9 The Chittagong Hill Tracts

Diminishing violence or violent peace?

Kabita Chakma and Bina D’Costa

The Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Accord 1997, popularly known as the Peace Accord (shanti chudik), signed on 2 December 1997, formally marked an end to more than two decades of armed struggle for autonomy by the indigenous or Adivasi Jummas of the CHT in Bangladesh. The Accord was signed between the Awami League government and the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS, popularly known only as JSS), an indigenous regional political party and the only such party at that time. While the JSS demobilized its military wing, the Shanti Bahini (Peace Force), as part of the signing of the Accord, the Bangladesh government continued to maintain high military presence and military rule in post-Accord CHT.

In the absence of armed conflict between the Bangladesh military and the Shanti Bahini over the last decade, the CHT has witnessed less vicious strife. But 13 years later, governments showed little interest in, or efforts towards, implementing the Accord in full, and no meaningful progress had been made on the most contentious provision of the Accord: ‘settlement of land disputes including proper rehabilitation of displaced people’. Also, soon after the signing of the Accord, there were intra-Jumma conflicts. These, however, were limited to conflict between the Jumma political parties, the JSS (mentioned above) and the United People’s Democratic Front (UPDF), and more recently between the JSS and a JSS-reformist faction. These disputes represent a fragmentation of the post-autonomy movement.

Charles Weibel writes that ‘peace in its progressive or dialectical mode denotes active individual and collective self-determination and emancipatory empowerment’ (2007: 8). The Accord has not succeeded in bringing peace. In this sense to the CHT. A UNDP–CHTDF report (2009: 164–165, 180) states that about 81 per cent of respondents to a survey have identified ‘communal threat’ as the major obstructing factor out of eleven factors preventing the achievement of peace in the CHT. Our own fieldwork suggests that post-Accord CHT with its massive military presence preserved a situation that could be described as ‘violent peace’. David Mares’ conceptualization of ‘violent peace’ underpins this analysis. In his examination of militarization in Latin America, he suggests that violent peace is:

the use of officially sanctioned military violence across national boundaries when war is not the intended result. War might occur, but as a result of
Political transition, healing and reconciliation and economic recovery are all closely interlinked with other security dynamics such as defusing spoilers of the peace process, integrating various factions, demobilizing former combatants appropriately and resettling displaced people. We argue that intense militarization, the perpetual fear and insecurity of people and displacement in the CHT make it a case study not of diminishing conflict but rather one of violent peace and latent conflict. This chapter explores militarization and displacement, the two major factors contributing to violent peace in post-Accord CHT, and in doing so, highlights the ‘missing elements’ that would be necessary to diminish conflict in enduring ways.

Background: The intractability of violent peace

The Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) in southeast Bangladesh, consisting of Rangamati, Khagrachari and Bandarban, are the home of 11 diverse groups (Roy 2007; Pande and Jamil 2009). Known as Adivasis, and regarded as indigenous peoples from the hills, they are easily distinguishable from the people of the plains because of their physical features, sociocultural practices and economic activities (Adnan 2008). Because of their traditional practice of shifting cultivation they are also collectively referred to as ‘Jumma’ people (IDMC 2006). This self-identification is also used by various CHT political communities to frame their own Adivasi/Jumma nation-building strategies. The CHT have geo-political and strategic significance for Bangladesh and South Asian security for various reasons: their proximity to India and Burma; the porosity of their borders; their rich natural resources; and the historical, political and social contexts that constitute CHT communities as ‘other’ (in times of conflict, also as an internal enemy) within a Bangladeshi state.

The British annexed the region in 1860 and created an autonomous administrative zone ‘the Chittagong Hill Tracts’ within undivided British Bengal. In 1900, the Raj enacted Regulation 1 in order to ‘protect’ the indigenous communities from economic exploitation by others and to safeguard traditional sociocultural and political institutions based on chiefly hierarchies, customary laws and common ownership of land. The CHT district was awarded to East Pakistan at Partition as part of the hinterland of the port city of Chittagong and to compensate Pakistan for its losses in the partition of Punjab in the west of the subcontinent (Mohsin 2003: 19). This was the beginning of the ‘resource war’ that led to the present-day violent peace in the CHT.

