anybody. Other gods and goddesses of the Lushais include Khoabang, Mitengatu and Shakhua.

Pujas are held at different times of the year. *Puja* and other religious festivals are conducted by Puithem. A Puithem is selected from among the honest men coming of good families.

Lushais, too, are divided into various sects and sub-sects, numbering about 150. Intra-sect marriage is prohibited.

The Lushais live in a patriarchal society. Sons inherit the properties of the father. But according to the laws of the Lushais, the youngest son inherits all the properties of the father, as result of which the elder brothers have to be dependent on the youngest brother. If there is no son, then in the case of death of a man, all properties are handed over to a close relative through a ceremony called 'Safum'.

'*Upa*' or the village chiefs exert a great deal of influence on the social life of the Lushai. They conduct the village litigations and get 'Salami' (honorarium) from both the complainant and the defendant.

The Lushais love to build their houses high on the hills. They build their houses on 'Machangs' (raised platforms). Lushai houses have a 'Sumahamun' or a verandah in the front, where family meetings are held. The house is divided into two parts. The master bedroom is called 'Kummoi'. The other part comprises the smaller bedroom called 'Kumai'. The heads of the hunted animals are hung in front of the houses.

The Lushais are hard-working people. Apart from 'Jhum' cultivation and weaving their clothes, they love to make handicrafts with bamboos and canes. They hate idleness and are a self-reliant race. They also have a treasure of fairy tales, folk tales and folk songs.

They neither burn, nor bury their dead. The body is removed out in the front yard of the house immediately after the death of a person. The body is then washed and clad in good clothings. Be it a man or woman, the dead person's clothings and ornaments must accompany the dead. 'Ra-aal' or the funeral ceremony is marked with sacrificing of dogs, pigs and goats. Songs and dance are an integral part of this ceremony. The ceremony is rounded off with a feast. The body of the dead is kept in a sitting position inside a bamboo cage. After the 'Ra-aal' ceremony the body is kept in between two thick timber, one of which is carved to make room for the body. The timbers are tied together and is kept along the wall of the room. A bamboo is tied to the body, one end of which is buried in the ground. The Lushais believe that this bamboo happens to be the link between the life Here and Hereafter. A fire is built beside the body, which keeps burning for a period of three months. After the expiry of one and half month 'Enlouk' or inspection ceremony is held, when the Lushais closely inspect the body. After three months, all bones are removed from the remains of a body. The bones are then buried and the two pieces of timbers are burnt.

The Lushais have a language of their own, known as 'Lushai' or 'Dolne'. Once they did not have any alphabet, but of late they have began to write using Roman alphabets.

7. The Khumia or Khumi

The Khumis concentrate around the four places, namely Modhu, Thhanchhi, Ruma and Lama of Bandarban district. Some of them also live in other parts of the CHT.

The Khumis used to live in Arakan before migrating to the CHT, along with other tribes like Murong, Senduz, Banjogi etc., by the end of the 17th century.

In Arakanese, 'Kha' means man and 'Mi' means 'good'; thus 'Khami' means good man. Their word 'Khami' is believed to have drawn its origin from this. The Khumis also believe in Animism. The name of their Creator is 'Puthian'. He has created the world. They have two more gods, namely, 'Nadag' and 'Bogely'. Nadag is the protector of the land, forests etc., while 'Bogely' is in charge of rivers, lakes, springs and such other water bodies. Puja of these gods are held at different times of the year by sacrificing dogs, pigs, poultry birds etc.

The Khumis have a very strong fraternity. They are trustworthy and sympathetic to each other. They are very careful about maintaining secrecy and speaking the truth. They vow by touching the heads of animals and their spears to keep away from bad deeds.

The Khumis are very much loyal to their chiefs called Rajas. They take oath of loyalty to their Chief in a very interesting manner. The village chief ties a goat by the neck and brings it to the fellow-villagers, who tie the hind legs of the goat and start pulling it in the opposite direction. Caught in this tug of war, the goat is weakened gradually, when, eventually, the village chief kills the goat with a sharp weapon. The villagers take oath of loyalty by touching the blood of the goat. They vow that if they break the oath of loyalty, a similar fate would befall them. The function is rounded off with feast, songs and dances.

The Khumis are also divided into many sects and intra-sect marriage is prohibited. They belong to a patriarchal society, where the eldest son inherits all the properties of the father.

They build their houses on tree-tops on top of the hills. Khumis build a bamboo wall around their village and no intruder can enter their village without their cooperation.

The Khumis burn their dead. The place where the body is burnt, is earmarked for building a small hut later on, in which the weapons used by the dead are kept. No dog is allowed near this hut, because the Khumis believe, the soul of the dead would be scared away by the barking of dogs.

The Khumi men wear 'nengti'(loin cloth) and the women wear 'Wanglai', like the Murong women. They also love silver ornaments and necklaces.

The Khumis, who love to live a primitive way of life, have a language of their own but no alphabet. They consider it a sin to learn others' languages.

8. The Bawm

The Bawm tribesmen live in the Ruma thana (former Upazila) under Bandarban district. Once they were believers in Animism, but now they have taken to Christianity. As a result, their way of life, dress and culture appear to have been greatly influenced by the Occident. The Bawms used to live in the Arakan region at one time. The Arakanese used to call them as 'Langi' or 'Lange'. The word Bawm is believed to have originated from 'Kem Jau' -- which means 'united nation'. As a result of turning to Christianity and spread of education the Bawm have become more literate. The Bawms cultivate orange, pineapple, banana and jackfruit in Ruma region of Bandarban. They sell these to earn a living. Accordingly to the 1981 Census the number of Bawms was 5,750.

9. The Khyang

The Khyang tribals live in and around Chandraghona of Rangamati district. As per the Census of 1989 the total Khyang population was 1,414. Most of them are Buddhists by religion. Some of them, however, have adopted Christianity recently.

During the first half of the 19th Century the Khyangs used to live along the Umatanong Hills of Arakan. The relatively good looking Khyangs used to be a nomadic people. They used to find fertile land. They have, of late, began to construct houses and live in those permanently.

The Khyangs dress somewhat like the Khumis. Their men wear lungi and shirts, while the women wear flower-designed lungi and blouse. They do not have any specific formality or rules regarding marriage. Their staple food is rice. There is no restriction or taboo about food items. Their main festival is called 'Henei' -- which is post-harvest festival.

Pregnant Khyang women are kept secluded in a room, where no male except the husband is allowed to enter. Women, however, are allowed entry. After delivery, the parents name their children.

The Khyangs cremate their dead; but if one dies of a serious disease, the body is buried.

10. The Chak

The Chaks usually live in Raikhali, Naikhangchari, Alikhong, Kayerjhiri, Kamichara and Korokkhyang areas of Bandarban district. As per the 1981 Census, the total number of Chaks was 1,438. The Chaks call themselves as 'Amok'. The Chaks are divided into two sects, namely Ando and Angrek. Birth, death and marriage in Chak community is extremely important. Intra-sect marriage is prohibited. The Chaks are Buddhists by religion.

The Chaks bury their dead and tribe-members are treated to rice after seven days of the death of a person. They also pray at the temple for the salvation of the soul of the dead.

11. The Riyang

The Riyangs once had a social structure of their own, which still prevails among the Riyangs of Indian state of Tripura. The Riyangs call their Chief as 'Roy' and 'Kachak'.

According to the 1981 Census, the total Riyang population was 1,801. Marriage takes place according to the choice of the guardians, as well, of the bride and bridegrooms. The Riyangs burn their dead, after bathing the body and clading beautiful dresses.

12. The Pankho

The Pankhos have come from the direction of the Lushai Hills or the Mizoram. According to the 1981 Census, their total population was 2,404.

The word 'Pankho' stands for 'shimul flower' and 'Khoa' means village.

The Bamboo dance and Flower dance of the Pankhos have earned them lavish praise from both within and outside the country. The Pankhos have now adopted Christianity as their religion.

13. The Tanchangyas

The Tanchangyas are the original sect of the Chakma., There are some similarities between the language of the Chakmas and the Tanchangyas. According to the 1981 Census the Tanchangyas numbered 17,738. Their women wear a dress called 'Kubei', while the men wear 'Sulum'. Their religion is Buddhism and conduct funeral rites of their dead as per the Buddhist practices.

Economy

The CHT has a predominantly agricultural economy. Its topography and climatic conditions only make it imperative that the people would have to fall back upon agriculture for their livelihood. Only a small percentage of the population is engaged in business, trade, professions and government services. Owing to the subsistence-economy, the tribal people, apart from cultivation, are involved in other productive activities to meet their basic needs of life other than those connected with food. CHT is presently a food deficit area.

Jhum Cultivation

Jhum is the name of the system of cultivation which is traditionally practised by the tribesmen of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. It is the typical

one of shifting cultivation (which is declining gradually, though the majority of the tribals is still involved in the practice of Jhum cultivation).

The essentials of Jhum Cultivation are the clearing and burning of surface vegetation before planting mixed crops of rice, millet, sesame, maize, vegetables and cotton. The mixed nature of cropping ensures a supply of food for most of the year. At the end of an annual cycle the land is left to revert to scrub and the cultivators move on.

For centuries Jhum Cultivation worked effectively. There was no serious deterioration of the soil and the plots lay fallow for at least seven years. This allowed regeneration of the soil and natural growth of the forest. Fallow periods are essential to jhuming, which is ecologically unharmed, but which also demands large areas per family as only part of the land is under cultivation at any one time. If either the population increases or the land decreases shifting cultivation is no longer viable.

Land suitable for intensive field cropping accounts for less than 5 per cent and is confined to the bottom of river valleys; about two-thirds of the land is of steep slope and considered suitable only for forests. Except for intensive crop farming in the alluvial plains, shifting cultivation is the most prevalent form of land utilization practised by the hill tribes and allowed on all land outside the areas declared as forest reserves. This system of shifting cultivation has been practised for centuries with little effect on soil fertility, but due to heavy population pressure in recent years in cycling of cultivation is shortened, causing imbalance in the system.

Plough Cultivation

From the last quarter of the 19th century plough cultivation began to penetrate as a new element into the style of agricultural production in the CHT, thereby creating a kind of dual economy — Jhum versus plough. Economically the tribals made a revolution when they first shifted from food gathering practices to cultivation. The introduction of the plough may be called their second revolution. The greatest impediments to the growth of the plough economy among the tribal communities were the marketing difficulties of the surplus agricultural

products. Jhum did not require any elaborate market, because it was fundamentally practised as subsistence level. Borrowing and bartering were the supporting pillars of the Jhum economy. But difficulties arose when the plough cultivation began to yield surplus agricultural products. They had no market mechanism to dispose of their produces profitably. Taking advantage of the situation the middlemen introduced the market mechanism along with plough cultivation in the CHT. The middlemen flourished on the trading of the surplus agricultural products of the tribal people. Consequent upon the availability of the surplus agricultural products *Hats* (weekly or bi-weekly rural markets) and *Bazars* i.e. markets began to spring up.

Land Tenure

The CHT has a quite different land tenure system from the rest of the country. Most of the land belongs to the government and its disposal used to be carried out by the Deputy Commissioner of the then CHT district. Under the regulation of 1900 which was amended in 1930, the control of the transfer of land lay in the hands of the Deputy Commissioner of CHT. The valley lands were available for distribution among the tribals and the settlers.

The tenants who are provided with the settlement right to land have permanent and heritable right in the land for which he pays rent unless there is a definite contract that one's right is not permanent or heritable.

According to decision taken by the government in July, 1989 to protect interests of the tribal people, settlement of land property in the areas of **Rangamati, Khagrachari and Bandarban districts has been barred without prior approval of the hill district council and one's landholding is not transferable to any person who is not a resident of the hills districts.**

The Kaptai Project

The land-man ratio underwent significant changes with the construction of the Karnafuli Reservoir for hydro-electric power generation, which after completion in 1962, submerged 40 per cent of the best agricultural land and displaced about 10,000 families.

Effects of the Dam

With the construction of the Kaptai Dam and creation of the Karnafuli reservoir in 1962, resource allocation problem became accentuated in the CHT. The direct and indirect impacts of this development have been felt in most parts of the CHT and in almost all sectors of the regional economy. The uprooted tribal masses were in need of resettlement. Consequently, competition for land became a most formidable problem. The decrease in the length of the cycle of shifting cultivation from 10 years to 3-4 years is the outcome of this competition.

The non-submerged hill and alluvial lands came under tremendous population pressure on account of the displacement by the reservoir of about 10,000 families having land rights in the reservoir bed and 8,000 landless Jhumia families. It is estimated that 40 per cent of the region's most productive land lie below the reservoir's full supply level.

The extent of non-submerged land of comparable quality available for allocation to these hapless tribal families was equivalent to less than one acre per family, while the average landholding of each of about 10,000 families having permanent rights to land in the reservoir bed comprised about 6 acres (2.43 hectares). In view of the shortage of suitable land, a portion of Kassalong Reserve Forest was allotted for rehabilitation of the displaced persons. The addition of these land raised the acreage availability per family to only 2 acres (0.81 hectare). The non-submerged land of good quality which were put under the rehabilitation scheme accounted for one-third of the areas formerly held by the families in the reservoir bed. As a result, it was not possible to allot lands of comparable quality to those families who had rights to land in the reservoir bed. By mid-1964, some 5,633 families were able to get an average area of approximately 3 acres (1.21 hectares) of land which equals about half the acreage held by the families earlier in the reservoir bed. About 4,500 families having productive lands in the reservoir bed could not be resettled with lands of comparable quality.

Industry

Most of the industries established in the Chittagong Hill Tracts are forestry resources-oriented. Karnafuli Paper and Karnafuli Rayon Mills

are two largest industrial units of the CHT. Located at Chandraghona the two industries employ about 6,000 people. Besides there are five medium-sized industries : a cigarette factory, a textile industry and a match factory at Aziznagar, a woodwork factory at Kaptai and a plywood factory at Shilchhari.

Several cottage industries have sprung up at Rangamati, Bandarban and Khagrachhari towns with the help of loans advanced under special schemes. Industrial estates are to be established to help grow more industries and create job opportunities in the area.

Development

The CHT Development Board (CHTDB) began to function from January, 1976 and the government under the leadership of Late President Ziaur Rahman, made it a point since then to involve the tribal leaders in the highest level of administration as Ministers and Advisers of the Government.

The face of the CHT began to change with the launching of massive development plans for development of roads, telecommunications, rural electrification, agriculture, construction of buildings, cottage industry, water supply, livestock, tourism and other sectors during the government of the Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman. A Radio Station has been set up at Rangamati. Many modern roads have been constructed connecting inaccessible places with the markets, important places and thana (former upazila) and district headquarters. The upgradation of three sub-divisions as districts and thanas has also helped accelerate the tempo of development in the area. Till 1979, CHT Development Board had completed 262 projects, while work on another 94 projects were under the process of implementation.

The CHT Development Board worked on a multi-sectoral 5 year (1979-1984) special programme for overall development of hilly areas and condition of the tribal people at a total cost of Tk. 263.13 crore (US \$ 172.90 million, of which an amount of Tk. 63.17 crore (US \$ 41.50 million) was allocated for agriculture, water supply and rural electrification, Tk. 40.41 crore (US \$ 26.60 million) for industry and power distribution; Tk. 144 crore (US \$ 94.60 million) for physical

infrastructures and Tk. 15.03 crore (US \$ 9.9 million) for socio-economic development. Four thousand tribal families are going to directly benefit from these programmes. Currently, phase-wise implementation of the programme is nearing its final stage.

The development programme envisages allotment of 6.25 acres (2.53 hectares) of land to each tribal family to undertake horticulture, rubber plantation and construction of houses. The rehabilitated families continue to receive technical and other forms of assistance.

Construction of 13 metalled roads with a total length of 795 kilometre (494 mile) was taken up in 1984-85 Fiscal Year at an estimated cost of Tk. 128.33 crore (US \$ 49.40 million). Under the Australian Grant the Chengi valley road has been constructed connecting Panchari, Khagrachari and Dighinala areas. UNICEF is looking after water supply to different settlements while the World Health Organisation (WHO) is involved in eradicating malaria.

Tremendous progress has been achieved in the Tele communications sector. The hill districts of Rangamati and Bandarban have been brought under Nationwide Direct Dialling (NWD) system at a cost of Tk. 172.20 crore (US \$ 66.30 million). Khagrachari has been under the STD system for quite sometime.

Modern medical facilities were unknown to the tribals even a few years ago. But now things have changed remarkably. The government has set up three modern hospitals at Rangamati, Khagrachari and Bandarban district headquarters. Besides, there is a good number of health complexes here and there. Allocation for health sector in the special 5-year plan is Tk. 4.53 crore (US \$ 1.70 million), of which Tk. 3.10 crore (US \$ 1.20 million) was spent for the construction of the hospitals.

Sixteen Upazilas have already been connected with National Grid supplying electricity to district and thana headquarters and important markets. This has ushered in a era of modernization in the whole region. Total allocation for this sector is Tk. 37.28 crore (US \$ 14.40 million).

Afforestation in 23,196 acres (9387.10 hectares) of land has been completed out of the target afforestation of 30,000 acres (12,140.58

hectares). Allocation for this sector is Tk. 27.92 crore (US \$ 10.80 million). Plantation of pulp wood has been completed over 6,318.31 acres (2,556.93 hectares) of land out of the target plantation of 9,993.01 acres (4,044.03 hectares) during the special 5-year plan period.

Work on 88 projects taken up in agriculture, livestock and fisheries have been executed at a cost of Tk. 7.2 crore (US \$ 2.80 million). Cotton cultivation had been undertaken in 650 acres (263.05 hectares) of land with an outlay of Tk. 60 lac (US \$ 0.23 million).

Education, Employment and Culture

Some positive steps have been taken by the government with a view to improving the situation in CHT. These steps include reservation of 1800 since mid 80s jobs for qualified tribal people; 10 per cent contracts of all construction works; fixed quota for tribal students in Engineering and Medical Colleges; Tribal Cultural Institute established in Rangamati; construction of hostels for tribal students at Rangamati, Bandarban and Khagrachhari and relaxation of qualification for appointment of tribals for various government jobs. In a meeting held on September 27, 1983, the Council Committee on CHT decided to encourage and ensure higher education among the tribals and reserve seats in different educational institutions. Twelve seats — four for each of the three districts of the Hill Tracts, have been reserved for the tribal students in the Medical Colleges; six seats — two for each district in the Engineering University and Colleges; six seats — two for each district in Agriculture University and colleges ; six seats — three for boys and three for girls in the Cadet Colleges; 30 seats — 10 for each district in Polytechnic institutes and 20 per cent seats in the Para-medical Institute at Rangamati for the tribal students. Besides about 200 financially handicapped students are provided with stipends or scholarships through the CHT Development Board every year.

Apart from enhancing grants to private educational institutions, 4 residential secondary schools and six primary schools have been set up for tribal students exclusively which involved an expenditure of Tk. 5.25 crore (US \$ 2.10 million). The Bangladesh government bears all expenses including that of food and accommodation of the students

of those residential schools. The CHTDB has, until 1990, given Tk. 52 lac (US \$ 0.21 million) as stipend to five thousand five hundred students of CHT region. The number of colleges in the region is now 7 against 1 in 1965. There are 12 government secondary schools in the CHT as against 1 in 1947 and 5 in 1976. Over 1000 primary schools are functioning in the three hill districts whereas in 1947 the number was only two. Exclusively for students of Mro tribe, two more residential schools have been established, one at Ruma and the other at Bandarban. UNICEF bears all expenses of the students of all four residential schools. Similarly, three primary schools in each thana would be given the same facilities by providing residential scholarship for backward and financially handicapped tribal students. There is a Vocational Training Institute at Rangamati.

Reservation of quota was also decided for government and other jobs. One to five per cent of all categories of posts, including Class I and Class II in government organizations on national basis have been reserved for the tribals. Industrial units in the area employing 500 or more persons would have minimum 30 per cent of all categories of jobs earmarked for tribals, 40 per cent of the employed persons would be recruited from among the tribals for the industrial units having 100 to 500 labour force and 50 per cent of the industrial units having labour force for 25 to 100. Overseas employment would be given to 5 to 10 skilled and unskilled tribals from each district of the CHT. It has been also decided to relax the educational qualification of the tribals for Class I and Class II jobs.

It may be noted at this juncture that educated and trained members of the ethnic groups of CHT are already manning high positions in civil administration and defence. Thus there are 2 Joint Secretaries, 2 Deputy Commissioners, and other high officials in various cadre of civil and defence service.

NOTES

1. *Statistical Pocket Book of Bangladesh*, 1991, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS).
2. CHT was a single district until early 1980's. It was after 1983 that CHT was divided into three districts, namely Bandarban, Khagrachari and Rangamati.
3. *Thana* (Police Station) is an administrative tier, just below District.
4. The soils of the Hill Tracts were surveyed during 1964-65 by the Forestal Forestry and Engineering International Ltd. under the Canadian Colombo Plan.
5. CHT Development Project : Annexes 1 to 8 'The Project : AGRAR-UND HYDROTECHNIC GMBH in Association with ULG CONSULTANTS LTD., HALCROW FOX AND ASSOCIATES' : LONDON, Dec., 1978 : p. 5, Annex 2.
6. *FORESTAL REPORT* : Vols. 2, 5 and 9.
7. *Chittagong Hill Tracts Manual with the Survey and Settlement Report, 1978*.
8. *Bangladesh Population Census Report, 1974*.

Chapter IV

THE REGULATION OF 1900 : ITS SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPACT

The British Raj had enacted various rules and regulations from time to time for the convenience of administration of the Chittagong Hill Tracts area. A Regulation was promulgated in May, 1900, comprising a package of rules for administration of the Hill Tracts. It aimed at protecting the rights and interests of the tribal people, their customs and practices; their local and racial peculiarities and prejudices and thus preserve their cultural identities. Under the Regulation the circle chiefs (called Rajas) were made responsible for collection of revenue and looking after the internal affairs of the villagers. Under it the tribes were veritably allowed limited self-rule, although ultimate authority rested with the Deputy Commissioner (the government official heading the district administration). The demarcation of boundaries was also undertaken in 1900.

Settlement History

The earliest people to move into the area seem to have been the Kuki groups (Viz. Lushai, Panku, Mro, Khyang, Khumia tribes). The second phase was opened by the movement of the Tripura groups (Viz. Morong, Tanchangya, Riang tribes); and the last mass migrations were made by the Arakanese groups (Viz. Marma and Chakma tribes). The

Bengali movement began in the late 17th Century. But their migration was always of a temporary nature and their number too small to form any significant social group among the family of tribes. The Bengali movement into the area gathered momentum from the beginning of the 19th Century, but it was drastically restricted after 1860, especially by the enactment of the Indian Limitation Act of 1877 (Regulation XV of 1877). The measures were taken on the basis of political considerations as the tribals disliked being dominated by the Bengalis who had moved into the area. The reason of their dislike was the fact that though small in number, the Bengalis were vigorous, active and socially assertive.

People's Relations with the Central Government

An interesting aspect of the tribal peoples' relations with the central authority was that they were seldom on good terms with the central government. They were prepared to give a nominal tribute to the government at the cost of being left undisturbed as regards internal affairs. Accordingly, all attempts at interference by the government were resisted.

They were rather content under Tripura or Arakanese rule as their administrators were more in accordance with tribal people's mode of life and customs. The Bengali rulers also attempted to keep them contented by allowing them to lead their tribal life undisturbed: But such was not the case under British rule. The East India Company attempted to increase revenue receipts from the area by introducing land-lordism and demanding a definite money rent from the tribal people.