The government of Pakistan amended the 1900 Act several times against the wishes of indigenous communities. The amendments allowed the migration of non-indigenous peoples from the plains into the hills to take advantage of the CHT’s natural resources. In 1962, the Ayub Khan regime decided to construct the Kaptai Dam to generate hydro-electricity for East Pakistan. This decision caused widespread dislocation of peoples and sowed the seeds of conflict. While colonization during the British period severely affected people’s livelihoods in the hills, the decision to build the dam, the militarization of the region and the economic and social costs of community grievances intensified the conflict. The dam flooded 54,000 acres and displaced 100,000 people, most of whom were Chakmas, the largest of the Jumma groups of the CHT. According to human rights organizations, more than 40,000 Chakmas left for Arunachal Pradesh in India, where a majority remained as stateless persons. The construction of the dam, loss of control over natural resources, threats of forced assimilation; construction of non-permanent army camps and oppression by the state led to the internal crisis of displacement.

The exploitation of indigenous communities continued even after Bangladesh’s independence in 1971 following the war of secession from Pakistan. Citizens of the newly liberated Bangladesh celebrated Bengali ethnic and linguistic identities as the drivers of independence. However, the connotations of Bengali identity isolated the minority population of East Pakistan who spoke other languages and were not ethnic Bengalis. The Constitution of 1972 called for a homogeneous nation-state, one language and one nation. An unsuccessful attempt by a delegation headed by Sharif Brikash Chakma (Rangamati-based Awami League leader) endeavoured to ensure separate constitutional safeguards for indigenous populations. In February 1972, Manabendra Narayan Larma met Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the first Prime Minister of Bangladesh, with a charter of four demands. Mujib, it is said, advised that ‘you all should become Bengalis (tora shob banglaie holey ja)’, following which Larma refused to endorse the Constitution. He said:

Under no definition or logic can a Chakma be a Bengali or a Bengali be a Chakma. A Bengali living in Pakistan cannot become or be called a Punjabi, Pathan or Sindhi and any of them living in Bangladesh cannot be called a Bengali. As citizens of Bangladesh we are all Bangladeshis but we also have a separate ethnic identity, which unfortunately the Awami League leaders do not want to understand.

(Singh 2003: 223)

In 1972 Larma and other senior CHT political activists established PCJSS and in subsequent years, the Shanti Bahini, its armed wing. Various regimes neglected CHT’s economic and social development. Although Bangladesh experienced steady economic growth from 1990, it remained one of the poorest countries of the world, with about 41 per cent of the population living on less than US$1 a day (DFAT 2010). Scholars identify the CHT region in Bangladesh as the most economically marginalized, with an average income 15 per cent lower than the rest of the country; its indigenous inhabitants fare even worse.

These colonial and post-colonial grievances resulted in an armed insurgency in the CHT in 1976. As a counterinsurgency strategy the government relocated over
400,000 poor and landless Bengalis to the region between 1979 and 1983. Many of the Chakmas crossed the border to Mizoram and Tripura in India. By 1983, nearly 40,000 Chakmas had arrived in Mizoram, and by May 1986 another 50,000 Chakmas had taken shelter in five refugee camps in Tripura (D’Costa 2011).

State violence against indigenous peoples in the CHT can be termed “politics of demography,” in which the Bangladeshi state envisaged making the indigenous peoples a minority in their own land. The Bangladeshi state planned large-scale migration of Bengalis into the CHT, in conjunction with systematic measures to evict and force out the indigenous peoples from their homes and settlements. It has been described as:

the manifestation of a deliberate, ruthless and cynical strategy of deploying state power to change the ethnic composition of the CHT and the distribution of its lands in favour of Bengali settlers with total disregard for the rights and interest of the Hill peoples.

(Adnan 2004: 53)

Such migration was the second biggest cause of internal displacement in the CHT after the massive dislocation of the 1960s with the creation of the Kaptai lake.9 To carry out the transmigration program, the CHT Deputy Commissioner sent secret memorandums to commissioners in the plains with instructions to select poor landless Bengali families from their respective areas. Before settling in the CHT, each migrant family was promised 5 acres of hilly land, 4 acres of “mixed” land, 2.5 acres of paddy land and bank loans. The government provided the logistics for their transportation to the CHT and reception at different points along the way. The state also provided incentives like cash allowances, military protection in their new locations and food rations. Transmigrants’ food rations and military protection continued in 2012.