The immediate cause for a revolt, however, was the increased movement into the Hill Tracts of the people from the plains. All the tribes united under the Chakma chief to oust the colonizers and to force the British government to withdraw from the Hill Tracts. The nature of their resistance may be understood from a petition of the colonizing Bengali jotedars and chowdhuries (relatively big land holders) and intermediate rent-receivers (26 June, 1778). Since the problem has a relevance with that of the present, the petition is produced here at length :

“Jan Baksh, Chief of the Chakma tribe and Ranu Khan, his Deputy dispatch warriors to seize and lay hold of our tenants and cultivators and exact from them tributes. They demand grain from them and threaten them in case of non-compliance with their demands. They will not permit the poor people to herd out their cattle for pasture into the grazing grounds. They have erected flag of independence on the lands adjacent to the sides of the mountains and will not permit the cultivators to bring lands under cultivation and force the cultivators to pay revenue to them

They will not permit us to procure either bamboos, grass, rattans, firewood or any other article from the hills, and if they ever give permission they exact a duty thereon

They make a practice of sending warriors who seize and confine our people and extort from them sums of money, and they have established a jurisdiction and inflict punishment in matters which are only cognizable by the Government. The warriors come from the hills with different arms into the newly cultivated lands, where they wound and even destroy entirely many of our people, and others again plunder their effects and property

They frocibly carry away the cattle of our cultivators from their houses into their own grazing grounds and Hills”.¹

The war against the Company was formally declared by Ranu Khan, the deputy of the chief, in early 1777. Rebellious relations with the Government continued until 1787, when a formal covenant was concluded with the Chakma Chief. It was laid down that the British Government would preserve tribal autonomy and migration from the plains would be restricted. But the covenant never worked well. The British Government took various measures to exploit the forest resources of the area. **Farmers, planters, timber-traders, honey and wax gatherers, retail traders, elephant Kheda-men (Trap Operators), revenue collectors were allowed to go into the hills freely and without control. Women were violated and men were forced to carry loads free of charge, people were kidnapped and**

turned into slaves, and forcible requisitioning seems to have been the order of the day.

The activities evoked hostilities from the tribal people who, being pushed back to the wall, took to similar violence and carried out frequent reprisal raids against the intruders. The most remarkable of such raids were the Kuki raids of 1859, 1866, 1888 and 1892. Several hundred British subjects and Europeans were killed in these raids. Other tribes also carried similar reprisal raids inflicting heavy casualties upon the British and their collaborators. A full military expedition had to be sent in 1871 to subdue the formidable rising of the Lushai tribes. In 1898, the British army was employed in an inch to inch combing operation of the whole region. By these operations all the tribal chiefs were brought to obedience. To keep them contented all chiefs and villages headmen were bestowed with many privileges including monthly allowances in cash.

Administrative Arrangements and Changes

Until 1860, Chittagong Hill Tracts was part of Chittagong District. To deal with tribal unrest and the resistance movement more effectively, the area was separated from Chittagong and constituted into a new district sometimes under a Superintendent, sometimes a Deputy Commissioner vested with absolute civil and military powers. Besides the presence of a regular army, an armed police force with paramilitary powers was also raised to deal with local disturbance. The headquarters of the district was first established at Chandraghona, but in 1868 for logistic and strategic considerations the headquarters were moved to Rangamati. The primary aim of the new administration was professedly the suppression of tribal disturbances. After the door to door military operations in 1868 the district became quiet. The primary aim having been achieved, the government now turned to the improvement of internal administration and a system of administration to be fully operated by the local people was revised.

In 1900, under the Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation No. I, a set of rules were framed. Under these rules, the Hill Tracts was divided into

three taxation circles, and these again into 'mouzas' (a number of villages). The Bohmong, the Chakma and the Mong chiefs, being charged with the administration of the three circles, were made responsible for all affairs within their respective circles. The appointed mouza headman was made responsible for collection of all government dues and also for the preservation of peace in the village. The chiefs and headmen had the power of imposing fines, of enforcing compliance and of imprisonment. In all tribal matters the decisions of the headmen and chiefs were final.

The chiefs and headmen were provided with rent-free lands and given a percentage of the collected public revenue. This arrangement pacified the majority of tribal people, but ambiguity remained as regards the huge forest lands and some areas not covered by any circle. By an amendment of the above Regulation in 1928, the entire Hill Tracts were divided into the Reserved Forests, the circles of the three chiefs and the Myani Valley. The district was divided into three subdivisions corresponding to the three circles.

The most important factor behind the tribal people's dissatisfaction was the greater movement of non-tribal people into the area. The tribal chiefs demanded immediate measures to curb the process, particularly the immigration of the money-lenders, traders and commercial farmers. To stop further immigration the Regulation of 1900 provided that "no person other than a Chakma, or a member of any hill tribe indigenous to the Chittagong Hill Tracts, or the State of Tripura shall enter or reside within the Chittagong Hill Tracts unless he is in possession of a permit granted by the Deputy Commissioner at his discretion". The strict conditions which were laid down made the attainment of such a permit impossible for all. In 1930, the rule was amended and entry into the Hill Tracts was made easier. In 1964 the restriction was entirely abolished and the area thrown open to all. The resulting effects were disaffection again among tribal people. Even today the tribal people's common complaint is that they are being exploited by the more advanced people coming from the non-tribal areas.

Land Revenue Administration

Under the Mughal revenue system Chittagong Hill Tracts was placed under chiefs, the Chakma chief and the Bohmong chief. These two chiefs were recognised by the Mughal rulers as local collectors of revenue. Revenue was paid annually in cash and kind (i.e. cotton, which was then the principal cash crop). The East India Company abolished the system of the payment of revenue in kind and it was commuted to a cash of Rs. 3,741.

After the Burmese occupation of the Arakan Kingdom in 1782, a batch of the Arakanese Marma families headed by Machai migrated to Chittagong and settled to the north of the Karnafuli river. The East India Company recognised Machai as their chief. Originally the three chiefs collected revenue from farmers of their own clan only, irrespective of the places where they might reside. Gradually, however, as their powers increased, they collected revenue from other tribes living under their jurisdiction. Frequent disputes arose concerning the extent of jurisdiction of the chiefs. To check tribal warfare the government defined boundaries of each chief in 1884. These were the Chakma Revenue circles, measuring 1658 square miles (4294.20 square kilometres) (excluding government Reserve Forests of 763 square miles [1976.16 square kilometres]) in Rangamati zone, the Bohmong Revenue Circles measuring 1444 square miles (3739.94 square kilometres) (excluding Government Reserved Forests of 620 square miles [1605.79 square kilometres]) in Bandarban zone, and the Mong Revenue Circle measuring 653 square miles (1691.26 square kilometres) in Ramgarh zone.

The revenue income of these chiefs was a house tax, in varying amounts, was levied only on the head of family who practised cultivation in the hills.

The agents for collecting the tax among Chakmas and other clans, were headmen called **ahun** (Dewan). The dewan was entitled to a fixed proportion of the tax he collected, and retained it and paid the remainder to the chief together with a yearly offering of first-fruits. He was entitled to a free labour from the head of every family in his jurisdiction, and to every stable animal killed in the chase.

Among the Marma, the collecting agent was the **roaja** or village head and in some cases, but not always, he received from the chief a percentage on the yearly revenue collections. In addition to the payment of capitation tax, each adult was liable to work for the chief for three days every year without pay, and an offering of the first-fruits and of the first crops of rice and cotton was made to the chief by each cultivator.

There was no uniform rate for this capitation tax; it depended entirely on the discretion of the chief. The courts recognized the sum of Rs. 4 as legal tender in full payment for one year's jhum tax in one family. In 1874, the Government decided that the jhum tax of Rs. 4 per family should be taken as the basis of assessment; of this amount Rs. 1 was to be assigned to the headman and Rs. 2 to the Revenue Circle, the remaining one Rupee to be paid by the Chief as Government revenue.

Unlike other Bengal districts where land was made the absolute property of zamindars the Government was the proprietor of land in the Hill Tracts, with the exception of four grants made before 1884. In these lands, grants consisting of 3734 acres (1511.10 hectares) of land the rights in the soil had been sold by the government. Otherwise no person had any right in the land and, with few exceptions, there were no persons paying rent to the Government who could claim to be tenure holders in the sense in which the word was used in other districts. The Revenue Circles Chiefs, however, tried to establish themselves as proprietors of the soil on the grounds that they were hereditary collectors of revenue from time immemorial and that they enjoyed some privileges which pertain to ownership of the soils. But the Government never recognized such rights of the chiefs. In grants of land previous to 1892, tenants were given leases in which certain rights were conceded by the Government. In the same way, from 1921, leases were given with definite rights set out in them. But between 1892 and 1920, which was the period within which the vast majority of grants were made, the tenants received no leases, merely **amalnama**, which amounted to little more than permission to cultivate land within certain areas, subject to provisions regarding payment of rent.

Since 1921 all **amalnamas** for plough cultivation gave tenants permanent and heritable rights in the soil. Normally no rent was charged

for the first three years of the reclamation of land. The rate of rent per acre of plough land was Rs. 3, 2 and 1 for the first, second and third class of land respectively. The rate of rent was purposefully kept low, so as to offer every encouragement to the people to take up plough cultivation.

In 1875 the revenue that came from plough-cultivated land was only a few hundred rupees. In 1906 it rose to Rs. 30,000 and acreage was 20,000. The Jhumias took to plough cultivation on a large scale after 1947.

Economic Conditions

As late as 1760 the tribal people were living in the pre-market age; there was no market place, no roads and hardly any currency.² The early nineteenth century brought about changes. Large scale contacts were for the first time established between the tribal and the plains people. Immigration from the plains was encouraged in order to introduce the elements of change in the economic outlook of the tribal people. Its result was the domination of the tribal economy by the plains people.

W.W. Hunter, in his **Statistical Accounts of Bengal** (1876) has described the material condition of the people of the Hill Tracts in the following words : “With the exception of the Chiefs and a few headmen, the people are generally poor. They cultivate their patches of jungle until the soil within easy reach of their village is exhausted and then they move to a fresh spot. In the case of a bad harvest they borrow from Bengali traders and money-lenders, trusting to good crops in the future to enable them to repay the loan. Repayment is also made by supplying boats, timber or bamboos”.

The Chakma elite, a nearly hundred years ago, brought Bengali cultivators as sharecroppers to plough and grow paddy on the flat lands. Later, plough cultivation was taken up by the Chakmas themselves, and also by Marmas, Tripuras and Tanchangyas. Most of the Bengali features of plough cultivation have been taken over by the tribal people and the same cropping cycle is followed as in the Chittagong plain.

The spread of plough cultivation resulted in an influx of Bengali plainsmen in the Hill Tracts. At the early stage they were merely sharecroppers, but later many were permitted by the district authorities to purchase land.

From the last quarter of the nineteenth century plough cultivation began to penetrate as a new element into the style of agricultural production, thereby creating a kind of dual economy — jhum versus plough. Economically the tribal people made a revolution when they first shifted from food gathering habits to jhum cultivation. The Jhumias who turned to plough economy definitely improved their condition.

The greatest impediments to the growth of the plough economy were the marketing difficulties of the surplus agricultural products. Jhum did not require any elaborate market, because it was fundamentally practised at subsistence level. Borrowing and bartering were the supporting pillars of jhum economy. But the difficulties arose when the plough cultivation began to produce surplus agricultural products. They had no market mechanism to dispose of these profitably. In recognition of these difficulties the Government tried to establish permanent hats and bazars and connect the Hill Tracts of Chittagong with good road systems. The restrictions on the plains people to visit the Hill Tracts were also withdrawn.

The hats and bazars were established principally along the main rivers. The earliest were Chandraghona and Rangamati where the bazars were established in the early years of this century. In the southern part of the district there were practically no bazars and until the 1940s the people depended on the Chittagong bazars near the boundary, and on the activities of floating traders who often established small hats every year at important points on the rivers.

The hats and bazars established on government initiative were all monopolized by the traders coming from the plains. It was noticed by a survey committee in 1928 that 'all such trade as exists in the Hill Tracts is almost entirely in the hands of Bengalis from Chittagong; the sale of paddy and cotton, the marketing of forest produce, is controlled by

financiers of the plains. There are very few tribals with sufficient capital for trade of any kind and they have a natural prejudice against leaving their hills and busying themselves in the intricacies of commerce. They are naturally indolent to improvement and seem to have no desire to undertake any commercial operations, except the simplest. It follows that they are exploited'. This picture of the economic conditions of the area remained more or less unaltered even in the 1950s. The Census Report of 1951 reported thus : "The economic condition of this district is very unsatisfactory. Trade is entirely in the hands of the outsiders. There are 66 bazars in this district and only a few shops of them belong to men of the district. The itinerant traders also are practically all Bengalis from Chittagong district".

The Emergence of a New Political Consciousness

All the leading tribal intellectuals seem to be at one in their thinking that the tribal people are languishing and sinking fast. The reason for their declining condition, according to Chakma allegations, "is the use of the resources of the district for the benefit of the other areas". This kind of feeling is common among most of the tribal people³ socially and politically this is very significant. The tribes are now protesting. Tribal differences are now subordinated to the greater struggle to achieve economic justice. The educated young have formed various societies to ventilate their grievances and to promote the transition of the tribal society from primitivism to modernity. They are trying to establish a greater culture by amalgamating all the individual tribal heritages. All these societies are trying to politicize the tribal people by recounting their heroic resistance to oppressors in the past.

Two of these groupings have become more well-known : the extremist **Shanti Bahini** guerilla movement of insurgents, said to number 500-700 active members, the Tribal Convention which in the long run hope to become a political party to give adequate voice to its tenets :

- a) The preservation of tribal integrity (Mongoloid outer appearance, culture, customs, religion etc.);

- b) Self administration of the Chittagong Hill Tracts in internal matters while remaining an integral part of Bangladesh (along the lines of an Indian State);
- c) Benefits from the area must accrue primarily to the “sons of the soil” (more jobs for tribals in industry, electrification of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, fair compensation for persons displaced by Lake Kaptai;
- d) Restitution to the tribals of all land that has been taken up by Bengalis after 1970; and
- e) Fair and equal treatment of all tribals by the administration, termination of all forms of harassment.⁴

The Regulation

With its publication in the Calcutta Gazette on May 17, 1900, the Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation, 1900 (1 of 1900) came into force. An evaluation of the Regulation points to the fact that the Regulation was not all-good so far as the tribal people were concerned. There were humiliating provisions, such as Rule 42, which made it compulsory for the tribals to provide labour when requisitioned by Deputy Commissioner, other gazetted officers, chiefs, headmen and any other officer authorised by the Deputy Commissioner.

Section 3 of the Regulation provides that the CHT shall be administered by rules framed by the Local Government (the Government of Bengal) under section 18 of the Regulation. Although the Regulation maintained the traditional institutions of the Circles Chief, Headmen and granted some special privileges to the tribals, all power, — executive, judiciary and financial — were vested in the Deputy Commissioner and the Commissioner of Chittagong Division. The power of the circle chiefs were limited to collection of taxes and dispensing traditional justice in tribal courts. The Regulation (Rule 34) substantially restricted possession of land by outsiders in the hill tracts but did not ban it totally, since an outsider could acquire land for plantation on commercial basis [Rules 34(b)], industrial purpose [Rule 34 (c)],

Residential purpose [Rule 34(d)] and Commercial purpose [Rule 34(e)]. Migration from outside was, however, checked because, under Rule 52, no non-hill man could enter or reside in the CHT without obtaining a permit from the Deputy Commissioner. Apart from that, the Deputy Commissioner could expel anybody out of the CHT if he or she was found to be undesirable (Rule 51).

The Rules under the Regulation of 1900 were amended a number of times by means of various acts, regulations and government notifications, mentionably in 1920, 1925, 1933 and 1935. The earlier provision of not allowing any non-hillman to enter or to reside in the CHT without a permit from the Deputy Commissioner, was repealed by the amendment of 1933. In 1920, by the amendment to the Regulation of 1900 the CHT was declared a 'backward Tract'. It gave the Governor-General-in-Council the responsibility of administering CHT as an excluded area.

Between the years 1900 and 1947 of the British Raj, the Regulation of 1900 was in vogue to provide for the administration of CHT in Bengal. Some considered this as the legal expression of the final destruction of self-government enjoyed by the tribals prior to this and replacement of colonial administration under a subtle guise of indigenous administration. To a large number of tribals, this meant a safeguard of their special rights, privileges and entity. Even today the Hill people constantly invoke the CHT Regulations as a source of rights and as a challenge to the legality of the presence of the Bengali settlers who are now in CHT. The Government, however, does not see much of a logic with this reliance on a "colonial" document and suggest, accurately, that British goals in protecting and isolating tribal peoples were strategic, not benevolent. The regulations reflected classic colonial strategies of 'indirect rule' and 'divide and conquer'. (For some important extracts of the 1900 Regulation, see Annexure I and II).

Bangladesh government representatives often suggest that the 1900 Regulations are no longer in force. But in 1989, when the government enacted legislation to establish the new Hill District Councils, there was also legislation to repeal the 1900 Regulations. In December 1990, the

Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission ⁵ was told that this legislation had not yet come into force because the government now states that the 1900 Regulations remains the legal source of authority for the Deputy Commissioner and the present court system in the CHT. Tribal leaders invoke the historic documents as part of their campaign to gain modern recognition of tribal rights.

The regulations of 1900 represent a particular historic compromise between rights of the tribal and outside political control. The British established the posts of Superintendent, now Deputy Commissioner, and recognized three tribal chiefs for what were called the Marma, Chakma and Bohmong circles. There are now three Deputy Commissioners, for, CHT were divided into three districts of Khagrachari, Rangamati and Bandarban in 1981 and 1983. The Deputy Commissioners are civil administrators, representing the Government. Bangladesh is a unitary state and government administration is quite centralized. In the CHT, the Deputy Commissioners are still District Magistrates, with jurisdiction in civil and criminal matters. This administrative and judicial role is particularly inappropriate on land matters, for the Deputy Commissioner has a basic responsibility for land records as well as judicial authority over land disputes.

The three chiefs, called Rajas, recognized by the British after 1860 had tax collecting responsibilities on behalf of the British colonial authorities. The Hill District Councils Legislation of 1989 recognizes these chiefs as judges and advisors on customary matters. The real significance of the 1900 regulations is in relation to land. The issues are both local people's control over land and the restrictions on non-tribals people settling in CHT.

The Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission in its report ⁶ notes the following regarding 'Retention of 1900 Regulations. The point of retaining the 1900 regulations and protecting them from future change is to challenge the presence of the settlers and to secure the tribal people's control over land. All parties knew that any arrangement has to have provisions on land.

A government argument used for a number of years, stressed constitutional right of citizens of Bangladesh to live anywhere in the country. Article 36 of the Constitution reads :

‘Subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the public interest, every citizen shall have the right to move freely throughout Bangladesh, to reside and settle in any place there in and to leave and re-enter Bangladesh’.

This, it was argued, made the restrictions on settlement in the CHT regulations of 1900 legally impossible.

But the government abandoned this rigid interpretation of Article 36, and began controlling arrival into the CHT by restricting land grants, an indirect way of limiting freedom of settlement. This was taken a step further in the 1989 laws, which gave the new Hill District Council a veto on transfers of land to new settlers. All sides agree on some extent of restrictions on land rights in the CHT. Restrictions could take the form of continuing the legal effect of parts of the 1900 regulations or could be accomplished in other ways.

But it must not be forgotten that the 1900 regulations have assumed an important role in the tribal people’s political statements.

The Jana Sanghati Samity (JSS) and the Shanti Bahini (SB) wanted “provincial autonomy”, a phrase they interpreted as meaning autonomy with a legislature. The model was tribal state like the states of Mizoram or Nagaland in India. It seems to be assumed by both sides that ‘provincial’ status would require a change in the Bangladesh Constitution, for Bangladesh is now described as a ‘unitary’ state. An alternative was ‘regional autonomy’. That phrase was understood to mean arrangements like that for Scotland in the United Kingdom that is, autonomy without a separate legislature. While regional autonomy was put forward by the JSS/SB in December, 1988, to ‘test’ the sincerity of the Government, Another alternative would be ‘administrative autonomy’, where a local government body would control certain

programmes and certain funds, but not have legislative powers. The campaign for provincial status was seen by government as challenging the established structure of Bangladesh as a unitary state with a single legislature. The country has five administrative divisions, but the basic structures are highly uniform and centralized.

As mentioned earlier, Bangladesh is predominantly homogenous in ethnic, linguistic and cultural terms. Ethnic minorities constitute less than 0.05 of its population. The fact of overwhelming homogeneity and historical developments have contributed to the unitary nature of the state organization.

This structure persists with the manifest consent and participation of the the people of Bangladesh. This has not, however, prevented the country from forging ahead with democratic and participative political and economic measures to accomodate the legitimate aspirations and demands of the ethnic minorities in the Chittagong Hill Tracts and elsewhere in Bangladesh.

The demand voiced by a small section of the leaders of a tribe in CHT for 'provincial' autonomy is not in consonance with the political and administrative reality brought forth and sustained by the willing consent of the people in democratic Bangladesh.

The government either argued or suggested in the negotiations that there was insufficient support in the country as a whole for constitutional amendments establishing "provincial" autonomy in the CHT. Some of the tribal people's leaders accepted this as a political reality.

ANNEXURE - I

RELEVANT EXTRACTS FROM THE CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS REGULATION

1900 (1 OF 1900)

The Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation, 1900 (1 of 1900) a regulation to declare the law applicable in and provide for the Administration of, the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bengal.

(Received the assent of the Governor-General on the 13th idem; and in the Calcutta Gazette on the 17th idem)

Whereas it is expedient to declare the law applicable in and provide for the administration of, the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bengal, it is hereby enacted as follows :

CHAPTER I - PRELIMINARY

1. Short title, extent and commencement :
 - a. This Regulation may be called the Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulations, 1900.
 - b. It extends to the Chittagong Hill Tracts
 - c. It shall come into force on such date as the Local Government may, by notification in the Calcutta Gazette, appoint.
2. Definition - In this Regulation :
 - a. The expression "Chittagong Hill Tracts" means the area known by that name as existing on the first day on January 1936; and
 - b. "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of the Chittagong Division.

CHAPTER II - LAWS

3. Chittagong Hill Tracts how to be administered-subject to the provisions of this Regulation, the administration of the CHT shall be carried on it accordance with the rules for the time being in force under section 18.

**CHAPTER - III - APPOINTMENT AND POWERS
OF CERTAIN OFFICERS**

5. Appointment of the Deputy Commissioner and subordinate officers - The Local Government may, by notification in the Calcutta Gazette :
 - a. Appoint any person to be the Deputy Commissioner of the Chittagong Hill Tracts; and
 - b. Appointment so many Deputy Magistrates and Deputy Collectors and other officers as it thinks fit to assist in the administration of the said Tracts.

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7. Chittagong Hill Tracts to be a district under the Deputy Commissioner. *The Chittagong Hill Tracts shall constitute a district for the purpose of criminal and civil jurisdiction and for revenue and general purposes, the Deputy Commissioner* shall be the District Magistrate and subject to any orders passed by the Local Government under section 5, the general administration of the said Tracts, in criminal civil, revenue and all other matters shall be vested in the Deputy Commissioner.*
 8. Chittagong Hill Tracts to be sessions division under the Commissioner :

1. The Chittagong Hill Tracts shall constitute a sessions division and the Commissioner shall be the Sessions Judge.
 2. As Sessions Judge the Commissioner may take cognizance of any offence as a court of original jurisdiction, without the accused being committed to him by the Magistrate for trial and when so taking cognizance, shall follow the procedure prescribed by the code of Criminal Procedure, 1898 (Act V of 1998), for the trial of warrant - cases by Magistrate.
9. **HIGH COURT** : The Local Government shall exercise the powers of High Court for the purpose of the Submission of sentences of death for confirmation under the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898 (Act. V of 1998) and the Commissioner shall exercise the powers of High Court for all other purpose of the said Code.
10. **POWER TO WITHDRAW CASES** : The Deputy Commissioner* may withdraw any criminal or civil cases pending before any officer or Court in Chittagong Hill Tracts and may either try it himself or refer it for trial to some other officer or court.

CHAPTER - IV - ARMS, AMMUNITION, DRUGS AND LIQUOR

11. Possession of firearms and ammunitions and manufacture of Gun powder -
- (1) The Deputy Commissioner may fix the number of firearms and the quantity and description of ammunition which may be possessed by the inhabitants of any village and may grant permission, either to such inhabitants collectively or to any of them individually, to possess such firearms and ammunition as he may think fit.
- — — —
- (3) Any permission granted under sub-section (1) to possess fire-arms and ammunition may be withdrawn by the Deputy

Commissioner \$ and thereupon all firearms and ammunitions referred to in such permission shall be delivered to the Deputy Commissioner or one of his subordinates.

- (4) The Deputy Commissioner \$ may grant permission to any person to manufacture gun powder and may withdraw such permission.
 - (5) Whoever, without the permission of the Deputy Commissioner \$ possesses or exports from the Chittagong Hill Tracts any firearms or ammunition or manufactures any gun powder shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years or with fine or with both.
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CHAPTER - V - MISCELLANEOUS

16. **POLICE** : The Chittagong Hill Tracts shall be deemed to be a general police district within the meaning of the Police Act, 1861 (V of 1861) and Bengal Act VII of 1869 (an Act to amend the constitution of the Police Force in Bengal), and the L.G. of Police, East Bengal shall exercise therein all the powers and authority conferred on an Inspector General of Police.