Successive governments used the transmigration program as a strategy to combat insurgency and change the demographic composition of the CHT. The state achieved its aim of making Bengalis the largest single ethnic group. The Bengali proportion of the CHT population reached 39 per cent in 1981; it had been 9 per cent in 1951 and 13 per cent in 1961 (Adnan 2004: 12, 57). In 1991, it reached nearly 50 per cent (48.57 per cent) (Adnan 2004: 57). In 2011, two-thirds of the Bengali population of CHT were migrants, and 62 per cent of Bengalis living in rural CHT had been there for less than 30 years (UNDP–CHTDF 2009: 46).

As there was no vacant land in the CHT to accommodate more people, the transmigration was made possible by employing two violent measures against the indigenous peoples: eviction and extermination, that is: the army and new settlers massacred and abused indigenous people, particularly women (Chakma 2010: 291). Sexual and gender-based violence against indigenous women and children, and conversions to Islam through forced marriage to Bengali men, also posed serious threats to the indigenous communities. There had been more than a dozen publicized massacres in the CHT before the Accord (from 1979 to 1997).11

The CHT Accord signed between the Awami League government and the PCJS on 2 December 1997 was expected to empower people, withdraw non-permanent army camps from the region and deal with the repatriation of Adivasis who had fled to India or displaced within the CHT. While at the time the international community considered this a successful case of conflict resolution, it involved no third-party mediation or direct intervention by international actors, nor was civil society involved in the peace process. These factors contributed to the failures of the Accord.

Conflict diminution? Post-Accord dynamics

While armed conflict in the CHT officially ended following the signing of the Accord, what remains in the region is a situation of violent peace. Several factors contribute to this. First, various Bangladeshi regimes have continued authoritarian control over the CHT. The army, the police, border security forces and intelligence officers all constitute a heavy presence, which contributes to a securitized environment. Instead of demilitarization there has been massive militarization following the Accord in the name of maintaining peace.

Soon after the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the military administration took over the entire country in August 1975. Although the state went through many democratic and military governments, there has been little change in conditions in the CHT. The state also maintained ‘Operation Utтарan’ (meaning Operation Elevation/Uplifting), de facto military rule, to allow the military and para-military to intervene in civil or political matters in the CHT when confronted by protests from indigenous political groups and local and national civil society and human rights groups. It also retained the ‘shantakarar’, or ‘pacification’, program. Under this scheme, the military undertook some economic measures to pacify the indigenous people’s dissatisfaction with the obstacles to social, cultural, economic and political rights. In 1991, the CHT Commission estimated that there was one member of the security forces for every ten indigenous persons in the CHT (Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission 1991: 42) making it one of the most militarized zones on earth. The scenario of military presence in post-war CHT was unchanged in 2011. In a report of April 2011, UN Special Rapporteur Lars-Anders Baer pointed out that one-third of the Bangladesh army was stationed in the CHT, an area that accounts for only one-tenth of the entire country (IRIN Asia 2011). The UN Special Rapporteur’s report also mentioned continuation of a ‘gross human rights violations’, including ‘arbitrary arrests, torture, extrajudicial killings, harassment of rights activists and sexual harassment’ (IRIN Asia 2011).
The Accord stipulates the gradual dismantling and removal of all temporary military and para-military camps from the CHT and retention of six military cantonments. The result of 13 years of sustained campaigning for demilitarization after 1997 can be summarized: 42 per cent of the makeshift security camps (235 out of 556 camps) of the military, the Bangladesh Defense Forces and the Armed Police Battalion have been withdrawn (Daily Star 2010). Less than 7 per cent of the temporary military camps (35 out of 550 camps) have been dismantled, and a brigade of troops out of five brigades was withdrawn in 2000. Six cantonments in three districts of the CHT, however, were excessive when compared to only 14 cantonments in the other 61 districts of Bangladesh. The disproportion was clear: there were six military cantonments in the CHT (which represents 10 per cent of the land of the country and less than 1 per cent of the population) in comparison to 14 cantonments for the rest of the country.