17. CONTROL AND REVISION

1. All officers in the Chittagong Hill Tracts shall be subordinate to the Deputy Commissioner,* who may revise any order made by any such officer including a Deputy Magistrate and Deputy Collector a Sub-Deputy Magistrate and Sub-Deputy Collector* under section 6.
2. The Commissioner may revise any order made under this Regulation by the Deputy Commissioner* or any other officer in the Chittagong Hill Tracts* except any order made in the matter of land Administration and land reforms.

3. The Local Government may revise any order made under this Regulation.

18. POWER TO MAKE RULES

1. The Local Government may make rules for carrying into effect the objects and purposes of this Regulation.
2. In particular and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, such rules may -
 - a. Provide for the administration of civil justice in the Chittagong Hill Tracts;
 - b. Prohibit, restrict or regulate the appearance of legal practitioners in cases arising in the said tracts;
 - c. Provide for the registration of documents in the said tracts;
 - d. Regulate or restrict the transfer of land in the said tracts;
 - e. Provide for the sub-division of the said Tracts into circles and those circles into mouzas; +
 - f. Provide for the collection of the rents and the administration of the revenue generally in the said circles and mouzas through the Chiefs and Headman;*
 - g. Define the powers and jurisdiction of the Chiefs and Headman and regulate the exercise by them of such powers and jurisdiction;
 - h. Regulate the appointment and dismissal of Headmen; *
 - i. Provide for the remuneration of Chiefs, Headman and village officers generally by the assignment of lands for the purpose of otherwise as may be thought desirable; *

- j. Prohibit, restrict or regulate the migration of cultivating ravats from one circle to another;
 - k. Regulate the acquisition by Government of land required for public purposes;
 - kk. Provide for compulsory vaccination in the said tracts;
 - i. Provide for the levy of taxes in the said tracts;
 - ii. Provide for the registration of persons who are habitual consumers of opium in the said Tracts; and
 - m. Regulate the procedure to be observed by officers acting under this Regulation or the rules for the time being in force thereunder;
 - dd. Provide for the control of money-lenders and the regulation and control of money-lending in the said Tracts.
- (3) All rules made by the Local Government under this Section shall be published in the Calcutta and on such publication, shall have effect as if enacted by this regulation.
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19. Bar jurisdiction of Civil and Criminal Courts-Except as provided in this Regulation or in any other enactment for the time being in force, a decision passed, act done or order made under this Regulation or the rules thereunder, shall not be called in question in any Civil or Criminal Court.
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ANNEXURE - II

**EXTRACT FROM RULES MADE UNDER SECTION 18-1900
REGULATORY FOR THE ADMINISTRATION
OF CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS (a)**

1. Administration of Civil Justice

The Administration of civil justice shall be conducted in the most simple and expeditious manner compatible with the equitable disposal of the matters or suits.

4. No court-fees shall be payable on a memorandum of appeal in case where a Chakma, Mogh or member of any tribe indigenous to the Hill Tracts is an appellant, nor shall such fee be payable by hillmen in the said tracts in revenue cases in respect of petitions for settlement or relinquishment of lands remission of rents, mutation, demarcation and sub-letting of lands.

A court-fee of two annas only shall be payable on all petitions relating to miscellaneous matters including petitions praying for time presented whether by hillmen or by non- hillmen in the said tracts.

11. Legal Practitioners and Agents-No legal practitioners shall be permitted to appear in any matter provided that with the consent of the Commissioner a pleader may appear in Session Cases and in appeals and revision cases before the Commissioner where the subject-matter of such appeals or cases is of the amount of or value of Rs. 2,000.00 or over and in all cases where the Chiefs are personally concerned, they are as far as possible to be personally dealt with. Agents are only to be allowed when the personal presence of the Chief is inconvenient or impracticable, and they must not be legal practitioners.

12. Regulation of Deeds-Deed of the following kinds shall be registered, provided that the property to which they relate is situated, or the work or act to which they relate is to be performed, within the chittagong Hill Tracts.

(a) Deeds of sale, gift, partition or mortgage of immovable properties.

(b) Leases of immovable property for any term exceeding one year, excluding Kabuliate executed by tenants in favour of Government.

17. No instrument relating to immovable property shall be accepted for registration unless it contain a description of such property sufficient to identify the same.

20. The function of the Registering Officer shall be performed by the Deputy Commissioner or Sub-Divisional Officer or by such other officer as the Local Government may appoint for the purpose.

24. Persons may be allowed to inspect the books in which deeds are copied, or to take a copy of a deed on payment in advance, of a fee of eight annas, besides any necessary charge for copying.

27. The deed, with the endorsement, shall than be copied without delay into a book previously paged and signed by the Registering Officer. The copy shall be attested by the Registering Officer and the original shall than be returned to the party entitled to receive it.

Provided that if the original of any deed remains unclaimed for two years following the close of the year in which it is registered, it may

be destroyed by the Registering Officer with the previous permission of the Deputy Commissioner, a not to this effect being made in the margin of the copy of the document concerned in the Registry book.

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34. The land : Transfers, Partitions and Sub-letting-(1) No settlement of government khas land shall be made in the district of Chittagong Hill Tracts except to the extent and in the manner specified below :

- (i) The quantity of cultivable or cultivated flat land to be settled for plough cultivation with a single family of hillmen or non-hillmen residents shall be such as added to the quantity of such land already in its possession does not exceed 5 acres. In addition to the flat land for plough cultivation, land for grove plantation not exceeding 5 acres may be settled with such family; but in a case where the performance of a lessee is found by the Deputy Commissioner to be highly satisfactory, a further quantity of land for grove plantation may be settled with such family so that the quantity of land so settled does not, when added to the quantity of land for grove plantation already in his possession, exceed 10 acres. Settlement of land for plough cultivation or grove plantation under this sub-clause shall be free salami.
- (ii) A lease for plough cultivation and for grove plantation under sub-clause (1) shall be granted by the Deputy Commissioner :

Provided that lease of land only for plough cultivation may be granted to a cultivating hillmen by the Sub-divisional Officer. At application of a hillmen for lease of plough land may be made to the headman who will forward it to the Subdivisional Officer with his recommendation.

- (iii) The rent for plough land leased out under sub-clause (1) shall be assessed at the usual rate of raiyati rent by the authority who grants the lease :

Provided that when any land, which has not been cultivated before, is so leased out, no rent shall be payable for the first three years of the lease.

- (iv) The grove land leased out under sub-clause (1) shall be rent-free for the first three years and shall be assessed to rent as third class land for the next three years followed by an assessment to be made by the Deputy Commissioner in accordance with the produce of the land.

Explanation - In this sub-rule, "grove land" means flat land and bumpy land and includes such foot-hill land as would not require terracing, full or modified, to be utilised solely for plantation of fruit trees and other trees.

- (i) Land for rubber plantation and other plantation on commercial basis may be settled with a person on long term lease basis by the Deputy Commissioner upto 25 acres and by the Commissioner upto 100 acres . Settlement of land exceeding 100 acres shall not be made without the prior sanction of the government.

Salami for settlement of land under this clause shall be charged at 100 percent, of market value, 10 percent of which shall be payable in the first year and the balance shall be payable at 5 percent in the 8th to 17th year and 10 percent in the 18th to 21st year.

Provided that in the case of hillmen and non-hillmen residents salami for lease upto 25 acres shall be charged at 50 percent of market value, 5 percent of which shall be payable in the first year and the balance shall be payable at 2 percent in the 8th to 17th year and 5 percent. in the 18th to 21st year.

- (i) Land upto 10 acres outside urban areas and upto 5 acres within urban areas may be settled by the Deputy Commissioner with a deserving industrialist on long term lease basis for establishment of industrial plants. Salami for such settlement shall be charged at 100 percent of market value and shall be payable at the time of settlement. In the case of lesses who are tribal people or non-hillmen residents the salami shall be charged at 50 percent of market value.
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- (i) Land for residential purposes may be settled by the Deputy Commissioner with deserving persons on long term lease basis. In urban areas, salami from hillmen and non-hillmen residents for such land shall be charged at 50 percent of market value and shall be payable at the time of settlement. In the case of a lease granted to any person other than hillmen or non-hillmen residents salami for such land shall be charged at 100 percent of market value. No salami shall however, be charged from hillmen and non-hillmen residents for settlement under this clause of land outside urban areas.
- (ii) Rent per acre of land settled under this clause shall be assessed at percent of market value.
- (iii) Land exceeding .30 acre in an urban area for residential purposes shall not be settled with any person without prior approval of the government.
- (e) The Deputy Commissioner may, in accordance with such plan as may be approved by the government, settle with a person land in an urban area for commercial purposes. The salami for such land shall be charged.
- (i) At 50 percent of market value in the case of hillmen and non-hillmen residents; and

- (ii) At 100 percent of market value in the case of others

Rent per acre of land settled under this clause shall be assessed at percent of market value.

- (2) (a) Sub-leases of whatever grade in existence on 3rd December 1920 and still in existence will be recognized as valid: provided that the lessee of every holding in which sub-leases were in existence on that date is required to submit to the Deputy Commissioner within three months of the date on which these rules come into force the name of every sub-tenant of whatever grade who then held land within his tenancy and the rent then payable in respect of it. Sub-leases not reported will be liable to be treated as unauthorised and dealt with under rule 34(5) below. No sub-tenant recognized under this rule shall be evicted except in accordance with rule 34 (7) below, nor shall his rent be enhanced except with permission of the Deputy Commissioner.
- (b) Whenever any recognised sub-lease terminates for whatever reasons, the immediate landlord of the sub-lessee shall not again sub-let the land without permission of the Deputy Commissioner and if the sub-lease had a tenant under him that tenant shall have the option of continuing on the terms on which he holds, or of taking over the entire sub-lease which has terminated at the rent formerly payable in respect of it.
- (3) As from 3rd December 1920 no lessee is allowed to sublet the whole or any part of his land except with the sanction of the Deputy Commissioner, which shall be given only in cases of temporary incapacity, such as minority, illness or temporary absence. The rent of such sub-tenants duly authorised by the Deputy Commissioner shall be a money rent and shall not exceed by more than 50 percent, the rent paid by the lessee to government

for the area sublet. In no case shall the sub-lessee be entitled to sublet. So called labourers, who are remunerated by a share of the produce, shall be treated as sub-tenants and if they are recognized by the Deputy Commissioner their rents shall be regulated by the principles stated above.

- (4) No Lessee or sub-lessee shall be allowed to transfer by sale, gift or mortgage the whole or any part of his holding without the previous sanction of the Deputy Commissioner, who may not sanction any mortgage to extend for a period not exceeding seven years and to provide for the extinction of the whole debt including principal and interest within that period subject to the condition that the mortgage will not, in any event, be extended beyond that period. Unauthorised transfers will, in no instance, be recognized unless the transferee has obtained a prescriptive right by 12 year's possession, the burden of proving which will lie on him.
- (4A) The power of the Deputy Commissioner, to sanction transfer under sub-rule (4) may be exercised by the Sub-Divisional officer within his jurisdiction only in cases where the transfer is proposed to be made to a cultivating hillmen who, together with his family, will not have more than 10 acres of land in the aggregate, including the land to be transferred.
- (5) In all cases of unauthorised lease or transfer the Deputy Commissioner shall resume the land sub-let or transfered and may either hold it khas or resettle it with the lessor or transfer, or with the lessee, or transferee, or with another hillmen raiyat according to circumstances.
- (5A) The powers of the Deputy Commissioner under sub-rule (5) may be exercised by the Sub-Divisional Officer within his jurisdiction:

Provided that he shall not resettle such land except to a cultivating hillmen who, together with his family, will not have more than 10 acres of land in the aggregate, including the land to be re-settled.

- (6) No partition of a holding shall be made without the consent of the Deputy Commissioner or the **Sub-Divisional officer**.
- (7) A sub-tenant recognized by the Deputy Commissioner is not liable to ejection except by his order or in cases where the areas of holding does not exceed 10 acres by the order of the Sub-divisional Officer.

A sub-tenant will ordinarily be ejected :

- (a) If he sub-lets or transfers any part of his holding or fails to show diligence in bringing or keeping the holding under cultivation;
 - (b) If he fails to pay an arrear of rent recorded or fixed by the Deputy Commissioner;
 - (c) If he uses the holding in any manner that renders it unfit for the purposes of the tenancy;
 - (d) If he enhances the rent of a recognized sub-tenant under him without permission of the Deputy Commissioner.
- (8) If in any case of unauthorised sub-letting between 3rd December 1920 and the date on which these rules come into force the Deputy Commissioner considers it inequitable to eject a tenant or sub-tenant, he may allow him to retain his tenancy for a limited period but not beyond the time fixed for the reassessment of the original holding and any tenancy so allowed to continue shall terminate on the death of the holder.
 - (9) The Deputy Commissioner in dealing with the recording of leases under this rule, shall have power to fix rents and to prescribe such other conditions for the holding of a sub-lease as seem to him fit.
 - (10) Notwithstanding anything contained in clause (b) of sub-rule (2) of rule 34 or in sub-rule (3) of that rule, the Deputy

Commissioner may, with the approval of the Commissioner, for special reasons to be recorded by the Deputy Commissioner in writing, sanction the lease or sub-lease either permanently or for a term of years of any land, whether held directly by Government or not, 60 any person of the cultivating class on such terms as he may think fit.

- (11) The rent of a sub-tenant of any grade cannot be enhanced except by the Deputy Commissioner or Sub-Divisional Officer. The rent of a such sub-tenant shall not be enhanced if his rent for the land held by him exceeds the rent paid by the landlord or if the rent of the landlord is also under enhancement, the rent settled as payable by the landlord by more that 50 percent. Except for special reasons to be recorded by the Deputy Commissioner or Sub-Divisional Officer in writing. The rent of such a sub-tenant may, subject to this condition, be enhanced by the Deputy Commissioner or Sub-Divisional Officer upto such limit as he considers fair and equitable on the application of the landlord, if the rent of the sub-tenant has not been enhanced during the ten years previous to the application.
- (12) Sub-tenants of whatever grade who have been, recognised by the Deputy Commissioner under any rule other than sub-rule (3) of rule 34 or under sub-rule (10) of that rule, when the lease has been sanctioned for a term of years, shall have, subject to the provisions of the rules regarding ejection and resumption, permanent and heritable rights in the land for which they pay rent.
- (13) A tenant directly under Government shall have permanent and heritable rights in the land for which he pays rent unless there is a definite contract that his right is not permanent or heritable, subject to the provisions contained in these rules for his lease, if any, regarding resumption :
- (a) Provided that he shall be liable to ejection
 - (i) If he fails to pay an arrear of rent recorded for fixed by the Deputy Commissioner, or

- (ii) If he uses the land in any manner which renders it unfit for the purpose of the tenancy, or
- (iii) If, in accordance with the terms of his lease, if any, he is liable to be ejected or the lease cancelled for any other reason :

Provided also that if in accordance with the terms of the latest lease or license under which the tenant was allowed to hold the land, all lands not kept under cultivation were liable to resumption, such lands shall be still so liable even though the period of such lease or license has expired and the tenant continues to hold the land under these rules and not under any lease.

- (13A) The power of the ejectment of a tenant or resumption of the land under sub-rule (13) may be exercised by the Sub-Divisional Officer within his jurisdiction in cases where the area of the holding does not exceed 10 acres.

Explanation : For the purpose of this rule, "Family" shall include father, mother, sons and daughters.

- (14) Nothing in these rules, or any grant, lease or contract under which land is held in the Hill-Tracts shall operate to increase the existing number of non-hillmen lessees in respect of any holding or to permit the inheritance of any Hill-Tracts land by non-residents of the district except with the express consent of the Deputy Commissioner who in giving his consent shall have regard to the principles of equity and as far as may be to the rights of plainmen which but for this rule would be operative. An appeal from such orders of the Deputy Commissioner shall lie to the Commissioner.
- 34A. The flow of any natural water-course cannot be stopped or diverted without the permission of the Deputy Commissioner.
- 34B. The Deputy Commissioner may prohibit jhuming or cultivation on or near the banks of any river, if in his opinion such jhuming

or cultivation is likely to cause silting in the river or flooding in lands down stream. Breach of this rule will be punishable by confiscation of the crops grown and by fine which may extend to Rs. 50.00.

- 34.C. Notwithstanding contained elsewhere in these rules in regard to the settlement of lands, the Board of Revenue may be general or special orders, authorise the Deputy Commissioner to settle any class of land upto any quantity for such purpose and subject to such terms and conditions, as may be specified in such orders either with hillmen or with non-hillmen.
35. **Circle Divisions** : The District of the CHTs comprises the reserved forests, the circle of the three Chiefs, viz the Chakmas Chief, the Bohmong Chief and Mogh Chief and the Maini Valley.
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37. The whole area of the district outside the forest reserves has been sub-divided into mouzas, the boundaries of which have been fixed by the Deputy Commissioner.
38. **Administration of the Circle and Mouzas** : The Circle Chiefs shall form an Advisory Council to the Deputy Commissioner and shall assist him with information and advise on all matters which concern the administration of their respective circles and shall exercise their authority as Chiefs in the prompt enforcement in the mouzas of their circles of all orders of the Deputy Commissioner. They shall visit all parts of their circles from time to time and by personal supervision shall ensure that the work of the mouza headmen is efficient, in the collection of revenue, in the preservation of the public peace and in good administration. They shall use their influence to spread education and to improve the health and material condition of the people resident in their circles. They shall at no time forcibly require “nazras” to be paid to them nor require the people to work without payment for their labour.

The mouza Headman shall collect punctually credit the account for the revenues due from their mouzas. They shall obey the orders of the Deputy Commissioner, the Sub-Divisional Officers and the Chiefs. They shall preserve peace and order within their mouzas, and shall give information to the Deputy Commissioner, of any changes in the position of villagers or the population or changes in the extent of cultivation within their mouzas.

Maini Valley : The Maini Valley shall be administered under special orders of the Governor issued from time to time.

- 38A. The District of the Chittagong Hill Tracts is divided into 3 sub-divisions, each of which is in charge of a sub-divisional Officer who is directly responsible to the Deputy Commissioner or the administration of his sub-division. The 3 sub-division are called the Rangamati (Or Sadar) sub-division, the Ramgarh Sub-Division and Bandarban Sub-division.

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40. Administrative powers of the Chiefs and Headmen save as otherwise provided in this rule the mauza headmen shall adjudicate on all disputes which may be brought to them by persons resident within their mauzas. They shall decide tribal cases in accordance with the social custom of the parties with powers of fine up to Rs. 25 of enforcing restitution and of detention until the orders of the Deputy Commissioner in the matter are received.

Save as otherwise provided in this rule the Chiefs shall adjudicate on all disputes in their khas mauzas as headmen and shall try such tribal cases as are referred to them from the decision of headmen or by the headmen themselves.

- 40A. The offences specified in sections 13 and 15 Chapter IV of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation, 1900, shall be offences for which a police officer may arrest without warrant and shall be deemed to be cognizable offences.

41. **Control and Regulation of Jhuming** : The Deputy Commissioner is empowered to control and regulate jhuming in the CHTs and to issued; and enforce such orders as he considers necessary for the same. He may for sufficient reasons declare any area to be closed to jhuming or restrict the migration of jhuming.
- 41A. The Headmen is responsible for the conservation of the resources of his mouza. For this purpose any headman may-
- a. Prohibit the removal of bamboos, timber and other forest produce by residents of his mouza other than for their domestic purposes or by non-residents of his mauza for any purposes;
 - b. Exclude any area or areas in his mouza from the jhuming area with a view to keeping such area or areas as mauza reserve of bamboos, timber and other forest produce;
 - c. Prevent newcomers from cutting jhums in his mouza if in his opinion their doing so is likely to result in a scarcity of jhum for his own tenants in future years; and
 - d. Prevent a person from grazing cattle in his mouza when such granting is harmful to his jhuming area.
42. (1) **Jhum Tax** : Jhum tax shall be paid to the mouza headmen at such rates as the Provincial Government may from time to time fix, by each jhuming family, consisting of the members of one household living in one mess, cultivating and sharing the produce of lone jhum and the headman after deducting his share shall pay the tax to the Chief.
- (2) The Chiefs shall declare what classes of persons are by custom exempt from jhum tax within their circles and shall submit for the approval of the Deputy Commissioner before 15th October every year a list of jhuming families temporarily or permanently exempted from payment of jhum tax.
- (3) Every jhuming family which lives in one mouza and jhums in another shall pay an additional jhum tax to the headmen of the

mouzas in which it jhums, at half rate if in the same circle and at the full rate if in another circle. Such families shall be called Parkulias.

- (4) Every headman shall prepare annually a jhum tauzi which shall contain the following information : the name of each family head and the number of persons in the family whether paying jhum tax, parkulia or exempt and the reasons for exemption; whether the family is old or new i.e. arrived within the previous five year.
 - (5) Jhum tauzis shall be sent to the Chiefs before 1st June and by the Chiefs to the Deputy Commissioner before 1st August. The Deputy Commissioner shall verify the accuracy of each tauzi once in every five years. The Chiefs shall be responsible that every headman keeps accurate records and accounts of jhum tax and grants printed receipts having counterfoils.
 - (6) Jhum tax is payable to the headman within the calendar year and shall become an arrear on 1st January of the subsequent year and interest at 6-1/4 percent per annum shall be chargeable on such arrears. The headman shall pay at least half the demand to the Chief on the Punyha day and the balance before 15th January, submitting at the same time an arrear list and counterfoils of receipts. The Chief shall submit the same and shall report any defaulting headman to the Deputy Commissioner by 31st January and after due enquiry the Deputy Commissioner may proceed to realise the arrears as a public demand.
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NOTES

1. Islam M.S. (ed.) : Chittagong District Records, 1760-1787, vol.1, Dec. no. 1-33.
2. Islam M.S. (ed.) : Chittagong District Records (1960-1787) vol. 1, p. 27.
3. Memorandum to Shaheed Ziaur Rahman, the then Deputy Chief Martial Law Administrator.
- 4.. **'Life is not ours'** : The Chittagong Hill Tracts "Commission", p. 10.
5. **Ibid.**
6. **'Life is not ours'** : Report by the Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission, May 1991 : p. 29-30.

Chapter V

INSURGENCY

At the inception of statehood Bangladesh, blessed with virtual demographic and cultural homogeneity seemed far from the threats of problems of ethnic differences; not to speak of an ethnic insurgency. But over the years the ethnic turmoil that originated in CHT has not only jeopardised nation-building process but also created sources of insecurity for Bangladesh with cross-border ramifications. At its birth, however, Bangladesh had already inherited an incipiently politicised ethnicity that had its immediate origin in the mid-sixties. In fact, by 1972, ethnicity in CHT, ostensibly under Chakma leadership, had become sufficiently politicised to create a periphery-challenging-centre like syndrome. The constitutional changes, administrative measures and steps for utilisation of CHT's natural resources by the Government of Pakistan created the background for such a politicisation of ethnicity.

Towards the final phase of the liberation war, the incipient politicisation of tribals received fresh impetus as some Bengali freedom fighters reportedly went on rampage throughout some areas apparently to avenge the anti-Bangladesh role of some of these people. It was also reported that some of the tribal collaborators of Pakistan army were tortured to death as they surrendered to Bangladeshi authorities. The tribals were further scared as, taking advantage of a chaotic situation in Chittagong, some Bengalis moved into the Feni valley in the north-west and Bandarban in the south.

Under such circumstances, during early 1972, a tribal delegation led by Charu Bikash Chakma, a leading Awami League leader from Rangamati, met the President, Prime Minister, Minister for Law and Parliamentary Affairs and pressed for a separate constitutional safeguard for the tribals. Nothing, however, came out of the efforts of this delegation as the Government of Bangladesh was busy in taking preliminary steps for drafting a constitution for Bangladesh. On 15 February 1972, another delegation led by M N Larma waited on the Prime Minister, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman with a charter of four-point demands, which were :

- a. Autonomy for the Chittagong Hill Tracts, and the establishment of a special legislative body;
- b. Retention of the Regulation of 1900 in the new constitution of Bangladesh;
- c. Continuation of the offices of the tribal chiefs; and
- d. A constitutional provision restricting the amendment of the Regulation of 1900 and imposing a ban on Bengali settlement in CHT.