The Awami League government of Habibul Quader, Sheikh Mujib’s daughter, came to power on 6 January 2009 following its victory in the elections held on 29 December 2008. The election manifesto of the Awami League stated that it would implement the 1997 Accord. But national and international groups, and many individuals monitoring the situation, reported that the government did very little in its first two years in office except talk a great deal about implementation of the Accord. A confidential document, marked no 2016/joint opial/787, of 30 June 2010 (Defense Department 2010), appeared to outline the strategy of the Bangladeshi government regarding the CHT. This involved further strengthening of strategic and economic interests, rather than demilitarization of military operations in the CHT. It also stated the government’s plan to acquire more land for the army and some strategies to combine intelligence operations (Defense Department 2010). This document underlined the Bangladeshi state’s failure to bring peace to the CHT.

The document revealed the government’s strategy to gradually demobilize regional indigenous political parties and encourage mainstream national political parties in the region. While regional political parties and civil-society and human-rights groups in Bangladesh demanded the CHT to achieve peace, the government repeatedly delayed the process of demilitarization and planned to strengthen the military presence in all spheres, including development. Strengthening military power and further imposition of military rule either through development work or in intelligence gathering terrorized the CHT but did not bring peace.

Second, forced displacement of indigenous communities, land grabbing and systematic settlement of Bengalis aggravated a process that contributed to violent peace in the CHT. LeVene suggests that the development interests of a state are key motives of perpetuating a genocidal process. He called the CHT conflict ‘creeping genocide’ (LeVene 1999: 346; Arens 2011), and pointed to protected and deliberate government policies to wipe out indigenous people. Drawing from LeVene, we observe that transmigration and massacres were concurrent in the CHT. The massacre in Machhachi (a remote village in the region) signalled the beginning of violent transmigration. While the Machhachi incident was barely noticed, the massacre at Kausali-Kalampati, close to Rangamati, the largest town of the CHT, received national and international attention. It was reported that:

[...]

In his analysis of various massacres in the CHT, Bhumitra Chakma states these are cases of ‘ethnicicide’ where minority ethnic communities are exterminated in a calculated manner (Chakma 2010). He also suggests that the Accord has not stopped the slow process of ethnicicide because it failed to address the key cause – the settlement of Bengalis (Chakma 2010: 295). The Bengali settlers became more violent as the adult males were recruited into Village Defence Parties (VDP, a para-militia force). There was a parliamentary inquiry into the Kausali-Kalampati massacre but no one was charged or brought to justice. This was also the outcome of all subsequent cases in the CHT.

Violent land grabbing and general intimidation continued in the region. Loss of land and fear of attacks were the major sources of displacement of indigenous peoples in post-Accord CHT. In the first six years of the post-Accord period, settlers, supported by security forces or civil administrators, attacked the Jammas on at least six occasions. These included, for example, attacks on 14 indigenous villages in Mahalchhari on 26 August 2003 (Amnesty International 2004). Another incident in post-Accord CHT, the Baghailair (Sajek) and Kaghachari Violence in February 2010, revealed endemic and widespread conflict throughout the region. It resulted in the burning of 500 buildings, most belonging to indigenous peoples, and at least three deaths. The conflict broke out as a result of Bengali settlers’ ambitions to take over lands on which were the villages and homes of the indigenous Jammas in Baghailair. Many national and international organizations, including the Amnesty International, the European Union, and the CHT Commission, called on the Bangladesh government for an independent and impartial inquiry into the incidents. No measures were taken.

Third, the tensions between the indigenous communities, many of whom remained internally displaced persons (IDPs), and Bengali transmigrants of 1979—1985 and post-1985 settlers increased. The military and civil administrations supported Bengali transmigrants. There were also allegations of land grabbing by different armed forces for their camps and garrisons or cantonments, either displacing more indigenous peoples or displacing some repeatedly. The continuing pattern of land grabbing by the transmigrants continued from the pre-Accord to the post-Accord period. The transmigrants enjoyed impunity and protection from the government from 1979, the year the state first implemented its transmigration program. Raising concerns over the continuation of the pre-Accord situation in the post-Accord period, a speaker in the British House of Lords drew attention to the
CHT in 2005 and warned that "the very demography of the CHT is being changed under military occupation." One point of contention is the labelling of transmigrants as IDPs. One of the most controversial factors in connection with rehabilitation of IDPs emerged in July 2000 when a government Task Force for Rehabilitation of India Returned Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons, submitted a report to the Awami League government identifying 128,364 families, comprising of 90,208 indigenous and 38,156 Bengali families, internally displaced in the CHT. The argument was based on giving the same status to transmigrants as that given indigenous peoples uprooted in their traditional homelands.