But these demands were deemed potently disruptive and rejected by the Prime Minister, who on the contrary, argued in favour of subsuming such parochial ethnic aspirations under a broader nationalism to facilitate national integration. This rejection infuriated the tribal leaders; and during the debate on the draft constitution in the Constituent Assembly M. N. Larma (a member of the assembly) fumed, "I am a Chakma. A Marma can never be a Chakma, a Chakma can never be a Bengali I am a Chakma. I am not a Bengali. I am a citizen of Bangladesh- Bangladeshi. You are also Bangladeshi but your national identity is Bengali They [tribals] can never be Bengalis". Elsewhere he was more candid : "Our main worry is that our culture is threatened with extinction. But we want to live with our separate identity". Even the student community, specially the Chakma students, vowed to uphold their culture against any external onslaught. Against such a charged background, the passage of a bill in Parliament on 23 January 1974 declaring Bangladesh a uni-cultural and uni-lingual nation-state seemed to add fuel to fire.

Seeing the fiasco that attended constitutional attempts to get their voices heard and demands met, the tribal leaders had been, simultaneously preparing for political and even military mobilization to challenge the Government of Bangladesh. The result was the formation on 15 February 1972 of the **Parbatya Chattogram Jana Sanghati Samiti** (PCJSS) [The Chittagong Hill Tracts People's Solidarity Association] as a political front, with M.N Larma as the head. Other prominent tribal leaders including those from RCP (Rangamati Communist Party) also joined the body. On 7 January 1973, **Shanti Bahini** (SB), an armed wing was added to PCJSS.

The records relating to the beginnings of the insurgency is not clear; but it seems SB first began its armed insurgency some time in the beginning of 1975. SB ambushed a police patrol near Subalong, a place located 7.46 miles (12 kilometres) northeast of Rangamati town. Taking up of arms against state is a high crime under Section 121 of Bangladesh Penal Code. However, the Government of Bangladesh is not on record as having reacted seriously to this first incident of taking up arms by some tribals.

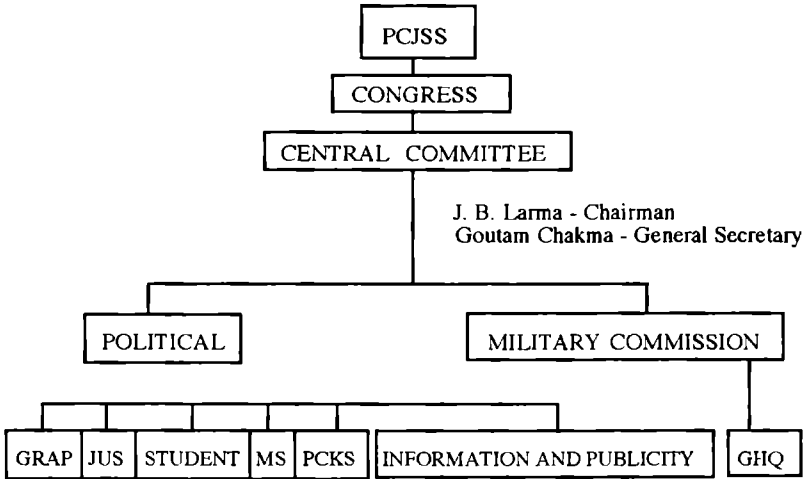
With the political change-over in mid-1975, M.N. Larma went underground and crossed over to India to lead the armed insurgency.

Ideology and Organisational Structure of the Insurgents

As is the case with any political mobilisation, cadres and most of the followers of PCJSS are drawn from the educated and enlightened segments of tribal society. As the Chakmas are a preponderant tribe with highest rate of literacy (about 59%), the leadership and higher echelons are dominated by them. The Larma brothers, M.N. Larma and J.B. Larma (Shantu), having their indoctrination in communism early in their political career, influenced PCJSS and SB with their ideological moorings. Political lessons in communism are imparted to the cadres during their training. Among the captured documents from the members of SB who were killed or captured (by voluntary surrender or otherwise) the common item is the **Red Book** of Mao Ze-dong.

A close perusal of SB documents and transcripts of interrogation of those members of SB (conducted by security forces) who surrendered to Bangladeshi authorities, reveal the following structure of the organisation of PCJSS :

ORGANISATION OF PCJSS



LEGEND

PCJSS	=	PARBATYA CHATTOGRAM JANA SANGHATI SAMITI
GRAP	=	GRAM PANCHAYET
JUS	=	JUBO SAMITI
MS	=	MAHILA SAMITI
PCKS	=	PARBATYA CHATTOGRAM KYATTANYA SAMITI
GHQ	=	GENERAL HEADQUARTERS

The insurgents have also divided CHT into six geographically marked operational and administrative zones nicknamed after some districts of the plains. These districts are divided into areas and the areas into sub-areas. The district-in-charge is called District Commander (DC) and that of the area is Assistant District Commander (ADC).

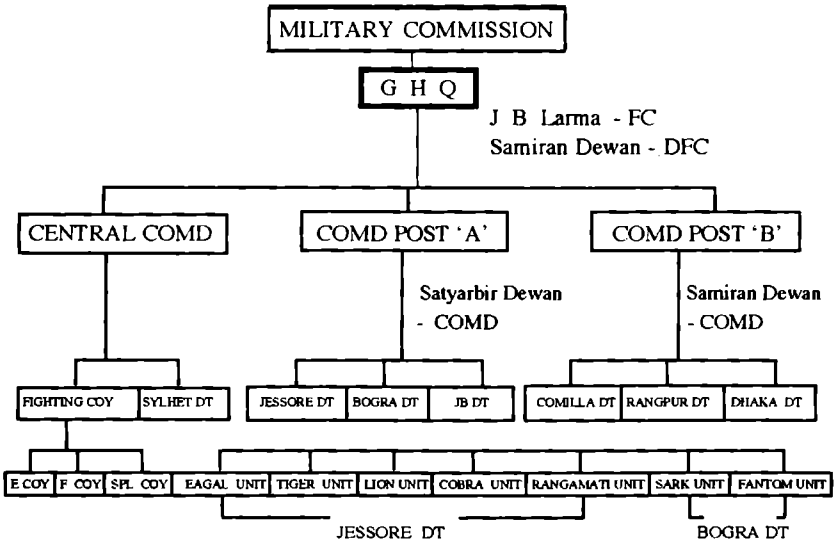
Like any other guerilla body PCJSS has a detailed political structure. The central decision-making organ is the **Party Congress** comprising all the district level leaders. This **Party Congress** sits every three years to elect a **Central Committee**. The **Central Committee** carries the mandate to implement resolutions that are passed through the triennial **Party Congress**.

Comprising military and political leaders, this **Central Committee** serves as the executive organ, planning, directing, supervising and executing all activities of insurgency. Working under the **Central Committee** are the political and military affairs branches. Headed by a member of the **Central Committee** the political affairs branch is entrusted with the task of publicity and control of some grass-root level organisations. Such grass-root level organisations include **Gram Panchayat (Village Council)**, **Jubo Samiti (Youth Association)** **Parbatya Chattogram Kyattanya Samiti (Chittagong Hill Tracts Woodcutters Association)**. The first organisation is responsible for local administration. The second one is a youth organisation that mobilises the common people for the movement and also for joining the armed cadre. The third one is a specialised body that supervises toll collection from the extraction of bamboo and timber. This is one of the major sources of finance for the insurgents. Besides these three, there is a specialised organisation exclusively for publicity both inside and outside the country.

The military wing of PCJSS is headed by the **Military Commission**, which also means the General Headquarters (GHQ). A field commander heads the GHQ. **Shanti Bahini (SB)** is the armed cadre of the party. In terms of operational responsibility SB is divided into two tiers — **central** and **regional**. The **Central** forces are composed of three fighting companies who have no definite area of

responsibility, but engages in action only when called upon by the **central committee**. The **regional** forces are more active and operate within a district under the district commanders. The following diagram shows the organisational structure of the military wing of PCJSS :

ORGANISATION OF INSURGENT ARMED CADRE



LEGEND

FC	=	FIELD COMMANDER
DFC	=	DEPUTY FIELD COMMANDER
COMD	=	COMMANDER/COMMAND
DT	=	DISTRICT
SPL	=	SPECIAL
JB	=	JESSORE BOGRA
COY	=	COMPANY

Manpower

As mentioned earlier the early recruits along with weapons came from the tribal collaborators of Pakistani forces. Over the years recruitment sources have been diversified and better training facilities arranged. Most of the SB recruits came from amongst refugees who had crossed over to India. During the peak of insurgency (1986-1989), the insurgents managed to muster about ten thousand men in their rank and file. Through factious infighting and desertion created by counter-insurgency measures of government the number of SB, however, has slimmed down over the years; and it is now reported that the total strength would be about 3,000. Out of these, approximately, 2000 belong to the armed cadre, though not all of them possess weapons.

Shanti Bahini Weapons

Weapons used by SB are of various types and origin. Initially, they had weapons of Chinese origin received from the Pakistan army during 1971. But since acquiring sanctuaries on the Indian soil they started acquiring Indian weapons. On 17 May 1991, Animesh Dewan (Captain Nandit) surrendered to the security forces. During the interrogation he revealed that the insurgents had received a consignment of three hundred G-3 rifle at a place called Pancharatan in south Tripura. The increased use of G-3 rifle by the insurgents and increased number of recovery of this kind of weapon from the insurgents thereafter by the security forces bear testimony to his statement. Around June 1989, the insurgents also received a sizeable quantity of explosives and accessories from the same source. The weapon types of insurgents are as follows :

- a. Rifles, sub-machine guns, light-machine guns of Chinese origin;
- b. Old model rifles and machine guns of British origin;
- c. Rifles, sub-machine carbines and light-machine guns of Indian origin;
- d. Rifles of German and Czechoslovak origin;

- e. Single and double barrel shot guns;
- j. Hand grenades;
- g. 2"/60 mm. mortars; and
- h. Explosives.

Leadership

From the very beginning the movement and insurgency have remained dominated by the Chakma tribe. As the most educated and, therefore, most politically conscious tribe, their leadership role in such politico-military mobilization is inevitable. The other two relatively less developed tribes-Tripura and Marma — have representation in PCJSS and participation in insurgency at a very minimum level. The remaining small and backward tribes have no role at all. Some members of these tribes are, however, inducted for providing manual labour.

The politico-military organisation of the insurgents has not remained a monolith. Since about the 1980s the leadership split on personal and ideological grounds. Such a split took place at the Party Congress held in October 1982. At that Congress, Priti Kumar Chakma, a leading member of the **Central Committee** put across the strategy for a nationalist movement for achieving the objective within a short period of time. Failing this, his alternative strategy was for accepting the Bangladeshi or Indian or Burmese flag. This strategy was countered by M.N. Larma, who argued for a protracted guerilla war along the Marxist - Leninist lines. Having failed to resolve the differences and seeing the preponderant strength of the supporters of M.N. Larma, Priti Kumar Chakma spilled and formed a parallel **Jana Sanghati Samiti (People's Solidarity Association)** with Bhabotosh Dewan as Chairman and himself as general secretary. The differences of opinion soon deteriorated into armed clashes between the two factions; and in the process on 10 November 1983, M.N. Larma was assassinated. A surprising upshot of this violent incident was the surrender of a large segment of the Priti faction on 29 June 1985. Priti Kumar Chakma, however, stayed back in India. Meanwhile, after the death of M.N. Larma, his brother J. B. Larma (Shantu Larma) took over the leadership

of PCJSS. It may be mentioned that back in 1976, J.B. Larma, then a field commander of the insurgents, was arrested by the security forces, but released in 1980 with the understanding that he would act as a conduit between the government and the insurgents for opening a dialogue. After his release, however, he backtracked; and following the assassination of President Ziaur Rahman in May 1981 went underground. After joining the insurgents in May 1981 he was reinstated in his previous position as the field commander.

On the other hand, the surrender of the Priti faction the subsequent events gradually eroded the support of the Tripura and Marma tribes for the Chakma insurgents. Jatindra Lal Tripura, a joint secretary of PCJSS, surrendered at the time when the Priti faction surrendered. Following his lead, a large number of insurgents belonging to his tribe either surrendered or quietly became inactive and settled down in normal life. Incidentally Jatindra Lal Tripura now edits the only Bengali weekly titled **Parbati**; published from Khagrachari.

Chabai Mogh, a prominent insurgent leader from the Marma tribe, was also apprehended along with J.B. Larma in 1976. But after release in 1980, he unlike J.B. Larma, went back to normal life. He was subsequently killed by the insurgents; and this was resented by the people of the Marma tribe. Following this, most of the insurgents belonging to this tribe left the movement and either surrendered to the security forces or went back to normal life quietly. Meanwhile, the Murongs, who were used as porters and a number of whose women were reported to have been violated by the insurgents, rose in revolt against the insurgents dominated by the disgruntled section of the Chakmas in 1984. These Murongs led the security forces to many insurgent hideouts and a large number of insurgents were either apprehended or killed in action. As a result of all these, Bandarban (southern portion of CHT), the habitation of the Marma and Murong tribes, is almost free from insurgent activities led and engineered by the alienated and foreign-linked section of disgruntled Chakmas.

Presently, therefore, ninety eight percent of the insurgents belong to a dissatisfied segment of the Chakma tribe; and the insurgency or the

political movement has turned into a movement of an externally inspired section of the Chakmas. It would therefore be erroneous to generalise this insurgency as tribal one as a whole.

Insurgent Front Organisations

Being declared illegal the insurgents cannot operate overtly. Thus, like any other underground guerilla organisation they have floated some front organisations to carry out propaganda and publicity activities. As of now at least three such organisations have been identified.

a. Parbatya Chattogram Juma (Chittagong Hill Tracts Juma) Rufugee Welfare Association

Headed by Upendra Lal Chakma, this publicity front is based in the Indian state of Tripura. Upendra Lal Chakma organises and attends various seminars in India and other countries to propagate the cause of PCJSS. He also conducts press conferences and arranges visits of people associated with human rights organisations and agencies through contacts abroad.

b. Pahari Chatra Parishad (Hill Students Council)

A section of Chakma students of university background founded this **Parishad (Council)** in May 1989. This **Parishad** occasionally organises rallies, seminars and press conferences through which they try to get across their views on CHT problems and also mount anti-government propaganda. Some of the members of this **Parishad** are reported to have links with some foreign missions in Dhaka. Reportedly they also frequently visit Tripura state in India.

c. Pahari Gano Parishad (Hill People's Council)

Manned mostly by a particular segment of Chakma tribal intellectuals and educated youths, this body works in liaison with the **Pahari Chatra Parishad**, and with the same objective. Subodh Bikash Chakma is Chairman, while Bijoy Ketan Chakma is General Secretary.

How do the Insurgents Operate ?

Aided by the favourable terrain of CHT, the insurgents follow the tactics of guerilla warfare. In general, however, their activities are of the following types :

- a. Ambush on security forces either on land and water.
- b. Harassing fire on security forces camps and villages of non-tribals.
- c. Killing of non-tribals as well as tribals not supporting them.
- d. Kidnapping of government officials and prominent citizens including tribals for ransom. On 19 January 1984, the insurgents kidnapped three foreigners working for Shell, which was engaged in exploration of oil in CHT. The employees — a New Zealander, a Dutch and an American were held for ransom reported to be as high as US \$ 200,000. It was reported that the company itself negotiated the release of its employees by paying this high amount in Indian currency. On 11 November 1991, three tribals belonging to the Tripura tribe were kidnapped for nonpayment of illegal levy and a letter was sent to their relatives asking for Taka 24,000.00 (US \$ 672.63 approximately) as ransom.
- e. Sabotage activities against power grid lines, bridges, culverts, road construction plants and forest resources extraction equipment.
- f. Firing on civil transports both on land and water.
- g. Attempt to create tribal exodus to India by fomenting communal riots.

Besides such insurgent activities the insurgents engage themselves in fund-raising activities by force. They have so far levied tolls and taxes on all items conceivable to raise fund to meet their expenditure. The following table shows the rate of illegal levy fixed by the insurgents.

RATE OF ILLEGAL LEVY FIXED BY THE INSURGENTS

Sl. No.	Items	Rate	
1.	Cow head (each)	Taka	25.00
2.	Buffalo head (each)	"	40.00
3.	Goat head (each)	"	10.00
4.	Rice Milling Factory (Annually)	"	500.00
5.	General Construction (on contract value)	"	5%
6.	Industrial Installations (on turnover)	"	3%
7.	Road Construction (on contract value)	"	10%
8.	Development Works at Upazila and Union Parishad (on project value)	"	10%
9.	Upland Settlement/Rubber Plantation Scheme (on project value)	"	15%
10.	Afforestation Projects of Forest Department (on project value)	"	15%
11.	Bamboo (per thousand)	"	150.00%
12.	Timber all types per cubic feet (based on quality and size)	"	10.00 to 25.00
13.	Fire Wood per maund	"	1.00
14.	Fire Wood per maund	"	2.50
15.	Brick (per number)	"	0.15

Source : *Interview with Tribal villagers.*

Insurgent Objectives

The earliest document conveying the political goal of the insurgents was the four-point charter of demands submitted to the Prime Minister of Bangladesh (Sheikh Mujibur Rahman) in 1972. As these demands were overlaid with a projected Chakma preponderance, the other twelve tribes did not feel enthusiastic. Thus to draw the support of all tribes a slogan was raised for **Jummaland** (i.e. for all the tribals). But in February 1988, a leaflet was circulated by the insurgents to highlight five-point demands that stressed "autonomy for the Chittagong Hill Tracts". Elaborated and explained, these demands reveal the following salient features :

- a. CHT to have provincial autonomy with a legislature having powers over all subjects excepting defence, currency and

foreign affairs. The name of the province was proposed to be **Jummland**. And, to accommodate this demand the Constitution of Bangladesh was required to be amended;

- b. No appointment of any non-tribal in any responsible post in this **Jummland**;
- c. No non-tribal settlement to be allowed in this province;
- d. In case of any emergency declared in the country, CHT to remain outside the application of relevant provisions;
- e. All non-tribals living in CHT with effect from 17 August 1947 to be evicted ;
- f. All tribals who left CHT since 17 August 1947 to be brought back;
- g. Withdrawal of all cases and allegations against all members of the **Shanti Bahini**;
- h. Allocation of special funds for the economic and infrastructural development of CHT;
- i. Establishment of a special bank for CHT;
- j. Reservation of special quota for tribals in defence forces and government services (such quotas are already in operation in educational institutions and some government jobs); and
- k. Withdrawal of all members of security forces from CHT.

Insurgency and Security of Bangladesh

The state of Bangladesh is threatened both internally and externally because of the persistence of insurgency caused by a disgruntled section of a single tribe in CHT. Intraborder security is being threatened in three different ways : political, economic and threat to life.

Political

The two demands of the insurgents for retention of Regulation of 1900 and provincial autonomy are threats to political and administrative integrity of Bangladesh. The motives for retention of the

Regulation are to flush out the non-tribals from CHT and to put a stop to any such future intrusion and to secure absolute control of the tribal people over this part of the land. Indeed, this is mainly a land question for tribals and non-tribals so far settled in the area are landless poor from some of the worst affected regions of Bangladesh. Again, as per Section 36 of the Constitution of the country, citizens have the right to live and settle anywhere in the country. Therefore, acceptance of the demand to close the doors of CHT to non-tribals would violate a constitutionally guaranteed human right. But the inexorable pressure of circumstances created by the increasing militancy of a section of a particular tribe has compelled the government to forego such a rigid interpretation and put restrictions on or even a stop to Bengali settlements. This was done by administrative order in 1985 and by regulation in 1989.

The term “provincial autonomy” as used by PCJSS and SB is not always clear in its implications. A careful reading of statements so far issued by them may lead one to interpret the term as meaning autonomy with a special legislative body. In 1986, Upendra Lal Chakma, then Adviser to President on Tribal Affairs (now in India) made a statement that gave a hint that this provincial autonomy would be on the model of the states of Mizoram and Nagaland in India. But unlike India, Bangladesh has a unitary structure; and accommodation of this demand would require a major change in the Bangladesh Constitution.

Besides being a challenge to the unitary state structure of Bangladesh, the demand for provincial autonomy is not accepted by the Government of Bangladesh on other grounds as well. As loyalty of a section of a dominant tribe among the tribal people is always a suspect as their cross-border and extraregional linkages are known, giving provincial autonomy to them is considered a highly risky policy option. Endowed with vast forest and other mineral resources CHT is geopolitically significant; and this is a factor that also militates against any decision agreeing to a so-called provincial status to a particular area within a unitary Bangladesh where no other province exists.

Economic

Economically, the ethnic turmoils in CHT pose a challenge to a resource poor Bangladesh. On the one hand, huge amount of money is

pumped into various special projects aiming at an accelerated development in the area; and on the other, counter-insurgency operations for over two decades by a large military establishment have placed a heavy strain on the scarce resources of the country that could have been used for more productive purposes. A cumulative result of all these is that one-tenth of Bangladesh sucks off a big chunk of national wealth in both ways; and creates a difference in **per capita** resource outlay from other regions of the country. Thus a vicious insurgency engineered, dominated and led by a small though resolute and foreign-linked and externality inspired section of a single tribe holds out grave threats to economic equity and justice in a land of the poor and deprived. Conceding to the unreasonable and unrealistic demands of a handful of armed insurgents is a luxury which poor and struggling Bangladesh cannot afford. Further, the political fallout of 'accommodating' a few militants, emboldened and empowered by external support and patronage will be disastrous in terms both of the reactions of the vast majority of the uninvolved tribals and the teeming million of non-tribal Bangladeshis.

Threat to Life

Normal life in CHT is disturbed, disrupted and even threatened by the guerilla operations of SB, the artificial creation of a small number of malcontents of a single tribe, malcontents supported by foreign links. There have also been reports of Bengali reprisals against the tribals as sequels to SB attacks and also alleged violation of human rights by the security forces. It is relevant to mention a few words about the Logang incident of April 10, 1992 in which 13 people were killed, 13 others injured and hundreds of temporary dwellings burnt as a result of inter-community clash and violence, provoked by the **Shanti Bahini**. The Judicial Enquiry Commission, instituted by the government on this incident, confirmed the official casualty figures as correct and authentic and noted that "number of deaths of tribals have been inflated and magnified in a section of international press". It concluded that report of "casualty in the incident" totalling over 1000 "is clearly an imaginary one and a concoction beyond proportion".

The Commission observed that the Logang incident was the result of deliberate plan and provocative action of the Shanti Bahini. It clearly stated that some 22 people, who were included in a list of 138 “dead” as prepared by Pahari Chatra Parishad and mentioned as such in their journal **Radder**, in fact appeared in person before the Commission. In addition the Commission had a sworn affidavit by tribal functionaries that the **Radder** list “was fictitious and baseless and that most the people listed in the **Radder** journal are in fact alive and living in villages nearby”. It is, therefore, very clear that Bangladesh is a victim of deliberate campaign of calumny and disinformation directed against it. The following table provides a quantitative analysis of casualties suffered as a result of SB operations. :

CASUALTY - CIVILIAN

Year	Killed		Injured		Kidnapped	
	Bangalee	Tribal	Bangalee	Tribal	Bangalee	Tribal
1980	87	08	75	05	57	07
1981	42	02	27	02	03	12
1982	16	07	20	-	51	18
1983	08	-	08	03	15	01
1984	108	07	45	08	18	27
1985	11	14	19	08	25	19
1986	248	33	118	16	33	04
1987	117	19	67	09	17	08
1988	128	16	65	14	131	27
1989	72	47	138	57	22	28
1990	47	20	38	12	18	22
1991 Upto December	68	15	36	18	21	32
Total	952	188	656	152	411	205

Source : *Official Records.*

Names of some important tribals and non-tribals killed by the insurgents are given in below :

Sl. No	Date	Area in CHT	Name
a.	August/September 1985	Panchari	Raj Kumar Upazila Chairman ✓
b.	8 November 1985	Laxmichari	Robibhusan Chakma Upazila Chairman ✓
c.	5 March 1986	Kawkhali	Atul Tangchangya alias Major Romel
d.	3 January 1987		Chabai Mogh Surrendered Insurgent
e.	29 July 1987	Naniarchar	Saliil Chandra Chakma ✓ Primary School Teacher
f.	1 February 1988	Jurachari	Sneha Kumar Chakma UP Chairman ✓
g.	10 November 1988	Barmachari	Kalendra Lal Chakma Ex member.
h.	8 December 1988	Pharua	Sunil Chakma, Primary
i.	23 December 1988	Belaichari	✓ School Teacher
j.	23 December 1988	Rangamati	Mr. Shanti Moy Dewan Upazila Chairman ✓
k.	13 January 1989	Rangamati	Nishidhon Chakma (alias Major Pior) Surrendered Insurgent
l.	4 May 1989	Guimara	Mongshazi Marma UP Chairman ✓
m.	23 May 1989	Langadu	Mr. Abdur Rashid Upazila Chairman ✓
n.	4 June 1989	Panchari	Nirmol Chandra Karbari
o.	4 June 1989	Rangamati	Mr. Abdur Rashid ✓ Editor, Parbattya Barta
p.	11 June 1989	Panchari	Mojendra Lal Chakma ✓ Primary School Teacher
q.	26 December 1989	Bandarban	Umes Chandra Tripura - Tribal Headman
r.	13 January 1990	Rangamati	Bankim Chandra Chakma - Tribal Headman
s.	1 February 1990	Laxmichari	Thwoun-idong Marma Acting Upazila Chairman ✓
t.	4 February 1990	Ghagra	Thaila Aung Marma UP Member ✓
u.	10 March 1990	Fatikchhari	Bhuban Mohan Chakma UP Chairman ✓
v.	25 March 1990	Ghagra	Indra Kumar Chakma UP Chairman ✓
v.	2 October 1990	Ghagra	Chunilal Chakma UP Chairman ✓

Source : Interviews with local communities and authorities.

Transborder Security

The transborder security dimension of ethnic conflicts engineered by a small group of disgruntled members of a tribe arises out of reported Indian involvement. The first reported involvement was during the Mujib Government (1972-75) when a joint Indo-Bangladesh operation against the insurgents was planned. But the plan could not be carried out because of a sudden political change in Bangladesh in mid-1975. Since then India gave active support to the insurgents allowing them to operate from bases well within its borders. At present there are more than 25 camps in Tripura and six to ten in Mizoram. Besides moral and material support from India, the SB insurgents also get tactical advice from relevant quarters in India. Even as late as December 1991 Upendra Lal Chakma (referred to above) was reported by the Indian press to have admitted that the leadership of SB was “now in the hands of Indian intelligence officials”. There have also been reports of SB raiding Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) camps along the border and deep into Bangladesh territory under cover provided by Indian Border Security Forces (BSF).

SOURCES

1. Official Records.
2. Press-clippings.
3. Syed Anwar Husain, "Ethnicity and Security of Bangladesh", paper presented at the seminar on South Asia's Security in the 1990s : Primacy of its Internal Dimension", organised by the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) during 5-7 January 1992.
4. Logang Disturbances Enquiry Commission, 1992, p. 24.

Chapter VI

GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH RESPONSES, 1972-1992

Attention has already been drawn to the fact that at independence Bangladesh inherited an incipient insurgency problem in CHT. For the sake of objectivity, however, it should be admitted that the problem almost burst upon the Government of Bangladesh at a time when it was preoccupied with the most pressing business of putting the house in order after a nine-month long sanguinary war of liberation. As this business proved difficult and time-consuming the Government of Bangladesh's response evolved slowly, and thus failed to keep pace with a rapidly unfolding insurgency. Nevertheless, the successive governments of Bangladesh perceived the problem in their own ways and sought solutions accordingly. In the process, either the policy of the previous regime continued or new dimensions were added to it. But, to date, the problem awaits complete resolution and has cost the Government of Bangladesh a great deal of its scarce resources.

Response of the Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Government (1972 - 1975)

It has already been mentioned that during 1972, the Government of Bangladesh had rejected the demand for autonomy, which quickly led to insurgency. The response of the Mujib Government was a mix of

political and military approaches. Politically there were two steps. First, the Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman journeyed to Rangamati during the election campaign of 1973 with the understanding that his presence and charismatic appeal would act as a damper on the embryonic insurgency activities. While addressing a huge gathering Sheikh Mujib categorically stated his government's intention to pay attention to the special needs of the tribals, but at the same time he declared that from that day they would be promoted to Bengalis. He did not explain what did he precisely mean by this declaration. He probably implied that the tribals would enjoy the same status as that of the Bengalis. But in reality, the declaration proved counter-productive as the tribals interpreted it as an invitation to surrender their distinctive identity. Consequently, tribal agitation assumed an unprecedented militancy, and soon insurgency began. The Government of Bangladesh therefore, decided to deploy security forces in aid of civil power in accordance with existing laws of the country. A joint Indo-Bangladesh operation against the insurgents was reported to have been planned, but could not be carried out because of assassination of Sheikh Mujib and the consequent change of government and the political scenario in mid-1975. After the political changeover in mid-1975 tribal insurgency became more organised and aggressive as India covertly started providing sanctuaries and material assistance to the insurgents.

Response of the Ziaur Rahman Government (1975 -1981)

During the period of Ziaur Rahman, the Government of Bangladesh appeared to regard the problems of CHT, at least initially, as principally of economic nature. It was widely held that retrieving the region from years of neglect and underdevelopment would be the best way to blunt the propaganda and activities of the insurgents. Lacking in basic infrastructure for any development, depending on primitive mode of cultivation, and with no organised market system the area was indeed a backward one by any description. But before embarking on massive socio-economic development the Government of Bangladesh did enlist expert opinion and assistance of such international development agencies as Forestal, Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA), Australian Development Assistance Bureau (ADAB); and

Asian Development Bank (ADB). From the studies carried out by these agencies between 1975 and 1977 (the report of Forestal was ready as it had been prepared in 1964) certain development goals were set, which included the following :

- a. Development of infrastructure;
- b. Development of small-scale processing units for adding value to agricultural and forest products;
- c. Development of improved marketing system;
- d. Establishment of village settlements that would allow reaching services and amenities at the lowest possible cost;
- e. Development of forest resources;
- f. Development of new tree-crops-particularly rubber, bamboo, fodder and fast growing timber crops;
- g. Development of livestock and fisheries on individual and community basis;
- h. Development of cottage industries based on local resources;
- i. Establishment and development of socio-cultural institutions to preserve and further ethnic culture and traditions of tribes;
- j. Ensuring a rate of carefully phased capital input for allowing maximum opportunities to the residents;
- k. Encouraging formation of internal capital and development of grass-root entrepreneurial skills;
- l. Emphasising labour intensive projects to ensure mass participation and also utilisation of traditional tribal skills;
- m. Emphasising development of human resources.
- n. Undertaking of agricultural research projects;
- o. Employment of extension workers;
- p. Setting up of effective mechanisms for monitoring and on-ground supervision of all such projects; and
- q. Literacy and Education Development.

The Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board (CHTDB) was set up with these goals in view in January 1976. Its main functions as defined in Ordinance no. LXXII of 1976 are :

1. To rehabilitate the landless **Jhumiya** families (tribal peasants) on a permanent basis;
2. To construct dams and other irrigational facilities in order to boost up production;
3. To construct roads, bridges and culverts for development of the communication system;
4. To provide starter funds for income generating activities of the people;
5. To establish rural health complexes and other social organisations for enhancement of welfare activities and at the same time setting up of vocational institutes for skill training and creation of job opportunities;
6. To provide assistance for revival of the small and cottage industries; and
7. To set up educational institutions, hostels and to provide scholarships for students to facilitate higher studies.

During 1979, a Multisectoral Development Programme was undertaken to boost socio-economic uplift in CHT. The overall aim of the programme was to create the necessary conditions for the longer term socio-economic development of the region. The original allocation of fund for the programme was Tk. 6,242.66 lac (US \$ 40.30 million approximately); but in 1992 the amount stood at Tk. 13,766.38 lac (US \$ 36.23 million approximately). The various components of the programme are :

- a. Upland settlement to settle 2000 **Jhumiya** families;
- b. Afforestation and settlement for settling 300 **Jhumiya** families through afforestation of 9,000 acres (3,642.17 hectares) of hill land;

- c. Road network for building the following four secondary roads :

Khagrachari	-	Panchari	:	26 km (16.16 mile)
Dighinala	-	Chotomerung	:	12 km. (7.46 mile)
Dighinala	-	Babuchara	:	14 km. (8.70 mile)
Dighinala	-	Marishya	:	11 km. (6.84 mile)

- d. Establishment of a new agricultural research institute at Khagrachari;
- e. Strengthening and upgrading of existing extension services by upgrading and increasing technical staff at all levels in agriculture;
- f. Extension and upgrading of five nurseries and establishment of one new nursery at Khagrachari;
- g. Construction of 7 fertilizer and 1 seed godown with storage capacity of 4000 tons;
- h. Strengthening and developing cottage industries by establishing training and display centres and providing technical assistance;
- i. Construction of additional hospital buildings, patient shed (10 bed) extension and renovation of Thana (sub-district) health centres, thana dispensary and staff quarters; and also procurement of ambulances and medical equipments;
- j. Upgrading of family planning, child health care and maternity services; and
- k. Strengthening the capacity of CHTDB by providing extra facilities for it.

During 1976, CHTDB took up series of *Jautha Khamar* (Cooperative Farms) projects to resettle **Jhumiyas** and other landless people. Each family under this scheme was allocated 5 acre (2.02 hectares) of hill land for cultivation and it was expected that they would achieve self-sufficiency within three years, principally through

cultivating and marketing horticultural products. Eight such *Jautha Khamars* were set up in Chengi, Mayni and Kassalong valleys. Besides, CHTDB undertook a scheme of community development for achieving self-sufficiency called **Adarsha Gram** (ideal village). Four such villages were established at Bilaichari, Magban, Balukhali and Kalampati. The idea was to bring the settler families into one locality, so that education, medicine and other necessary amenities could be easily provided to them in a more systematic manner.

Alongside such socio-economic and infrastructural development measures, the Government of Bangladesh felt constrained to call in the armed forces as security forces in “Aid of Civil Power” on 6 October 1976. It has been observed that the **Shanti Bahini** (armed insurgents comprising a section of the disgruntled among the Chakma tribe) had mounted their first ambush on a police patrol party sometime during early 1975. Emboldened by this success, and to the utter disregard of the development efforts by Government of Bangladesh the **Shanti Bahini** were found to be escalating their subversive activities. Thus the assistance of security forces was deemed necessary as the police was not trained to deal with an insurgency-like situation.

Gradually, however, the Government of Bangladesh became aware that nothing short of a concerted and systematic political approach would be appropriate to deal with the problem. With this intention, and specially to open a channel for a meaningful dialogue with the insurgents Government of Bangladesh appointed Rajmata Benita Roy (herself a Bengali) mother of Raja Tridiv Roy, advisor to the President. She was shortly replaced by ex-minister A.S. Prue Choudhury. But both of them, being members of the royal family, failed to win the confidence of the insurgents.

It was against such a background that the Government of Bangladesh began looking for a broad-based political forum that would be representative of the tribal people and would act as a go-between the government and the insurgents. With this end in view, on 2 July 1977, a Tribal Convention was formed. The Tribal Convention was successful in contacting the insurgents and holding talks with them. These talks,

preliminary to holding official level talks for finding an acceptable and enduring political solution, were held (four sessions) between 30 July 1977 and 15 December 1978. Initially, *Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS)* showed enough eagerness to cooperate with the Government of Bangladesh; but subsequently, because of internal problems within their party hierarchy, they gradually backtracked. But instead of despairing, the Government of Bangladesh persisted in its efforts to open a dialogue. At one stage, and by the beginning of 1981, Major General Manzoor, largely through his personal appeal, could create favourable circumstances for the projected dialogue. It was also reported that PCJSS would sit for the necessary dialogue with Government of Bangladesh representatives to find a political solution. But the assassination of Ziaur Rahman in May 1981 interrupted this process.

The arrival during 1979-81 of landless Bengalis into CHT turned out to be controversial. During this period about hundred thousand such Bengalis moved in. As a result, the ratio of Bengali settlers to tribals in CHT rose to 27.05%; whereas in 1947 the ratio had been 2.05%. Each settlers' family was allotted 5 acre (2.02 hectares) of hilly land or four acres of mixed land or 2.5 acres (1.01 hectares) of rice land. About 15% of these people subsequently left CHT for fear of malaria and atrocity by the insurgents.

Response of the Justice Abdus Sattar Government (May 1981 - March 1982)

Following the assassination of President Ziaur Rahman, Vice-President Justice Abdus Sattar took over the reins of the government. Towards the end of the year a presidential election returned him as an elected President. But his administration was cut short by the imposition of a martial law during March 1982. During this short tenure Justice Sattar had only one occasion to concern himself with the CHT situation. On 5 February 1982, a delegation led by Presidential Adviser on CHT Affairs, Subimal Dewan and comprising tribals and Bengalis met him. The overall situation in CHT and the ways to solve the problem were discussed, but no decision was arrived at.

Response of the Hussain Muhammad Ershad Government (1982 - 1990)

Comparatively, the longest to be in power in Bangladesh so far, the Ershad government had more time and opportunity to concentrate on the CHT problem than any of the previous regimes. Consequently, the controversies aside (as PCJSS rejected all measures) the government during these years undertook a large number of measures, which were marked by variety as well as good deal of cogitation. One distinctive feature was opening of the region to the media world for the first time. And, since 1988 visits and tours by professionals and people of various walks of life to CHT increased. The press has been further stimulated from 1991. In addition the Inter-Services Public Relations Directorate has been arranging guided tours of intellectuals, journalists, students and people from other walks of life in CHT. As a result, CHT has become an issue for substantial write-up in the national media. Despite the obvious limitation of such military sponsored guided tours, at least some concerned people are getting a chance to know something about CHT first-hand.

During 1982-90, the government continued counter-insurgency operations, but at the same time undertook steps to develop socio-economic structure, and to ensure comprehensive political settlement.

One of the earliest economic measures was to declare CHT as a Special Economic Area (SEA) in August 1985. The objectives were to integrate tribals and non-tribals, with the mainstream of economic activities create employment opportunities, promote trade, commerce and industries; and over-all agro-economic development of the area. The special incentives under this programme were the following :

- a. Tax relief for small and cottage industries;
- b. Exemption of fees for importing capital machineries and spares;
- c. Provision that only 5% interest for project be payable in ten annual instalments after the project starts operation;

- d. Reduction of power/gas rates;
- e. Reduction of interest on bank loans to 5%;
- f. Encouragement to joint-ventures by tribals and non-tribals;
- g. Tax holiday for twelve years; and
- h. Exemption of all show houses from payment of excise and amusement taxes.

Some special privileges for the employment of tribals have also been made. First, 5% of all government jobs has been reserved for them (for all the tribals including those of CHT). Moreover, in 1988, the government reserved 1,877 vacancies in various government departments and scheduled banks to be filled in by the tribals. This was a special allocation over and above the 5% quota. Second, age-limit in government jobs for tribals has been relaxed by five to ten years. Third, over and above the 5% reserved quota of employment, during 1988 government allocated 1977 vacancies in various departments and scheduled banks to be filled in by CHT tribals.

Moreover, to encourage educational development of tribals, specific number of seats in various educational institutions has been reserved in the following manner :

Institutions	Number of seats
Medical Colleges	12
Engineering University and Institutes of Technology	6
Technical Schools	30
Agricultural University and Colleges	6
Rangamati Para-Medical School	20
Cadet Colleges	3 male 3 female

The average qualifying mark for application to the higher educational institutions has been relaxed to 40% for the tribals, whereas other students need 45% to 65% marks for application.

Arrangements have even been made to favour the tribal contractors. All development projects within Chittagong Hill Tracts, of estimated costs up to taka two hundred thousand are exclusively reserved for them. Besides ten percent of development projects undertaken in CHT is reserved for them. This is over and above those earned through open competition.

The major development programmes in CHT are piloted through CHTDB. Based on the budget allocation in each fiscal year CHTDB prepares an annual programme costing about Tk. 25 lac (US \$ 0.07 million approximately) for a specific sector. Upto 1992 CHTDB has implemented 757 projects in various development sectors at the cost of Tk. 3,828 lac (US \$ 10.07 million approximately). During the current fiscal year (1992-93), Tk. 260 lac (US \$ 0.68 million approximately) has been allocated for CHTDB.

UNICEF aided Integrated Social Development Programmes are also implemented through CHTDB. The projects are also partly financed by the Government of Bangladesh. Implemented in three phases the third phase (1985-1993) is being implemented at the cost of Tk. 2,115.90 lac (US \$ 5.57 million approximately).

A Special five Year Plan (SFYP) especially for the three hill districts was undertaken in the financial year 1984-85. The aim of the plan was to provide a major thrust to the socio-economic development programmes in the area. The original budget allocation was Tk. 263 crore (US \$ 101.30 million approximately). Extended by one year the plan came to an end in the fiscal year 1989-90; during which time 19 sectors were covered. The progress achieved in these sectors are shown in the table under the heading SFYP for CHT appended at the end of this chapter.

Special allocations for development are also made to Upazila (recently renamed as Thana) Parishads (sub-district councils) and Hill District Local Government Councils. The yearly allocation varies from Tk. 25 lac to 75 lac (US \$ 0.08 million to 0.23 million approximately) depending on the size and state of development of the Thana (Upazila),

since the inception of the Hill District Local Government Councils in 1989 the government has been allocating fund to these councils for the ADP.

Started in 1975 the Food for Works Programme (FFWP) is undertaken by both these administrative units. These programmes help conduct and complete small-scale development projects.

Initiated during 1984-85 the first phase of a special development programme for CHT was completed during the financial year 1990-91. Development projects in such 23 sectors as roads, telecom service, electricity, health, agriculture, education, fisheries and livestock, cottage industries and tourism were implemented during this phase at the cost of Tk. 277 crore (US \$ 106.70 million approximately). The second phase of the programme got underway during the financial year 1991-92. Ten specific projects for developing families and communities have been identified involving a total cost of Tk. 11,176.90 lac (US \$ 29.41 million approximately). During the fiscal year 1992-93, Tk. 15 crore (US \$ 3.95 million approximately) has been allocated to finance eight projects.

As has been suggested in the previous chapter such a huge expenditure on various types of projects in CHT has created a wide gap between this one-tenth part of the country and the rest in term of **per capita** resource outlay.

Alongside these multifarious development projects a good deal of money and other resources are needed to help resettle the tribals affected by insurgency. The tribal refugees returning from India are given option to go back to their original homes or resettle themselves in cluster villages. Administered under the Hill District Local Government Councils the assistance provided to each returnee family comprise the following:

- a. One-time grant of Tk. 1500.00 to repair or build their houses;
- b. Transportation allowance of Tk. 100.00; and
- c. Foodgrains at the rate of 21 kg per week for six months.

Up to November 1991, twenty five thousand one hundred and fourteen (25,114) returnee families were resettled under this programme. Besides these returnees, tribals displaced by insurgent actions also seek assistance and are provided the same under this programme. They also receive 21 kg. foodgrain per week for six months; but they get Tk. 1000.00 for building/rebuilding their houses.

There is also the question of insurgents who surrender to security forces with weapons. The package of incentives for them is considerably large. This contains a cash grant for the weapons and ammunition, foodgrain grant of 21 kg per week for a period of one year and allocation of 5 acre (2.02 hectares) of **Khas** (government) land. The insurgents surrendering without arms also get cash grants. But all of them, however, are favoured with priority employment opportunity, contracts for development works and permits for extraction of forest resources.

Move to Find Political Solution

During 1982 a move was made to open a channel of communication with PCJSS through the formation of a liaison committee headed by Upendralal Chakma. But the move failed as PCJSS questioned the legitimacy of this committee.

Another reason for the failure was a sudden rift in the PCJSS leadership which ended in the killing of M N Larma on 10 November 1983. But a welcome upshot of this factious infighting was the surrender of the Priti faction to government on 29 April 1985.

The next move was the revival of the Tribal Convention on 30 August 1983. As this convention started functioning for organising public opinion in favour of a negotiated settlement Government of Bangladesh announced a package deal in October 1983, which included suspension of Bengali settlement, granting of amnesty and proposal for direct dialogue with the PCJSS leadership. Following this announcement and some spade-work by the liaison committee the first ever dialogue was held on 21 October 1985. The dialogue proved inconsequential, but both sides undertook to continue the process. The next dialogue was scheduled to be held on 25 December. This meeting, however, did not take place as PCJSS set some preconditions which appeared unacceptable to the Government of Bangladesh.

With such a stalled negotiation in the background the Government of Bangladesh, on 19 September 1987, set up a National Committee for CHT with the then Minister for Planning as the head. This committee had the mandate to take necessary steps for resuming dialogue with PCJSS, as well as recommend action for solving the problems.

The second dialogue was held on 17-18 December 1987; but it repeated the experience of the first. But this time the impasse was created by the five point demand of PCJSS, which included.

1. Autonomy for CHT with its own legislature and the recognition of the **Jumma** nation's right to self-determination;
2. Retention of the Regulation of 1900, and a constitutional provision restricting the amendment of the regulation;
3. Removal of all non-tribals who had entered CHT 17 August 1947;
4. Allocation of fund from the centre for the development of various sectors in CHT; and
5. Creation of circumstances favourable for peaceful and political resolution of the problems.

Twenty-five other detailed demands were added to this main five point demand. The Government of Bangladesh made it clear that these demands could not be accommodated within the framework of the Constitution of Bangladesh. However, both sides agreed to meet again.

At the Third dialogue held on 24-25 January 1988 Government of Bangladesh requested PCJSS to modify their demands in such a way as would not be contrary to the Constitution of the country, but PCJSS did not demonstrate any willingness to reciprocate; and the dialogue thus ended without any positive outcome.

The fourth dialogue was held on 17 and 18 February 1988. As both sides refused to change their positions, this dialogue also ended fruitlessly. The fifth meeting, held on 19 June had the same outcome. But the unwelcome result of this dialogue was that the PCJSS representatives left by letting it be known that it was "useless to talk to the government". On the contrary, the Government of Bangladesh did not despair. But before the next round of talks could be held the

Government of Bangladesh had an alternative set of proposals ready to counter the five-point demand of PCJSS.

In the backdrop of stalled negotiations with PCJSS, the National Committee was geared up to ascertain public opinion in the three hill districts as to the possible solution. The committee held over a hundred meetings, and finally came up with the following nine-point recommendations:

- a. Identification of CHT districts as special areas under Article 28 of the Constitution;
- b. Establishment of directly elected strong local governments in these districts as per Articles 9 and 28 of the Constitution;
- c. Division of subjects between district level local government institutions and national government;
- d. Delegation of powers under the provision of Article 65 of the Constitution to the district councils for formulating, promulgating and executing specified sub-laws, orders, regulations, instructions, etc. under the existing laws for transferred subjects;
- e. Grant of authority to the district councils to request the national government for reconsideration of any law passed by the National Assembly, if the said law is considered to be affecting the interest of the people of the districts adversely;
- f. Redelimitation of the boundaries of the districts and 'tribal circles' to remove any anomaly;
- g. Coordination of status between tribal chiefs and heads of district councils;
- h. Formation of police force in each district; and
- i. Incorporation of suitable amendments for necessary implementation of CHT manual or cancellation of it afterwards.

This nine-point programme was endorsed by the tribal elite from the three hill districts. To move further ahead in the attempt to find a solution

the tribal leaders, on 10 July 1988, made an overture to PCJSS for a mutual dialogue before any dialogue between PCJSS and government would be held. But having earlier questioned the legitimacy of such tribal leaders PCJSS reacted negatively. This made these leaders to talk to the National Committee on the nine-point framework. Between 29 August and 18 October 1988 number of meetings with representatives of each of the three Hill Districts were held in which forty-eight tribal leaders attended. The outcome was a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two sides.

The signing of this MOU gave a new signal to PCJSS. At the fifth dialogue they had categorically expressed their rigid position that unless the government accepted their demand for provincial autonomy they would not return to dialogue. But now they became apprehensive that such obstinacy might lead to their being alienated from their own people; and hence felt compelled to get in touch with the liaison committee for the next dialogue.

Accordingly, on 14 and 15 December 1988 the sixth dialogue was held. At this dialogue PCJSS modified their demand for provincial autonomy and asked for “regional autonomy”, but other demands remained unchanged. The government side agreed to accept the PCJSS memorandum for consideration provided the PCJSS delegation would also accept the government proposal containing the nine-points. Initially, PCJSS refused to reciprocate; but on insistence by Upendralal Chakma, Convenor of the Liaison Committee, they agreed to communicate their decision on these proposals during the next session of dialogue. The seventh dialogue was scheduled to be held within six weeks (from 15 December, 1988); but this could not be held as PCJSS did not make the necessary gesture.