The contention provoked a serious question: were transmigrants, who were forced to move from their first place of occupation in the CHT, entitled to be called IDPs? This was a key identity crisis and demonstrated the nature of violent peace in the CHT.

From 1986, however, the state relocated transmigrants within the CHT because Shanti Bahini guerrillas were reportedly attacking them. There were reports of transmigrants choosing to leave the CHT and of civil and military personnel preventing their departure. To make the politics of demography succeed, the government protected and relocated the transmigrants. The government introduced 'vachchagram' (cluster villages), located close to security-force bases to provide security and shelter, and to consolidate rather than disperse transmigrants. Each family was provided with a plot of land, and given support like cash allowances per month, a house-building grant and weekly food rations. The state provided infrastructure and other basic facilities, such as connections to major highways and roads, culverts, water supplies, sanitation, electricity, primary schools, madrasas (Islamic schools) to these villages, through various development projects under strict military control. There are also allegations the state used international organizations' funds to serve these cluster villages in the name of 'developing' the CHT. Thus, for many transmigrants or settlers there had been relocation (within CHT) and dislocation (outside the CHT).

Finally, while more complex, it could also be argued that another manifestation of violent peace was seen in terms of the split within the Adhavi community and the radicalization of some factions. The UDPF rejection of the Peace Accord and its demand for the full autonomy of the CHT is well documented. In December 2009, UDPF claimed that supporters of PCJSS from Manikchhari kidnapped seven of its activists 20 kilometres from Rangamati. Media reported other clashes, for example, the death of UDPF activist Kalapa Chakma in July and revenge killing of two PCJSS members, the village chief Kurbari Ali and Bkhun Chakma and an activist, Kaya Pru Mana in the same month. PCJSS claimed that the UDPF intimidated its members and their families. Intra-community clashes caused temporary and permanent displacement of people from their homes.

Prospects

Fundamental to diminishing the conflict in the CHT, the Bangladesh state would have to respond to the grievances of the indigenous communities. Researchers Adnan (2004) and Gulshahakura and Chakma (2006) maintain that the indigenous IDPs should be rehabilitated, and the transmigrants or settlers be helped and assisted, but not as displaced persons as suggested by the Task Force. The studies called upon the government, enlightened politicians and international bodies to encourage voluntary withdrawal of the Bengali settlers outside the CHT.

In 2011, there was no exact figure for indigenous IDPs in Bangladesh. The government Task Force reported 90,208 indigenous families or 360,000 to 460,000 individuals. An UNDP survey mapped the size and frequency of movement of the indigenous IDPs in the CHT. It reported that about 38 per cent of indigenous peoples had to shift from their places of usual residence. An IDP household had to change its permanent address about twice on average (UNDP–CHTDF 2009: 46).

The JSJ opposed the inclusion of Bengal transmigrants as Internally Displaced Persons on the grounds that this could lead to legal recognition of the transmigrants as permanent residents of the CHT and thus recognize them as legal owners of their occupied lands (Chittagong Hills Tract Commission 2000: 48). The inclusion also generated widespread resentment among the indigenous communities, who regarded it as unjust and unacceptable. Indigenous communities perceived Bengal inclusion as the Awami League's election-winning strategy to attract transmigrants' votes. Transmigrants constituted a significant percentage of the population (UNDP–CHTDF 2009: 46) and were added to the voter list for the first time under the Awami League government. This violated the terms of the Accord. As a protest the JSJ refrained from participating in the election in 2001.

The Task Force of 2000 conflated two incongruent groups -- the indigenous evicted population and the Bengali transmigrants -- as one category. It treated them all as Internally Displaced Persons. In the interest of electoral political advantage, the Task Force failed to respect the opinions of its members and provoked many questions, such as: should not a line be drawn between the evicted and the occupiers? The Task Force of 2010 did not take any significant steps in its first year. There was no indication whether it would review the category or the number of IDPs, as there were by then at least 9,780 more indigenous families (out of 12,222 families or 64,609 individuals) who joined the tally of the existing IDPs. These 12,000 families were listed earlier as India-returnee international refugees but they could not get back their homes promised by the government, as transmigrants, security forces, local administration or others occupied their lands (Daily Star 2010).