Meanwhile failing to hear from PCJSS within the stipulated time (January 1989) the Government of Bangladesh introduced three separate district council bills in the National Legislature (Jatiyo Sangsad). At this stage the **Shanti Bahini** broke silence and gave an ultimatum that unless the bills were withdrawn they would not come for any dialogue. But this was a condition which GOB could hardly fulfil under the circumstances.

On 15 February 1989, Rangamati Hill Tracts Local Government Council Bill 1989, Khagrachari Hill Tracts Local Government Council Bill 1989, Bandarban Hill Tracts Local Government Council Bill 1989

and Hill Districts (Repeal and Enforcement of Law and Special Provision) Bill 1989 were moved and discussed in parliament. The bills were adopted on 26 and 28 February 1989.

The salient features of the Acts are :

a. Hill District Local Government Act 1989

1. Each CHT district will be administered by a Council named District Local Government Council which consists of one chairman, who will always be a tribal and thirty other members of which two-thirds are tribal and one-third is non-tribal. The tribal seats are proportionately divided among the tribes of the districts. The representation is shown below :

COMPOSITION OF THE THREE HILL DISTRICT LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS

Appointments Tribes	Rangamati	Khagrachari	Bandarban	
Chairman (always a tribal)	Any tribe 01	01	01	
Members	Chakma	10	09	01
	Marma	04	06	-
	Tanchangya	02	-	01
	Tripura	01	06	-
	Lushai	01	-	-
	Pankho	01	-	-
	Khiang	01	-	-
	Marma and Khiang			10
	Murong			03
	Tripura and Uchai			01
	Bom, Pankhu & Lushai			01
	Khumi			01
	Chak			01
	Total :	21	22	20
	Bengali :	10	09	11
Grand Total :	31	31	31	

2. The Council will be directly elected on the basis of adult franchise.
3. The Deputy Commissioner of each hill district will act as the ex-officio secretary of the District Council.
4. The District Council will decide on the question of transfer of land and settlement of land within the district.
5. The District Council will have the power to levy taxes and raise tolls locally with the approval of the government.
6. The District Council can appoint personnel for junior administrative posts and also frame rules for the administrative functioning of such personnel.
7. The District Council will be responsible for the maintenance of law and order within the district and will in this regard recruit a District Police force. All numbers of this police force up to the rank of Assistant Sub-Inspectors will be appointed by this council from among the permanently resident population of hill districts.
8. The District Council will initiate resettlement and rehabilitation of landless tribals within the hill district.
9. The Districts Councils will formulate their own budget each year for all round development activities.
10. The District Councils will be solely responsible for administering the following 22 subjects :
 - a. Law and order;
 - b. Coordination of Development Works;
 - c. Primary and Secondary Education;
 - d. Health;
 - e. Public Health;
 - f. Agriculture and Forestry;
 - g. Livestock;
 - h. Fisheries;
 - i. Cooperatives;
 - j. Small and Cottage Industries;
 - k. Social Welfare;

- l. Art and Culture;
 - m. Non-reserved Roads and Bridges;
 - n. Recreations, Games and Parks;
 - o. Rest Houses;
 - p. Ferries;
 - q. Implementation of Government Sponsored Development Projects;
 - r. Communication Facilities;
 - s. Water Supply and Sewerage;
 - t. Local Multipurpose Development;
 - u. Religious and Moral Affairs; and
 - v. Local control over sale, settlement, transfer, lease etc. regarding land.
11. The Chakma chief of Rangamati, the Mong chief of Manikchari and the Bohmang chief of Bandarban will have the right to attend the Council meetings of their areas either on their own or on invitation and to give their opinion in the discussions.
 12. The Chief, Headman and Karbari have been invested with judicial authority, both civil and criminal, to settle disputes.
- b. Hill Districts (Repeal and Enforcement of Law and Special Provisions) Act 1989**
1. The traditional institutions of *Chief, Headman* and *Karbari* have been retained. The collectorate function as provided under regulation 1 of 1900 has been retained.
 2. The provision of **Jhum, Jhum** control, **Jhum touzi** and imposition, remission and collection of **Jhum** taxes and grazing tax have been included in the legislation as it is provided in regulation 1 of 1900.
 3. The right of tribal people to occupy **Khas** land up to maximum of 30 decimel, for the purpose of homestead outside municipal area with the permission of the headman of the mouza concerned

without obtaining any formal settlement from the Deputy Commissioner and the land related privileges as provided in regulation 1 of 1900 has been included.

The first election under the new legislation was held on 25 June 1989. Shanti Bahini tried to forestall the successful holding of the elections, but failed. The voter turnout was over 50% despite *Shanti Bahini's* intimidation and other natural odds, including heavy monsoon. Moreover, 33 prominent international media representatives turned up to cover the election. Among the more prominent ones were those from British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Voice of America (VOA), All India Radio (AIR), Japan TV, **The Daily Telegraph**, **The London Times**, **The New York Times**, **The Statesman**, **The Ananda Bazar Patrika**, Press Trust of India (PTI), etc. The new administrative bodies started functioning from 2 July 1989.

During July 1990, the Government of Bangladesh constituted a separate ministry, named Special Affairs Ministry, to look after the affairs of CHT. The Vice-President of the country was placed in charge of the Ministry so that coordination with other ministries on Hill Tracts matters were fully ensured. This Division has been further strengthened since 1991 and placed under the Prime Minister's Secretariate.

With such a Ministry specially concerned with CHT and with consequent administrative moves definite qualitative changes were brought about in the CHT region. First, a beginning was made in the direction of autonomy, albeit a limited one for the time being. Second, the ten most disadvantaged smaller tribes, other than the more advanced *Chakma*, *Marma* and *Tripura*, have for the first time been initiated to a political process. During the late eighties the Government of Bangladesh transferred three such vital subjects as primary education, agriculture, and health and family planning to the newly constituted district councils headed and run principally by the elected tribal representatives. During the early nineties the democratic government transferred all the subjects enlisted excepting two which are also being processed for transfer.

Another significant political response during these years was the declaration of general amnesty. Taking advantage of the four general amnesties declared between April 1983 and September 1989, 2,294 insurgents surrendered. Moreover, thirty thousand three hundred ninety tribals returned from camps across the border between 1987 and 1990. Further, between 31 May 1986 and 18 February 1991 the Government of Bangladesh sent eight high level official delegations to talk to the Indian counterparts for securing repatriation of tribal refugees. These efforts, however, did not bear any fruit.

Responses During the Tenure of Caretaker Government (December 1990 - March 1991)

Following the fall of the Ershad government tribal students formed the **Pahari Chatra Parishad** (Hill Student's Committee), and held press conferences and rallies in support of their such demands as dissolution of the three local government councils, modification of the voter-list of the three hill districts; and deferring of the proposed parliamentary election until the return of all refugees from India. But on 30 December 1990, while on a trip to Rangamati (one of the three hill districts) the Acting (caretaker) President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed, categorically rejected the demand for the dissolution of local government councils. On the other hand, the move for finding a political solution was intensified. Entirely in keeping with **Pahari Chatra Parishad's** demand, the Government of Bangladesh made an overture to India for a district level bipartite meeting to facilitate the return of the refugees before the scheduled election. Secondly, immediately before the election a six member liaison committee headed by Hongsodhaj Chakma, a Khagrachari based politician, was formed to act as a go-between in an effort to open a dialogue with PCJSS. It may be mentioned that in November 1990 PCJSS set three preconditions for the seventh dialogue, namely setting up of a parliamentary committee on CHT, putting a minister at the head of the delegation and announcing of the names of the members of the delegation beforehand. These conditions were rejected by the Government of Bangladesh. In January 1991, PCJSS reiterated this three-point demand. After the election the

liaison committee unofficially wrote to them saying that unless they were more accommodating to the new democratic government it would be difficult to hold the talks. The talks did not take place.

Responses by the Democratic Government

The democratic government took power in March 1991. It took specific steps and made policy statements to expedite the process of finding the much desired political solution. It may, however, be mentioned that coming into power of this democratic government synchronised with an upswing in insurgency.

The first major specific step by this government was the declaration of general amnesty for the insurgents. It was also announced that insurgents surrendering with arms would be offered following cash amounts :

For each LMG	Tk.	30,000.00	
For each Mortar	Tk.	30,000.00	
For each SMG	Tk.	25,000.00	
For each SMC	Tk.	22,000.00	
For each Semi-Automatic Rifle	Tk.	20,000.00	
For each Rocket Launcher	Tk.	20,000.00	
For each Rifle (Bolt-action)	: Tk.	12,000.00	
For each Pistol Revolver	: Tk.	10,000.00	
For each Shot Gun	: Tk.	7,000.00	
For each Wireless Set	: Tk.	10,000.00	to Tk. 20,000.00
For each Grenade	: Tk.	1,000.00	
Explosive (one pound)	: Tk.	500.00	
For each Bullet	: Tk.	5.00	
For each Cartridge	: Tk.	5.00	

Under this fifth amnesty 24 armed and 18 unarmed insurgents surrendered to the security forces.

A major policy statement was made by the Prime Minister while on a trip to Khagrachari on 12 May 1992. She said, "I think it is possible

to find a political solution only through the constitutional process and within the constitutional framework of the country". Reacting to the such moves by the Government of Bangladesh, Gautam Dewan, the then Chairman of the Rangamati Local Government Council stated, "I think such steps by the government have a positive result in resolving the CHT issue".

During July 1992, the Government of Bangladesh appointed a 9-members (all members being Member of Parliament) Committee to look into the CHT issue, with a directive to submit recommendations within two months.

Over the years the disgruntled tribals have tried to draw the attention of government to the land issue, especially its ownership. A decision on this issue needs to be preceded by a cadastral survey. But the problem of survey becomes difficult because of shifting style of livelihood of the **Jhumiya**s. Moreover, no tribal and non-tribal has any document relating to his ownership of land. Nevertheless, some initial attempts were made for the survey, but later discontinued because of deteriorating law and order situation. Under the new setting a decision has been taken to start the cadastral survey in 1993. It has been estimated that the survey would cost Tk. 2,649 lac (approximately US \$ 6.97 million) and continue for about eight years. Because of the highly sensitive nature of the issue utmost significance has been attached to it by government.

Besides the manifold development projects as discussed above the local administration has been called upon to perform relief and rehabilitation works. Since the financial year 1989-90 fifty thousand families affected by insurgency have been covered under the following relief and rehabilitation programmes :

a. Pacification

This programme enjoins upon GOC 24 Division, Chittagong and the local administration in the hill districts to undertake necessary measures for helping the families affected by insurgency. This programme includes small development works like repair and building of culverts, religious institution, roads and tracks etc.

Under this programme covering the three hill districts 26,000.00 metric ton foodgrain was distributed between July 1990 and June 1992.

b. Rehabilitation of Non-tribal Families

Twenty-six thousand non-tribal families have been rehabilitated in cluster villages between July 1900 and June 1992; and 36,830 metric ton foodgrain and Tk. 16.10 lac (US \$ 0.04 million approximately) were allocated for the purpose. During the same period 95 cluster villages were created for the non-tribals in Rangamati and Khagrachari.

c. Rehabilitation of Tribal Families

Under this programme 12,000 tribal families were rehabilitated between July 1990 and June 1992; and for this purpose 5311.085 metric ton foodgrain and Tk. 64.80 lac (US \$ 0.17 million approximately) were allocated. Each family is given a one-time payment of lump-sum of Tk. 1,000.00 lac (US \$ 26.32 approximately) and 21 k.g. foodgrain per week.

d. Rehabilitation of Returnees from India

For the rehabilitation of 12,000 tribal families who returned from India Tk. 136 lac (US \$ 0.36 million approximately) and 5681.398 metric ton foodgrain were allocated. Under this programme each family gets a one-time grant of Tk. 16,000 (US \$ 421.05 approximately) for house-building and transportation purposes; and also 21 k.g. foodgrain per week for six months.

For the fiscal year 1992-1993, 50,000 metric ton foodgrain and Tk. 399 lac (US\$ 1.05 million approximately) have been allocated under these four programmes.

Over the years the CHT issue has consumed enormous efforts and energy and a huge chunk of resources of the Government of Bangladesh. More than Tk. 356 lac (approximately US \$ 93.70 million

in present day) has been spent for development works undertaken by CHTDB since its formation in 1976. In addition, over Tk. 280 crore (US \$ 107.9 million approximately) has been spent under the Special Five Year Plan initiated in 1984-85 for various socio-economic development projects. The second phase of the implementation of this plan began in the financial year 1991-92. Ten projects involving an estimated expenditure of Tk.11,176.90 lac (US \$ 29.41 million approximately) were included in this phase. A UNICEF financed project is also currently under way to improve community facilities, installation of ring-wells for water supply and installation of slab latrines, improvement of educational facilities and income generating projects. Originally scheduled to be completed in June 1993, the project has now been extended up to June 1995 involving a total expenditure of Tk. 2,115.90 lac (US \$ 5.57 million approximately).

Begun in July 1979 and expected to be completed in 1993, a 27 million U.S. dollar Asian Development financed rubber plantation project has so far rehabilitated 2000 tribal families Khagrachari and Rangamati districts. Under this project each tribal family is allocated land as per the following specification.

	.25	acre for habitation
	2.00	acres for fruit garden
	4.00	acres for rubber plantation
Total	6.25	acres (15.44 hectares) per family

To expand the total area of Rangamati hill-district and also to improve its communication facilities the Rangapani-Asambasti link road construction was undertaken during the 1991-92 financial year and would be completed by 1992-93. The total expenditure involved in this project is Tk. 282.50 lac (US \$ 0.74 million approximately).

Created in 1989 the three Local Government Councils have also been receiving annual grants for development purposes. During the financial year 1992-93 a total amount of Tk. 500 lac (US \$ 1.32 million approximately) was allocated for the purpose.

Such development projects have undoubtedly created a positive impact on the local people and also induced many tribals to return. There was a conspicuous sign of increase of number of returnees after the fall of the Ershad Government. For example, the number of tribals returned from Indian refugee camps totalled 1,034 persons in December 1991 and January 1992. On the contrary, the number of returnees in November 1991 stood at 18 only. The sudden spurt in the number of returnees was possibly a sequel to the new confidence of tribals in the caretaker government and also the democratic government. Thus with the return of 22,000 tribals from India the number of tribals still in India stands at 8,000; as 30,000 had originally crossed over to India. The left out tribals at six Indian refugee camps have been languishing for want of bare necessities of life. More than six thousand tribals reportedly died of different diseases in these camps.

Role of Security Forces

When deployed in the mid-seventies to deal with a full blown insurgency in CHT, the security forces were confronted with a new job. Starting off with some initial improvisations, but learning over the years, they developed a comprehensive concept of counter-insurgency with the following goals :

- a. To contain, neutralize or eliminate the insurgents through intense offensive and security operations in order to restore and maintain normalcy;
- b. To win over hearts and minds of the people through extensive military-civic action and motivational programmes;
- c. To assist in socio-economic development to create a favourable situation for introducing other measures; and
- d. To assist in introducing and pursuing other measures such as political and socio-cultural ones to resolve the crisis.

The following elements of security forces operate in CHT :

- a. Army (24 Infantry Division)
- b. Bangladesh Rifles (BDR)

- c. Armed Police (AP)
- d. District Police
- e. Ansars
- f. Village Defence Party (VDP)

Task of Security Forces

Of the various types of task performed by the security forces the most important one may be termed **protective tasks**. This type of tasks are performed to provide security to government machineries and people so that their normal business can go on unhindered. The specific tasks performed are :

- a. Protection of lines of communication;
- b. Protection of communication centres and townships;
- c. Protection of vulnerable group of population (mainly those who are victims of insurgency);
- d. Protection of public utility services;
- e. Protection of government officials and visitors; and
- f. Protection of work sites of various development agencies, forest extraction project areas and units of industries.

Offensive tasks

The offensive tasks are basically military aspects of counter-insurgency operations, and aimed at confronting the insurgents. The security forces thus carry out patrolling, raids, ambushes etc. These are no different from the tasks usually undertaken by security forces anywhere else in the world, when deployed for similar counter-insurgency role. All these operations are carried out on information obtained either from the intelligence sources of the security forces or from the members of the public. On account of the positive impact of socio-economic and political moves by Government of Bangladesh, members of the public have been coming forward in increasing numbers with such information. The following three tables show the impact of such operations :

STATISTICS OF INSURGENTS CAPTURED, KILLED AND WOUNDED *

Year	Killed	Wounded	Captured
Upto 1979	52	04	-
1980	23	15	-
1981	08	05	-
1982	08	07	-
1983	03	-	-
1984	21	10	-
1985	11	05	-
1986	05	02	299
1987	10	08	254
1988	09	02	301
1989	29	05	390
1990	40	08	355
1991 Upto 30 November	17	13	293
Total :	236	84	1892

STATISTICS ON RECOVERED ARMS AND AMMUNITION*

Year	LMG	SMG	Rifle	Pistol	SBBL/ Civil gun	Gre - nade	Mortar	Ammuni- tion	Mine
1978	01	04	37	04	06	04	-	1999	-
1979	02	04	08	-	11	06	-	898	-
1980	-	06	21	04	24	11	-	2808	-
1981	03	02	24	-	13	03	-	2520	-
1982	-	06	17	01	11	02	-	1838	-
1983	-	05	24	-	28	06	-	162623	-
1984	05	30	43	02	23	16	01	33211	-
1985	20	42	134	03	85	99	02	14818	-
1986	-	05	05	01	37	57	-	39127	-
1987	-	09	08	-	19	04	-	1705	-
1988	01	11	04	-	26	10	-	1958	-
1989	02	14	21	10	65	14	07	29136	-
1990	-	11	27	07	98	17	-	3435	02
1991	-	16	19	05	62	49	54	3030	01
Upto 30 November									
Total :	34	165	392	37	508	298	64	299106	03

STATISTICS ON SURRENDER OF INSURGENTS *

Amnesty	Duration	Armed	Unarmed	Total
Before Amnesty	Upto 02 October 1983	14	27	41
First Amnesty	03 October 1983 to 25 April 1984	146	766	912
Second Amnesty	26 April 1984 to 26 April 1985	648	323	971
After Second Amnesty	Upto 21 April 1989	137	144	281
Third Amnesty	22 April 1989 to 22 June 1989	03	08	11
Fourth Amnesty	23 August 1989 to 30 September 1989	07	30	37
After Amnesty	01 October 1989 to 24 August 1991	119	160	279
Fifth Amnesty	24 August 1991	24	18	42
Total		1098	1476	2574

* All these tables are reproduced from official records.

Regulatory Tasks

These are the tasks undertaken as precautionary measures for securing private and public properties and also for denying insurgents freedom of movement, active contact with the people and choking their sources of income. The tasks performed by the security forces under this category are of the following types :

a. Controlling the movement of people

In any counter-insurgency operation some sort of control is imposed on the movement of people; and mostly they are relocated, as has been done in Malaysia and Vietnam, in specially protected habitations. But, bearing in mind the loss of

the freedom of movement under such a system of unavoidable control, this is not done in CHT. On the contrary, three specific measures are undertaken. First, smaller and relatively more backward tribes are encouraged to lead a corporate life; and for which they are provided special assistance both in cash and kind. Secondly, camps established in some major centres open a channel of communication to these tribes, who are encouraged to reap the benefits of on-going development measures. Third, people seeking protection of the government are encouraged to form cluster-villages which are protected by the security forces. Food and cash assistance are provided to the families living in such villages on weekly basis until they settle down on their own.

- b. **Resource Control** : This is done to choke the insurgents financially and logistically.
- c. **Control of Public Movement** : To allow normal day to day activities and socio-economic activities no direct control is exercised to restrict the movement of people. But, for security reasons some indirect control is imposed which include the following :
 - Restricted movement in the rural areas at night; and in case of movement people are advised to follow certain instructions to avoid the risk of being confused as **Shanti Bahini** by the security forces;
 - Occasional on-the-spot check of vehicles and water crafts;
 - Monitoring arrival of new people in the area through friendly contacts; and
 - Prohibiting movement close to the international border.

Military - Civic Action

Carried out separately or jointly with civil administration this is basically a confidence building measure geared to winning hearts and minds of people. The methods applied to achieve the goal are the following :

- a. Development projects, especially small ones that generate activity as well as income in an area. These are complementary to other major development projects;
- b. Consoling of aggrieved tribals and non-tribals with cash and kind incentives;
- c. Extension of medical facilities to the local people by the army medical teams;
- d. Distribution of gifts and presents during the visit of security force patrols to villages as gestures of goodwill;
- e. Patronisation of tribal religion and culture;
- f. Patronisation of education, games and sports;
- g. Compensation for damages due to military action;
- h. Assistance to victims of insurgent atrocities; and
- i. Arbitration of minor disputes.

Motivational Programmes

The aim of the motivation programme is to blunt the **Shanti Bahini** propoganda through moral persuasion and getting across the merits of government measures. This is conducted by the following means :

- a. Mass contact programmes;
- b. Use of print media.

Conclusion

On account of the misperception and failure of appreciation by a sections of the tribals the Government of Bangladesh response, has not, so far, been able to fully resolve the complicated problem. This is not because the Government of Bangladesh lacked any sincerity or commitment, but mainly because the tribal insurgents did not fully comprehend and appreciate the substantial benefits of the measures undertaken. It is also true that because of certain constitutional and political constraints the Government of Bangladesh could not go all the way in meeting the demands of the insurgents.

However, the foregoing discussion clearly reveals the depth of commitment and variety of response of the Government of Bangladesh. Despite a definite positive impact of these responses on the people, both tribals and non-tribals, the problem has remained festering because of intransigency of the **Shanti Bahini**, who receive overt and covert patronisation and assistance from the Indian authorities.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN CHT PROJECTS UNDERTAKEN BY CHTDB

From 1975-76 to 1990-91
In Million Taka

Sector	From 1975-76 to 1989-90		Programme for 1990-91	
	No. of projects	Cost	No. of projects	Cost
1. Agriculture	89	60.794	1	.131
2. Communication	122	53.978	16	4.125
3. Education	156	55.971	24	5.823
4. Sports & Culture	58	24.311	17	3.771
5. Construction (Building)	35	31.352	3	.850
6. Social Welfare	204	64.619	20	4.300
7. Cottage Industry	28	4.491	-	-
8. Reserve fund for contingency	-	-	1	2.000
	692	295.516	82	21.000
9. Establishment cost of the Board	-	36.170	-	6.500
Total :	692	331.686	82	27.500

EXPENDITURE OF MONEY IN VARIOUS PHASES UNICEF PROGRAMME

(Taka in Million)

Sl. No.	Phases	Government Grant	Foreign Exchange	Project Aid (in Money)	Total
1.	1980-82	.089	.182	1.478	1.749
2.	1982-85	2.203	.954	15.013	18.170
3.	(Till June 1992)	36.770	8.880	78.670	124.320
Total Expenditure :		39.062	100.016	95.161	144.239

ACHIEVEMENT - UNICEF PROGRAMMES

Serial Number	Heads	Achievements	Remarks
1.	Community Facilities	50 Mouzas	
2.	Construction of Multi-purpose Community Centre	50 Nos.	
3.	Digging and Construction of Ring Wells for Water Supply	162 Nos.	
4.	Distribution of Slab-latrines	1674 Sets.	
5.	<u>Income Generating Activities</u>		
	Loan	3871 Tribal Men/ Women at the rate of Taka 1,200/-	
	Equipments	60 Handlooms	
	Training	Skill - 524 Paramedics - 151 Maternity Nurse-180 Mason-14 Pre-School Teacher - 12 Nutrition-1500 mothers	
6.	Education	Setting up of 4 Residential School; one for MURANGS and three for other tribes	Three are functioning in Bandarban District with 466 students
7.	Materials Supplied by UNICEF	Teaching aids, sports, goods and medicines are provided in good numbers/quantity	Construction of another one has been completed in June/1992 which is in Rangamati and it will be started soon

**MULTI SECTORAL DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMME - PROGRESS**

Taka in Lac

Sl. No.	Name of Component and Executing Agency	Period of Execution	Estimated Cost	Expenditure	Physical Progress in %
1.	Upland Settlement (CHTDB)	1979-93	4,769.50	3,766.57	80% (Approx.)
2.	Afforestation and Settlement (Forest Deptt)	1979-90	343.45	314.87	81% (")
3.	Road Network (RHD)	1980-91	6,448.30	5,973.92	85% (")
4.	Agri. Research (BARI)	1979-87	357.96	361.22	98% (")
5.	Agri. Extension (DAE)	1979-87	539.08	493.65	100%
6.	Nurseries Dev. (DAE)	1979-85	77.73	77.73	100%
7.	Storage Facilities (BADDC)	1981-86	192.17	177.78	100%
8.	Cottage and Rural Industries (BSCIC)	1979-85	288.62	242.25	100%
9.	Health Facilities (Health Part) (DOH)	1979-83	35.76	34.92	100%
10.	Health Facilities (PC and FP Part)	1979-85	22.82	19.58	100%
11.	Strengthening of CHTDB (CHTDB)	1979-88	690.99	690.99	100%
Total :			13,766.38	12,153.48.	

SPECIAL FIVE YEAR PLAN FOR CHT

Taka in Million

Sl. No.	Components	Target	Allocation	Progress
1.	Road Construction	a. 15 roads b. 350 miles	1296.101	85% 20 Upazila connected with District Headquarters
2.	Telecom Service	Modernization of existing tele- communication and providing tele- communication upto Upazila	115.853	100%
3.	Electrification	Electrification of all Upazila Headquarters	398.512	90% 20 Upazila connected with National Grid.
4.	Integrated Afforestation and Jhumia Rehabilitation	a. 5300 Acres of Afforestation b. Rehabilitation of 3400 Families	219.256	13196 Acres 1730 Families
5.	Water Supply	Provision of Drinking Water to major settlements	159.990	100%
6.	Pulb-wood Plantation	Plantation of Pulpwood	38.931	5577 Acres 140 Families
7.	Infrastructure for Jhumia Rehabilitation	Extending community facilities to Jhumia settlement	24.483	100%
8.	Horticulture Development	Improvement of Horticulture Farm and Raising of Nursery	38.931	95%
9.	Special Agriculture Development works	Construction of Storage Facilities	37.460	95%

Sl. No.	Components	Target	Allocation	Progress
10.	Cotton Cultivation	Cultivation of Comilla variety of Cotton	7.300	95%
11.	Health (Hospital) Facilities	Construction 100 Bed Hospital at Rangamati and 50 Bed Hospital at Khagrachari	31.650	100%
12.	Livestock	Establishment of Upazila livestock centre	37.300	80%
13.	Fisheries Development	Hatchery and Excavation of Ponds	4.300	100%
14.	Cottage Industry	Establishment of Production Centres and Extending Training Facilities	32.000	100%
15.	Tourism	Construction of Auditorium and Picnic Centre	6.000	100%
16.	Education	a. Construction of Tribal Hostels b. Providing grants/scholarship	80.600	100%
17.	Family Welfare	Construction of Family Welfare Centre	14.000	70%
18.	Games and Sports	Construction of Bandarban Stadium	10.332	65%
19.	Child Care Centre	Construction of Child Care Centre at Khagrachari	2.500	70%
20.	Labour and Manpower Development	Driving Training	.500	100%
Total			2555.999	

MAJOR PHYSICAL PROGRAMME FOR 1993 - 95

1.	Community facilities	-	75	Moujas
2.	Construction of Multi Purpose Community Centre	-	75	Nos
3.	Digging and Construction of ring-well for Water Supply	-	657	Nos
4.	Distribution of slab latrine	-	24,000	Sets.
<u>Income Generating Activities</u>				
5.	Loan	17000 Tribal Men/Women at the rate of Tk. 1200.00		
6.	Training	(a)	Skill Training	- 2200
		(b)	Paramedics (CHW)	- 380
		(c)	TBAS	- 375
		(d)	Pre-School Teacher	- 75
		(e)	Group Leader	- 3100
7.	Education	(a)	4 Residential Schools where 1000 students will receive formal education	
		(b)	75 Pre-schools where 14000 minor students will receive informal education.	
8.	Materials	Necessary material like play materials, educational materials and medicine will be supplied by UNICEF.		

Source : *Official Records.*

**PROJECT TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE CHITTAGONG
HILL TRACTS DURING FY 1992-93 AT THE COST OF
TAKA 150.00 MILLION (US \$ 3.84 MILLION)**

Sl. No.	Projects	Allocation for 1992-93 (in lac)
1.	Special Socio-Economic Projects	- 125.00 (\$ 3.20)
2.	Electrification (2nd phase)	- 300.00 (\$ 7.69)
3.	Rangapani - Asambasti Link Road	- 189.00 (\$ 4.84)
4.	Socio-Economic Development of Hill people living in Cluster Villages through the Development of Small and Cottage Industries	- 243.00 (\$ 6.23)
5.	Integrated Development and Rehabilitation Programme (DAE part)	- 231.00 (\$ 5.92)
6.	Integrated Development and Rehabilitation Programme (CDB part)	- 79.32 (\$ 2.03)
7.	Development of Rehabilitated Jhumiya Families and Afforestation around Security Camps	- 117.58 (\$ 3.01)
8.	Development of Physical Infrastructure for the Socio-Economic Development of the Inhabitants of Cluster Villages	- 214.19 (\$ 5.49)

Source : *Government of Bangladesh.*

NOTES

1. Official records.
2. Newspaper clippings.

Chapter VII

CONCLUSION

As indicated at the outset (chapter I : Introduction), the principal purpose of this work is to bring to clear light the nature, character and reality of the problem in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh in the historical and socio-economic perspectives of the country.

No pain has been spared to ensure the objectivity of narration and analysis of the problem, many important aspects of which have often tended to be overshadowed in the perception of some impassioned viewers both at home and abroad.

As the foregoing chapters, result of the painstaking work of independent, distinguished academicians and senior journalists, have shown, the problem is primarily a legacy of the British imperial and colonial rule (from late eighteenth century to 1947) and internal colonialism and exploitation operating principally from Karachi-Rawalpindi-Islamabad, in the post-British postcolonial state of Pakistan (1947-71). It is important to remember that during both these periods, the entire people of Bangladesh, and not only of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, were equal sufferers of these historic processes of domination and exploitation by rulers from far territories.

The analyses of the present volume also take note of the impact of socio-economic development and modernizing efforts of the post

Western-colonial state on the ethnic minorities of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. These underscore, and recognize that the development and integrating endeavours of the post-imperial modernizing state contributed to the heightening of the sense of identity and aspirations of a section of the ethnic groups.

These exercises were frequently well-intentioned. These also yielded some positive results in the socio-economic advancement of several ethnic minorities in the area. Thus the state efforts at development of education, resulted by 1970, in the phenomenal spread of literacy among the numerically dominant Chakma tribe among whom, by that time, around 50 percent were literate compared to the national average of less than 30 percent, years later in 1981.

Socio-economic scholars analysing modernization processes have mentioned that though ascription of communal ties are usually viewed as necessarily traditional, communal characteristics and identities are frequently intensified, sometimes even initiated, by modernizing changes. These break down group isolation, thanks to expansion of modern transport and communication, and cause the spread of literacy, education and consequent consciousness. Sometimes, government policy also exacerbate group conflicts on issues of definition of roles of the involved groups in national life.

Economic development also raises new issues. These change old traditional subordinate and superordinate relationships within the hitherto traditional but modernizing ethnic groups. All this often leads to friction and clash posing threats to peace, stability and development of the entire national society at large.

All these processes, in varying degrees and scale took place also in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh especially during the post Western colonial period (during 1947-71), in pre-liberation Bangladesh.

Hence, as the foregoing analysis shows, the problem was primarily and largely, an inheritance that liberated Bangladesh was confronted with in during 1971 at the very moment of its birth as a sovereign state.

It is significant that in those formative times, the allegations of politico-economic deprivation and exploitation were most forcefully voiced by a very small fraction of the Chakma tribe which had benefited most from the earlier development efforts and thus became most advanced among the many tribes inhabiting the CHT. The other tribes have, therefore, legitimate cause of apprehension that the leading elements, mostly drawn from the traditionally dominant feudal Chakma segments, may if they have their way, impose unimpeded domination on them.

The recent democratizing and participative measures that have thrown open the doors for full participation to the tribal people at large, also disturbed the dominant position and influence of Chakma feudal lords; hence the resistance of a very small fraction of a single tribe of the tribal people, to democratising and progressive steps launched by the national polity.

It is important to note that the endeavours of the Bangladeshi society to ensure their rightful share for the tribal people in a democratic and developing society are directed towards all ethnic minorities, in and outside the CHT, and not towards any single component.

Another important aspect of the process is the situation of Bengalis who have been inhabiting the CHT from time immemorial since their first move into the area on invitation of Chakma Chiefs. The intensification of Chakma tribal feelings by deliberate action of the disgruntled, foreign-linked feudal few and their addition of violence and terrorism to the process, have robbed the Bengalis in CHT of their rightful sense of security.

The addition of the dimension of violence and terrorism, as the present work notes in several foregoing chapters, is a post-liberation phenomenon. As explained in detail, the insurgency in CHT, handiwork of a very small, misguided fraction patronized by external forces, has confronted economically impoverished and technologically and industrially underdeveloped Bangladesh with a problem that is not its own making. Moreover it also threatens to impede the pace of its total socio-economic development, a must for the emancipation of all Bangladeshis from poverty and backwardness.

The nation and government of Bangladesh have tried sincerely and energetically to solve the problem; the efforts have been traced in elaborate detail in the present work.

As mentioned in the introduction, the ethos of the Bangladeshi mechanism for solving this none-too-unique problem in the present day world, has been the democratic and participatory politics and peaceful dialogue.

As the untold story related in this work clearly shows the hitherto intractable/factor in this process has been the violence and terrorism senselessly practiced by a handful of foreign-linked, misguided armed men belonging to a single tribe in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

Despite all this the Government and people of Bangladesh have never wavered from the peaceful path of democracy. As Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia reiterated in the Chittagong Hill Tracts during her visit there on 25 August 1992 : “Arms and terrorism cannot bring solution to any problem we want a political solution to the problem. There is a democratic government now in the country which wishes to resolve all problems politically”. She referred to the formation of a Committee composed of Members of Parliament and representing various political parties for forging an amicable solution to the Chittagong Hill Tracts’ problem and urged those few who are engaged in insurgency to sit with it for a dialogue.

The Committee, charged with the responsibility of recommending measures for solution of the prevailing problems in the Chittagong Hill Tracts area, was constituted by the Government on 9 July 1992. The formation of the committee followed the first ever state visit to India by Prime Minister, Begum Khaleda Zia and her meeting with the Indian Prime Minister, Narasimha Rao during late 26-28 May 1992.

The Committee headed by the Communications Minister, Oli Ahmed consists of eight other members of the Jatiyo Sangsad (Parliament) representing the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and various opposition parties (including the Awami League, Workers’ Party, Jamaate-Islami etc.).

The Committee, formed by the representative, democratic government is the first of its kind and aims at finding solutions to the problems of CHT through the democratic and peaceful processes of dialogue and participation of all concerned.

It has started work in right earnest and has, by the middle of September 1992, held interviews and talks with more than 3000 inhabitants, representing various social segments and political and ethnic groups, of the Hill districts of Khagrachari, Rangamati and Bandarban. This is a highly encouraging development. The spontaneous and energetic response of peace-loving leaders and peoples of the CHT area manifests the use and effectiveness of the peaceful political initiatives of the Bangladeshi government.

The commendable work of the committee set the stage for talks with the **Parbatya Chattogram Jana Sanghati Samiti**, the political front of the disgruntled section of the ethnic groups (mainly a segment of the Chakma tribe), of which the **Shanti Bahini** is the armed terrorist wing.

Consequently the first-ever talks between the Committee formed by the Government and PCJSS were held in Khagrachari on 5 November 1992. The Committee was led by Col (Retd.) Oli Ahmed, Communication Minister while the five-member PCJSS team was led by Mr. Shantu Larma. The meeting reached an agreement to extend the "ceasefire" by the **Shanti Bahini** in the Chittagong Hill Tracts till December 31 and to hold the next round of talks within one month to reach an acceptable political settlement of the problem in CHT.

The Committee's commendable work notwithstanding, there are criticisms about its composition. Two Awami League (the major opposition party) Parliamentarians who are members of the Committee demanded that all three members of the Parliament, representing the three hill districts should be included in the Committee. At present there is only one such M.P. in the Committee, Mr. Kalpa Ranjan Chakma representing the Khagrachari district.

The gap tended to be created by absence, in the Committee, of the members of the Parliament who represent the other hill districts, can be bridged by regular consultations by the Government with all M.P.'s of the Hill Districts in all matters affecting the area.

Another useful and vital step that the Government can take to further stimulate the process of participative socio-economic development, energised and strengthened by the operation of the democratically elected and largely autonomous Hill District Council, is to resume the practice of heading the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board (CHTDB) by the Chief civil official of the Chittagong Division, the Commissioner.

Such measures will reinforce the imaginative and positive steps that need to be taken by all concerned to strengthen the peaceful, participative political process that the Government of Bangladesh has already launched in the CHT with massive popular participation by the overwhelming majority of the people living in the CHT.

This democratic exercise needs to be further strengthened. No stone should be left unturned, no time lost in fulfilling this important national mission, Government, the tribals and Bengalis in the Chittagong Hill Tracts need to move with all sincerity and utmost care to expand and reinforce the base and superstructure of participation.

The available mechanism of the popularly elected, self-governing Hill District Councils should be utilized to the optimum level. These representative local government units have already been given charge of administering 20 out of the 22 earmarked subjects. The others are in the process of transfer. These already transferred include such significant subjects as Law and Order, Coordination of Development Work, Primary and Secondary Education, Health, Agriculture and Forestry etc.

As recorded in the analysis in chapter VI (Government of Bangladesh Responses, 1972-1992), the first elections under the new

legislation held on 25 June 1989 was successful in ensuring widespread participation. “**Shanti Bahini** tried to forestall the successful holding of the election but failed. The voter turnout was 50 percent despite **Shanti Bahini**’s intimidation and other natural odds, including heavy monsoon. Moreover, 33 prominent international media representatives, (including the BBC, the VOA, The London Times, The New York Times, The Statesman, the Ananda Bazar Patrika, The Press Trust of India) turned up to cover the election”.

The new self-governing, representative Hill District Councils which started working from 2 July 1989 have further been strengthened by the democratic government. These councils, with wide authority and responsibility display a new social imagination in which democratic Bangladesh shares power with regional minorities. It thus refuses to toe the paths of centralized and interventionist states. The enthusiastic response of the overwhelming majority of the peace loving ethnic groups including the massive majority of the Chakma tribe, to this participative process reveal the extent to which this new social imagination has spread.

In this largely favourable atmosphere, though often vitiated by ‘insurgents’ violence and terrorism, the Bangladeshi Government needs to further strengthen the processes of peaceful development of the people of CHT by taking other timely measures. These should include greater training and upskilling of the ethnic groups for sharing wider responsibilities in administration and development. Educated and trained members of these groups are already manning high positions in the civil administration and defence forces of Bangladesh. This welcome development needs further acceleration and expansion.

As already mentioned, the democratic and participative approach of Bangladesh has been manifest in various recent steps concerning the Regulation of 1900 and the issue of land ownership in CHT, an issue perceived by the tribal people as of critical significance.

Chapter IV (The Regulation of 1900) analytically shows how recent government measures have sought to protect the spirit and form of the Regulation so far as its provisions preserve and nurture the rights and

legitimate interests of the tribals. Land grants have been restricted in the CHT to control movement into the area. Laws introduced during 1989 have given the newly constituted, popularly elected, representative Hill District Councils veto on transfer of land to new comers. "All sides agree on some extent of restrictions on land rights in CHT. Restrictions could take the form of continuing the legal effects of part of the 1900 regulation or could be accomplished in other ways". (Chapter IV).

The issue of land ownership needs to be carefully handled because of its sensitive nature. The Government of Bangladesh appears to be evidently conscious of the importance of the question of land ownership in the Hill Districts.

The issue of tribal land ownership has also been focussed in chapter VI (Government of Bangladesh Responses, 1972-1992). Enduring rights on land can be secured by processes of which a cadastral survey is a prerequisite. The mounting, conduct and completion of such a survey have been complicated by the shifting style of livelihood and cultivation of some of the tribals and also by the threats to law and order posed by a handful of armed militants. However, under the new setting, promising peaceful solution of problems through dialogue and democratic participative process, a decision has been taken to begin the Cadastral Survey in 1993. The issue of land ownership is being treated with utmost care and importance on account of its highly sensitive nature.

It has also been noted in course of the detailed analyses in this work that despite the predominantly homogenous nature of the society in Bangladesh (in ethnic, linguistic and cultural terms), the cultural traits and ethnic heritage of tribal groups are regarded and respected as proud possessions enriching the varied mosaic of national life.

The way of life and the distinctive elements of tribal culture and heritage are carefully protected and preserved by special socio-economic measures. At the same time, democratic and participative political and economic steps continue to help mainstream the tribal groups in national life by accomodating their legitimate aspirations and demands.

Thus the analysis in this work finds ample proof of the sincerity and eagerness of the people and government of Bangladesh and the vast majority of the tribals to ensure success of the peaceful participative process. The tribal people have shown their awareness that they are one with the larger national society. This is a unity created with tireless care by shared history, a long record of peaceful and happy interexchange, interaction and social intermingling and cultural osmosis which have enriched all without diminishing any. This process needs to be nurtured and consistently sustained by the democratic national polity and tribals alike with tolerance, patience and care.

The peaceful, democratic and participative solution is the only way that ensures mutual survival and development. The other way points to chaos and disorder in a poverty-riddled, and economically underdeveloped country relentlessly harassed by natural and man-made calamities.

The importance of pluralism cannot be denied in a democracy especially in a society with distinct ethnic groups however small they may be. However, the limits of pluralism must be set and appreciated by all concerned. As a contemporary analyst aptly observes :

In the context of recent developments, the intransigence of certain groups and world developments in Eastern Europe, we no longer have that luxury or safety net. In other words scholars have to come to terms with not only the importance of pluralism but the limits of pluralism. When do we say, at this point pluralism ends and something else begins and the spectre is more daunting than what was envisioned. Conservatives would argue that the initial mistake was to push for pluralism for that is the push for fragmentation. With this one cannot agree since pluralism is the starting point for democratic discussion and a democratic polity in societies especially in multi-ethnic societies. But perhaps recent history in South Asia requires that we formulate the thesis more carefully so that we can identify where particularistic movements asserting parochial concerns have to give way to larger conceptions whether they be rooted in democratic norms of what in legal terms is called “the general principles of civilised societies”.

It is only when scholars from within the tradition begin to do this that we have hope of retaining universalist human values in our respective political orders".¹

It is a vital matter which needs to be appreciated not only by the scholars but also by the leaders of nation-states and the international media.

During the seventies the world-order appeared multi-polar or polycentric to many observers. Some thought that it had the possibility of becoming an "evolving polyarchy" ... "a place without a dominant structure of cooperation and conflict in which nation-states sub-national groups, and transnational special interests and communities would all be vying for the support and loyalty of individuals, and conflicts would have to be resolved primarily on the basis of *ad hoc* bargaining in a shifting context of power relationships".²

With the demise of the erstwhile Soviet Union in the early nineties, and the disappearance of the largely bipolar world, a new arrangement is evolving. The new world order — with 'one superpower', may be predominantly unipolar with multipolar underpinnings as the economic centres of power may be more diverse and different than the military one.

As already mentioned, this emerging scenario may be fraught with the dangers of polyarchy unless and until the limits of pluralism are set and appreciated by all concerned and tiny ethnic and subnational groups are happily contained within national entities by constructive new social imagination.

As the analysis in this volume has tended to underscore the democratic society in Bangladesh displays awareness of the unfolding reality. The steps Bangladesh have taken to solve the problem in the Chittagong Hill Tracts reflect the larger social awareness that "the nation can no longer be a mythical construct embodying one people, one race, one religion, one language, one culture. Diversity and managing it in a style which allows for the resolution of conflict in a non- confrontational manner is an important component of future development".³

The significance of this vital requirement is being increasingly recognized by the nations of the world. Thus Australia, while commenting on the Report by the Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission, stated **“Australia believes that the interest of all parties should be taken into account. We do not accept the central recommendation of the International CHT Report that Bengali settlers in the CHT be resettled in the plains”**. (Appendix II, Aide Memoire).

Such recognition of the realistic and just requirements to solve the problems becomes, all the more urgent in the context of misperception and distortion of various incidents of civilian clashes including the Logang incident (10 April 1992) by some quarters. These tended to overlook and minimize the root cause of the clash in Logang between the tribals and the Bengalis : deliberate plan and provocative action by the **Shanti Bahini**. The findings of the Judicial Enquiry Commission reasserts : the official casualty figure of 13 was correct and authentic and the “number of deaths of tribals have been inflated and magnified in a section of international press”. The Commission concluded that the report of “casualty in the incident totalling over 1,000”, “is clearly an imaginary one and concoction beyond proportion”. (Summary of Report of the Commission on Logang is at Appendix III).

It is important that this awareness of the reality-based requirements of the situation is shared by the neighbours who got involved, willingly or not, in the problem in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh and their future action be guided accordingly. If they do develop this consciousness and the emerging guardians of human and ethnic rights in the international arena also appreciate this and refrain from extending indiscriminate support and encouragement to the microscopic violent few among the members of the ethnic groups, peaceful solution of the problem in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh may be ensured within a short span of time.

NOTES

1. Radhika Coomeraswamy, "A New Social Imagination", pp. 9-10.
2. Seyom Brown, **New Forces in World Politics**, (Washington D. C., Brookings Institution, 1974), p. 186.
3. Radhika Coomeraswamy, "A New Social Imagination", p. 13.

CONVERSATION

WORLD FACING GREATER CHALLENGES ON HUMAN RIGHTS

LORD DAVID ENNALS is a familiar name around these parts of the world. Chairman of the Asia Committee of the British Refugee Council, Lord Ennals has a long-held interest in human rights in general, and the rights of indigenous or aboriginal peoples in particular. Although his latest visit to Bangladesh, from May 7 to May 13, was sponsored by the UK-based Campaign for Diasaster Prevention in Bangladesh (CDPB), this highly-energetic member of the British House of Lords covered a whole range of issues during his short stay.

He is actively involved in the move to repatriate some 237,000 Pakistanis still stranded in Bangladesh; he visited the Chittagong Hill Tracts and met senior civilian and military officials to discuss the problems facing the region and the indigenous tribal people of the area; and last but not least, the continuing exodus of the Rohingyas from Myanmar into Bangladesh came in for some sharp scrutiny and comment from the veteran British Politician, who served as a Foreign Office

minister in Harold Wilson's government between 1974 and 1976, and as the minister of health in James Callaghan's cabinet between '76 and '79. Last week, Lord Ennals talked to a Daily Star team led by the Editor, S. M. Ali, covering a wide range issues affecting human rights in this region, as well as outside the region. S. M. Ali was assisted during the conversation by Assistant Editor Subir Mustafa and Staff Reporter Toufique Imrose Khalidi.

The Daily Star : As far as we know your visit to Bangladesh concerned three major issues — the Rohingya refugees from Myanmar, the Chittagong Hill Tracts and the stranded Pakistanis in Bangladesh

LORD DAVID ENNALS : These were really some issues which I had a mind to look into. But particularly I came here for my interest in flood protection and cyclone, the other issues came because of long standing interests.

I came here on behalf of the Campaign for Disaster Prevention which was established in the United Kingdom by Bangladeshi people who are anxious to be of assistance to people in Bangladesh and supported by some people I myself were very interested in. So the starting point has been, looking at all sorts of things like flood control and cyclone protection shelters and variety of things that concerns disaster prevention in this country.

DS : Would you kindly tell us how meaningful has your visit proved to be. Are you happy about your visit? Have you drawn some conclusions over your visit here? If so, what kind of conclusions?

LDE : Well, for me personally, it has been a special joy, because it has been for the first time in many years that I have been here under a

democratically elected government. I have had the privilege to meet the ministers of that government and the Speaker of the elected House and the Leader of the Opposition. I am a democrat and I fell happy visiting a country which is pursuing democratic policies.

“There must be constant international pressure on Myanmar as I believe there has to be upon Indonesia and on China and wherever there is gross violation of human rights and oppression against indigenous people”.

Secondly, I haven't been to Bangladesh for a long time and certainly think Dhaka is looking a much better place, streets are better and cleaner and the buildings are more impressive than they were a few years back. So there obviously appears to be progress in this city and progress in this country.

DS : Have you any thoughts you can share with us regarding the situation in the Chittagong Hill Tracts and the Rohingya problem?

LDE : Well, let me start with the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Now, obviously, it is an internal affair of Bangladesh. Secondly it is a problem that goes back deep into your history. Thirdly, the problem has very special interest this time, not just because of the massacre (in Logang) or allegations of massacres, but because the world is more aware than ever before about the importance of protecting indigenous people.

One other thing that I am much concerned about is that, indigenous people in all parts of the world, be it Brazilian-Indian or Tibetans or Chakmas ought to have their rights — the freedom of culture, be allowed to take pride in their history and language and above all their need of a special protection. I'll be attending a special conference in Rio, before the Earth Summit, on the rights of indigenous people.

So I obviously had taken an interest in what had been going on in Chittagong Hill Tracts partly for the reason I have already mentioned in my discussion and secondly, of course, there was a massacre on April 10, and the allegation vary from one another on the total number of casualties there. They say one thousand two hundred were killed whereas, the government verifies that 13 died in the incident. That was the official figure I received from the General Officer Commanding in Chittagong.

Now when there was so much differences in each of the figures, quite clearly it demanded a thorough inquiry. So when I came to Bangladesh I made myself clear saying that it demanded a judicial inquiry. Therefore I have been able to welcome the fact that an independent judicial inquiry under Justice Sultan has been announced. This information was given to me by the Foreign Minister and I was really glad about this.

If I can get a little further, it is obviously an internal problem, but one of interest because of the rights of indigenous people. It is like so many other problems in the world affected by things from outside. There is no doubt in my mind that the evidence, that people have in large numbers been murdered by the Shantibahini, is a part of the problem that we simply cannot ignore.

I firmly believe that the Shantibahini could never have fulfilled this murderous task if they did not have any assistance from outside. So that is a problem which has international connotation. It may be that some time may come when the government of Bangladesh may seek a longer term solution. They might look to the United Nations or some other international bodies for help, who can independently come up with some advice, or some international group who can look up the matter with some authority. And for this a good relationship with India is needed.

The government of Bangladesh could not expect that Chittagong Hill Tracts should forever be governed by the Army, any more than I can wish that the situation in Northern Ireland should be always governed by the British Army.

Actually this matter has been of great concern to the voluntary and human rights organisations in Britain and they asked me, knowing that I was coming to Bangladesh to make inquiries. Before I came here I had written to the former High Commissioner on April 30 before he left London and had written to him urging that there should be a judicial inquiry.

DS : Your Lordship, you mentioned about a conference to be held in Rio before the Earth Summit which will discuss the problems of indigenous people. Will the Chakma issue be discussed there? Will they be represented there in any way ?

LDE : It's a very good question, I hope that they go. I really don't know the answer to this question. I know that there would be some 700 representatives of indigenous people throughout the world, and I know that at one stage the Chakmas were on the list, but I don't know whether infact they would be present in Rio.

DS : You have had a look at the whole of South Asia and also South East Asia. As a human rights activist, how do you feel about the situation of human rights in countries which are democratic, at least has a parliamentary democracy? We are thinking of Malaysia, Singapore and we are talking about India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. Are we on the right track? Are we doing it the right way ?

LDE : I think you have a long way to go, quite frankly speaking. A long way to go.

Whether we are talking of democratic government or countries which make no claim to be democratic I think in Asia in general there is some severe human rights problems. I am speaking for Asia as a whole.

I look as far as Tibet. I am deeply concerned for the rights of the people of Tibet, who are a people in their own right. They have a history of their own independence, a culture and tradition which spread over hundreds of years and yet are treated by the Chinese government as if they were some colonial territory. I think the issue — rights of indigenous people of Tibet has a very strong claim which must eventually be met and the government of China has to face external criticism for the way it has treated the people of Tibet.

Myanmar is perhaps the worst example of all. Whether we are going to see a change in policy by the government of Myanmar, we simply don't know. But in there have been few good signs. The government has lifted the restriction on anyone visiting Aung San Suu Kyi and her being totally regimented. May be this is a sign that in the coming future the government intends to treat its people with some respect.

However, the fact that the majority of those who were chosen to represent the people through a free election (in 1989) are now in prison, doesn't yet give anyone much cause for hope. Nor does the plight of the refugees who have come to Bangladesh. Obviously they had fled to Bangladesh from a land which practised oppression, torture, rape, forced labour and denial of human rights. If it was not so, there would have been no good reason for them to come here.

I visited the Myanmar refugees in their camps and had great respect for the Bangladesh government in the way it is looking after these refugees, providing shelter, food and water to the best of its abilities.

“In giving more power to the UN, it must be power to the UN. Not to the United States or any other countries of the world which occupy global influence. The UN represents humanity and we must see that those that have power don’t misuse or flout that power by seeking to use UN”.

There are about quarter of a million refugees from Myanmar and I can’t believe that they are going to go back voluntarily without a change of situation from which they have fled. There has been an agreement that they will return. But any return other than voluntary would be a second denial of their human rights. If by any change at all the government of Bangladesh decided to send back any of them who didn’t want to go, that would be an abuse of their human rights.

So there must be constant international pressure on Myanmar as I believe there has to be upon Indonesia and on China and wherever there is gross violation of human rights and oppression against indigenous people.

If I may add a general comment at this stage, it is that the prospects of fulfilling the original purposes of the UN Charter is so much better than there has been for the last 40 years, we can now look forward with much hope to the tasks that the UN can perform. It always seemed to me that, though non-interference in internal affairs of states under Article 27, was an essential part of the original membership of the Charter, I think we are moving away from it bit by bit.

We are beginning to accept that the question of human rights at least, now go beyond boundaries. For example, the UN in fact was interfering in the internal affairs of South Africa (by imposing sanctions for its apartheid policies), and as we took into the situations in Libya and much more so in Iraq — the UN is beginning to say, here are such gross

breaches of human conduct that we, the UN, must intervene on behalf of the humanity.

This may be a very important time in our history. It so happens that this weekend I am involved in a conference in Rome sponsored by the Italian government into which they have invited all sorts of people most of whom are far more expert than I. People like Perez de Cueller and Edward Shevarnadze and many other people who are now working within the UN system. We would be looking at the future of the UN under the new and happy circumstances of the ending of the Cold War. I think that some of the issues that we are discussing are bound to come up in that conference — can the UN fulfill the task on behalf of we, the people of the world ?

DS : The UN Charter lacks the strength of taking any kind of punitive action against countries where violation of human rights are very obvious, gross and blatant. Is there any move at all among the human rights activists like yourself to strengthen the UN Charter or UN system, because it's not just a question of passing a resolution but going into some kind of action ?

LDE : Firstly, I would not use the term 'punitive action' rather I would prefer to think it as action seeking to influence situations.

A very good example at the moment is Libya. Quite clearly the Libyan government has been told that if it does not meet the wishes of the Security Council and release for trial two people — the ones who are alleged to be responsible for the bombing of the plane in which several hundreds of people had died — then the UN member states shall take definite action against this.

This is very interesting example. I would like the Security Council to look at issues like Myanmar. But one thing must never happen, the

power of UN should never go into the hands of a wrong power or any wrong group of powers.

I had had concerns at the time of the Gulf crisis, I could not have been more condemnatory of the behaviour of Iraq and of Saddam Hussain but at the certain moment when the UN had decided economic sanction against Iraq was the proper way to influence the situation, the affairs seemed to move outside of the Security Council. As you remember that Perez de Cueller then remarked that the actions taken against Iraq was not UN's action and he felt very deeply about that and I was much concerned about that too.

So, in giving more power to the UN, it must be power to the UN. Not to the United States or any other countries of the world which occupy global influence. The UN represents humanity and we must see that those that have power don't misuse ore flout that power by seeking to use the UN.

DS : One gets the feeling that much of the activities in favour of human rights has been conducted from the West. Is there anything being done to strengthen these movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America. How do we make the Human Rights Movement gain stronger grassroot support ?

LDE : It is really going to take a long time. I was at a conference last year in Nigeria, which was attended by human rights activities from different parts of Africa. Some of them, though they were human rights activists, had to be very careful that they did not get arrested by their own governments. Some African governments believe that any human rights activity tantamount to activity against their own governments. So some human rights workers are in great danger. But I think the situation is improving day by day.

But in African and some countries in Latin America, human rights has a long way to travel. But the situation is improving there also.

We are beginning to see more and more democratic regimes in Latin America. But no doubt some human rights activists in Brazil even face danger to their lives. Their government considers their activities as an attack on the government.

The case is almost same in China and the other parts of Asia. So human rights in these areas has a long way to go before it is genuinely applicable. China had made it perfectly clear that its concept of human rights is totally different from that of the West and its practice is thus unwelcome.

To tell you the truth I am not too optimistic that in the very near future there will be a genuine order in human rights in these regions.

DS : You have given your viewpoint about the violation of human rights in Tibet, East Timor and Burma? But how about those countries which claim to be democratic for instance, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan ? The laws that they practice, are they in any confrontation with the question of human rights ?

LDE : You see, I don't think I am in the business of making general critical comments. Except on specific issues, I cannot make expert opinions, since I am not an expert. I must agree that many of the democratic have to face up to the fact that in many occasions they are pursuing undemocratic policies. But I don't want to discuss it by picking on or by singling out one particular government that one might say I am attacking one government and these are violations which even cannot be proved.

Let's say, the Kashmir issue. I am not on the side of India or Pakistan. I am on the side of Kashmiris. They I think should have the liberty to form their own institutions and own form of government without any domination from either of the two great powers.

People have been fighting for their rights worldwide. Such a right is the right of the Pakistanis (stranded in Bangladesh) to return to Pakistan. Even though the government of Pakistan, is going a bit slow on this issue. I hope that they will come round to the commitment that they had made.

DS : When the Vietnamese boat people were sent back from Hongkong, some observers said that they had been forced back. It is difficult to say how far they were volunteering ...

LDE : The British Refugee Council is very much opposed to the idea of forcing people home. I myself was much involved in this. Both by visiting Vietnam and Hongkong and had some strong words to say.

It so happened that, in relation to the first group who were forced back, there were 51 people which the British government put on a plane and look back, I spoke to 40 of those 51. I spoke to them confidentially, without being heard by any representative of the Vietnamese government.

Firstly none of them had been arrested by the Vietnamese authority. They were received with maximum acceptance and help, and they told me that infact they were very ready to go back to Vietnam. They had volunteered to go back, some of them complained that even though they were volunteering to go back, they were kept waiting.

There was a rather special group, the second group which was special in the sense that they had been from Vietnam to Hongkong twice. There had been people who had gone from Hongkong to Vietnam, and some of them voluntarily to Vietnam, and then made a second trip, because if they came twice they would get a second rehabilitation grant.

So both of these were rather special groups. I don't think either of these two could be labelled as typical. I am against and British Refugee

Council is totally against people being forced back to places from which they had fled.

DS: Do you have a policy of looking into countries from which they have fled, to see what the situation is which prevails there ?

LDE : Yes, we have to look at those too. I think that much of the cause of people quitting Vietnam to go to some other parts of the World, whether its Malaysia or Hongkong or anywhere, is the policies of the American government in denying the government of Vietnam and the people of Vietnam the opportunities of normal trade, and normal aid, as would apply to any other countries. The Americans have continued to insist ever since because the Vietnamese had defeated them in battle.

I am happy to realize that the British government is putting maximum pressure on the Americans on this specific issue and believe that there will be time when America and Vietnam will live in better terms. The British government is now beginning to support the works of the voluntary organisations and putting increasing amount of money and there is more and more being done by the British government and it shows that it doesn't accept the American theory.

I think if their was a proper aid and trade programme in Vietnam, it would put an end to the exodus of these people. Because Vietnam is denied normal access to the markets of the world that it is lagging behind than many other poor countries of the world.

DS: Your Excellency, we have infact a very difficult situation in Northern Ireland and we receive all kinds of reports here. Being in such a position we are really not too clear, could you brief us in short about the situation in Northern Ireland from the human rights angle ?

LDE : I won't be of any solution. But I will answer to the best of my abilities.

Earlier today, talking to someone else I compared the Shantibahani with the Irish Republican Army (IRA) who are committing acts of violence, murder and anarchy. They are killing people without any thought about the people they are killing. It is violence of a disgraceful kind whether its is the Shantibahani or the IRA such acts of violence and thoughtless murder make a political solution all the more difficult.

But there must be a political solution. As there must be a solution for the Chakmas and majority of the people in Northern Ireland want to find a political solution. The proportionate people who are involved in violence are minute. They feel oppressed by the murderous activities of the IRA. They would like to see, as I would like to see a political solution and an eventual withdrawal of British forces and that must be our objective.

I would like to see an eventual agreement about the whole of Ireland. The government of the Republic of Ireland is anxious to find a solution. As you know that there are talks that take place regularly between the governments of the Republic and of Britain, keeping in mind a solution for Northern Ireland and eventually a solution must be found.

You with the Shantibahini, we with the IRA are left with a situation which has been difficult for a political solution by the use of deliberate actions of violence and murder. The arms are often smuggled and supplied from outside. There are some Americans who back IRA activists to create violence in Belfast, as outside assistance had powered into the hands of Shantibahini to kill innocent people here. I for myself want to see a definite solution to the crisis in Northern Ireland, even if by united the two parts of Ireland together.

To achieve a peaceful settlement on the issue the democratic views of the people of Northern Ireland must of course be taken into consideration by the British government.

DS : As a human rights activist do you have a strong feeling against the growth of armaments in the modern world ? You know there is this new theory that, let us reduce the areas of consumption and cut short defence expenditure and use it in development works. How do you feel about it ?

LDE : I totally agree with you and I think it imposes heavy responsibility on those who supply arms and those who buy arms. The problems take shape from both the two sides.

The relatively developed Western countries including China produce huge arms inspired by many of the less developed countries who are eager to buy them. Some governments are spending massive proportion of their budget on defence and not on education and health and human betterment, but upon maintaining huge armies which protect dictatorship and often protect people who are making big money out of business. There is a too closer a link between arms trade and protection of business interest.

I believe in a world where we want to see at the end of the Cold War, a greater measure of peace, everyone should be alert that we do not use such high proportion of our resources for armaments. The decade has not really created any opportunity where we can drastically reduce the expenditure and production of arms.

Another focus is that the difference or gap between the rich and the poor has only multiplied in the past few years and it is still-increasing at an alarming rate. The least developed countries are only repaying debts and it seems like their money is pouring into the hands of the developed donors more than they receive from them. It is monstrous and I think that the powerful countries of the world should face up to this fact and come to the aid of the lesser developed countries. I put forward this case at the conference in Rio. Of course, I do not have any considerable

power as I only represent a few non-governmental organisations like World Federation of United Nations Association and the British United Nations Association. So I firmly agree with you and think that the poorer or less developed countries of the world should not be hired to purchase arms at the cost of their other basic needs.

DS : You have visited the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar. Do you think that the bilateral agreements between Bangladesh and Myanmar is going to workout ?

LDE : It still remains more of a choice or option for Myanmar. It will work out if they want it to workout. Myanmar authorities first have to make sure that the environment for repatriation of the refugees is safe for them. It also has to be confirmed by the UN personnels who will monitor the situation prevailing in Myanmar. Without some action from Myanmar it is difficult to believe that the agreement just as it now stands can work. Because people should be allowed to live in their own countries in freedom. But Myanmar has to do enough to impress these refugees that they will live in security and peace there and not continued oppression. And Bangladesh in that way also will not have to be burdened with refugees from other countries.

So anyone who would want it to work would surely have to create conditions.

DS : Lord Ennals, do you think that Bangladesh should have played together with Myanmar in this issue to force them to allow United Nation monitoring and observance from all over the world ?

LDE : No, I honestly think that they did (Bangladesh leaders) their best. I have spoken to many high foreign office personnel here and am convinced that there couldn't have been a better approach.

DS : One question which we really should have asked before, because it relates to the matter of the indigenous people, we were

wondering if human rights activists are also similarly concerned about the rights of minorities over the world, who are not indigenous but who may just be minorities in terms of number ?

LDE : You see, the rights of indigenous people is one question and the rights of minorities is another. Most states contain within their boundaries minorities. People of minority languages, races, cultures and religious almost exist in every countries. The rights of these people have to be respected as much as the rights of indigenous people.

To differentiate the two I would say most minorities have friends elsewhere, but the indigenous people are pretty deprived, poor and friendless. But their rights are as important to be protected as the rights of the indigenous people.

DS : Would you agree that not enough has been done about that ?

LDE : At present human rights organisations face a bigger challenge of protecting the rights of minorities and indigenous people as the world, is dividing into small islets and a vast country like the Soviet Union break up into small minority groups. Yugoslavia is another case where the rights of minorities must be protected. So we are facing more challenges now. But at the same time we feel that we are better equipped than ever before in protecting the rights of minorities and indigenous people world-wide.

DS : Thank you Lord Ennals, for your time.

EXTRACTS FROM AIDE MEMOIRE

Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT)

The international community will continue to take an interest in the human rights aspects of the CHT. We trust the GOB will accord this matter a high priority.

We note that the Shanti Bahini have called a three month truce and have expressed an interest in negotiating. Is there any chance of negotiations being held? We would hope that if a dialogue committee is established to conduct such negotiations, consideration could be given to one of its members being an independent member of the judiciary.

Australia believes that the interests of all parties should be taken into account. We do not accept the central recommendation of the International CHT Report that Bengali settlers in the CHT be resettled in the plains.

The transfer of remaining powers to the Hill District Councils would fulfil earlier the Government of Bangladesh promises to seek a lasting political solution to this problem.

Conventions

Australia welcomes Bangladesh being a party to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention of the Rights of the Child. We would welcome Bangladesh becoming a party to the leading instruments of these conventions, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

*Government of Bangladesh
Dhaka, 16 August 1992*

**SALIENT FEATURES OF THE FINDINGS
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF
THE LOGANG DISTURBANCES ENQUIRY
COMMISSION, 1992**

The following sections contain salient-features of the findings and recommendations in the Report of the Logang Disturbances Enquiry Commission - 1992, which was released during the month of October, 1992. After the tragic April 10 incident in Logang in Khagrachari, Government of Bangladesh formed this one-member Commission headed by **Justice Sultan Hossain Khan** under the Commission of Enquiry Act, 1956 to determine the cause of this incident, identify persons responsible and submit recommendations to avoid recurrence of such incident in future.

The Judicial Enquiry Commission, basing itself in Khagrachari, went into the depth of the tragic incident of Logang. After extensive interview with 101 people which included tribals and non-tribals in Logang and in neighbouring villages and Khagrachhari and their leaders and elected representatives, officials of civil administration, civic, military and para-military forces like Army, BDR, Ansars and VDP (Village Defence Party) and all concerned in Dhaka as well as cross varification of all evidences the Commission formulated its report and submitted it to the Government. The report was thus a direct result of painstaking efforts, extensive evidences and thorough scrutiny of all available evidence.

The salient features of the Commission's findings, conclusions and recommendations are as follows :

A. Exact Casualty of the Logang Incident

- i. One of the most important findings of the Commission was its conclusion that the official figures of casualty as stated by local administration immediately after the tragic incident - 13 killed (12 tribals and 1 non-tribal) and 13 injured were true, fully reflected the reality and were in no way understated. The Commission, after thorough scrutiny of all available evidence and practical factors concluded that there was no possibility of any greater death tally.
- ii. Taking into account the claim of 138 deaths as alleged by local tribal organisation - **Pahari Chatra Parishad** and reported in its magazine 'Radder', the Commission was able to get 22 people, who figured in that death list, appear before it and give testimony as living human beings. In addition, the judicial body obtained sworn affidavits from local tribal functionaries that most of the other people claimed as having been killed in the incident were alive and residing in neighbouring villages and that the 'Radder' list was fictitious. The Commission also stated that no independent confirmation could be given by any one including the **Pahari Chatra Parishad** of any more deaths and injury figures over and above the official figures.

B. Responsibility for the Tragic Incident

- i. Taking a larger view of the problem in CHT the Commission independently reached the verdict that the Logang incident was deliberately fomented, precipitated and provoked by the **Shanti Bahini** insurgents as part of their overall destabilization endeavours to perpetuate a situation of insecurity, tension and conflict in the three hill districts.

- ii. Confirming the initial killing of a non-tribal boy by armed insurgents as true, this independent judicial body concluded that the resultant killing of 12 tribals and burning of 550 clustered huts of tribals were “the results of the planned objective of the Shanti Bahini” and it was an act of backlash and revenge on the part of non-tribals. It went to add that the non-tribal boy’s killing was a pre-mediated act of the **Shanti Bahini** to incite the non-tribals into launching assault against the tribals and thus subvert ethnic cohesion and harmony.
- iii. Taking the direct, immediate view of the Logang incident, the Commission held a section of non-tribals of the locality, members of civic and para-military forces like Ansars and VDP responsible for the incident of burning and firing which caused the tribal deaths. Accordingly it recommended that the FIR (First Information Report) case lodged on behalf of tribals should thoroughly be investigated by the competent police and criminal investigating officials in order to ensure that persons responsible for the incident were tried and punished.
- iv. The Commission, in addition, expressed strong disapproval of the conduct of some BDR personnel commenting that more mature and responsible handling of the incident by them could have averted the tragic incident. It specifically established that the allegation of the armed tribal insurgents’ presence in Logang after the initial incident and apprehension of further **Shanti Bahini** attacks (which prompted the civic forces firing) was not true and that the civic bodies acted more in panic and confusion than responsibly contributing to resultant killings.

C. Positive and Pragmatic Recommendations

Apart from factually releasing its findings the Commission, acting independently, also made a number of positive and pragmatic recommendations.

In order to prevent recurrence of Logang type incidents in future the commission feels that the designs of the tribal insurgents to disturb ethnic peace and tranquility have to be frustrated first. It recommends that the primary objective of the local administration must be to maintain law and order and to deal with the tribals and non-tribals equally and impartially.

Since the acts of insurgency are a major factor in perpetuating tension and enmity between the tribals and the non-tribals, the Commission recommends that the insurgents should continue to be checked and curbed by the Army unit as their primary duty is to help preserve peace and tranquility and that the presence of the Army units in the CHT in aid of the civil authorities would be necessary as long as the **Shanti Bahini** insurgency continues. It feels the withdrawal of the Army can be recommended only after the insurgents give up their arms and that unless this happens withdrawal of the Army from the Hill Tracts can not be recommended.

The Commission has at the same time, strongly recommended that the civil officials of the hill districts should be left to do their duties without any hinderence or bottleneck so that the civil administration can deal with the tribal population in a normal manner. It also suggests that the Army units stationed in the Hill Tracts should not do any work relating to the civil administration other than those connected with the counter insurgency operation.

Observing that some unscrupulous tribals and non-tribals are involved in illegal transfer or possession of land and that tension and ill-feeling between the two communities are, in substantial measure, related to possession and dis-possession of land and consequent disputes, the Commission strongly recommends immediate adoption of land survey for preparation of record as to titles and possession of owners or claimants of land. It feels that once land survey is completed a substantial cause of tension and acrimony would be eradicated in CHT.

The Commission also recommends that the situation in CHT including inter-community disputes, should be enquired into and settled by a Parliamentary Committee of the Bangladesh Parliament.

The Commission has specifically recommended that clustered villages of the tribals and non-tribals should be gradually dismantled and that the people should be rehabilitated and settled in their respective villages where they have their land and orchards obtained by way of settlement. The non-tribal villagers should be dispersed and sent to their respective villages but they must raise their own security force namely Village Defence Party with assistance of the concerned authorities. The recommendation is strongly at variance with the existing policy of the Government.

The Committee in Conclusion Specifically Noted the Following :

“Logang incident regarding the number of death of the tribals have been inflated and magnified in a section of international press; it has reported that casualty in the incident was over 1000 which is clearly an imaginary one and a concoction beyond proportion”.

About this Book

This book relates the largely untold story of the origin and evolution of the problem of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) of Bangladesh. It examines the historical evolution of the CHT from the early recorded times.

The analyses are presented against the perspective that the problem in the CHT is not unique in the present day world. The challenge posed by assertive regional minorities is a widespread phenomenon shared by numerous states — both developing and developed — of the world of our times. The problem of integrating them peacefully and equitably into the mainstream of national life through democratic participation is shared alike by many postcolonial developing and economically, technologically and industrially developed polities.

The untold story of the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh is sought to be related in this volume so that there is wider and objective understanding and comprehension of the essence of the problem : the complex challenge that a democratic society faces from extreme and mindless violence engineered by a few elements not amenable to reason or rationality, even though the vast majority of the concerned ethnic minorities opt for and participate in the peaceful, democratic process of solving the problem.

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