To have enduring peace in the region some primary questions need to be answered through dialogue between the state and the CHT communities. Is there a difference between displacement and relocation? Does the relocation of Bengali settlers in the CHT constitute displacement? Can the settlers in the CHT be considered IDPs? Can a forceful occupier (instigated by the state) when relocated from the place it occupied also be recognized as displaced?

Second, the Bangladeshi state has been relatively uncompromising in recognizing the rights and diversity of its population, and consistently failed to integrate the Adhavi voices into its national security policies. To achieve
meaningful peace for the CHT, the state would have to initiate a comprehensive, all-inclusive and sincere dialogue between various interest groups. A heavily militarized environment such as this generates fear and reproduces violence. To change this atmosphere, Bangladesh government would have to consider demilitarizing the CHT (D’Costa 2009).

Third, ambiguous and inconsistent management of CHT’s development policies failed to take account of displaced Adivasi communities’ anxieties. While during different political regimes, the state’s engagement with the Adivasi community in terms of confidence-building measures and integration in the broader Bangladeshi society were somewhat arbitrary, it was the NGOs and NGOs that provided key development assistance in the CHT through community development activities. However, many of their projects in the areas of health, education and micro-credit were framed as ‘development’ projects and deliberately left out human rights in deference to government sensitivity. Human rights were perceived as a desired outcome that would automatically be realized if development projects succeeded. As such, development projects carried out with the communities did not succeed in responding to the concerns of displacement and dislocation (D’Costa 2009).

Finally, the disjointed political parties and the UPDF would need to recognize that a deeply divided CHT actually makes it much easier for the ruling regimes in Dhaka to maintain the state’s authoritarian control over the region (D’Costa 2009). Intra-community confidence-building measures would be necessary, and these would need to promote dialogue and activities for youth groups as ways to address radicalization.

Lessons

Internal displacement of the Adivasi people in Bangladesh was the result of post-colonial nation-building (D’Costa and Ford 2009) and identity conflict (Mohsin 1997). A low-intensity conflict deeply embedded in the struggle over land and existence in the CHT contributed to massive internal displacement (UCDP-PRIO 2006). Since 1979, the CHT has remained the prime site of internal displacement in Bangladesh. While internal displacement in most parts of the country is connected with natural disasters like river erosion, floods, cyclones and so on, in the CHT state violence has induced dislocation. Threats, force and violence during the pre-Accord period created the conditions that prevailed after the Accord and that the Accord was intended to resolve.

Demilitarization of the CHT, a complete stop to Bengali in-migration to the CHT, proper rehabilitation of the India-refugees and IDPs, proper rehabilitation of the Bengali settlers outside the CHT, and good governance would be precursors for diminishiing conflict and achieving peace in the CHT. However, the militarized post-Accord CHT, with an acute absence of justice and broken promises regarding the Accord, remained a landscape of displacement and dislocation for a large number of marginalized indigenous people, for whom violent peace is the everyday reality.

Notes

1 The meaning of the term ‘Parbattya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity’ is the Chittagong Hill Tracts United Peoples Party, while JJS (Jana Sanghati Samity) is its short name.
2 UPDF stands for the United Peoples Democratic Front. It was formed by a section of JJS and JSS students’ group out of dissatisfaction with the limited autonomy contained in the Accord, and its aim was full autonomy for the CHT.
3 The JSS-reformist faction was formed in 2009–2010.
4 Respondents were from both indigenous and non-indigenous Bengali communities in the region. The 2009 UNDP-CHTDF report states, ‘A total of eleven factors act as constraints to peace in the CHT. About 81% have reported communal threat, followed by 80% reporting extortion, 79% both reporting abduction and armed conflict, 77% of both reporting insecurity of women and fear of eviction from own land, and 67% reporting fear of insecuity of children’, p. 164.
5 In ‘Spoiler problems in peace processes’, Stedman (1997) defines spoiler management as ‘leaders and parties who believe the emerging peace threatens their power, worldview, and interests and who use violence to undermine attempts to achieve it’, pp. 7–8.
6 Following an agreement between the Governor of Assam, Vishnu Sahay and the then Chief Minister, B. P. Chaliha, 57 Chakma families were moved from Assam to Tirap District, Arunachal Pradesh in 1964. Due to Mizo-Chakma and Naga-Chakma internal conflicts, a larger number of Chakma refugees moved to Arunachal Pradesh from other parts of the northeast in later years.
7 In the 1970 elections, Larma was elected member of the East Pakistani Provincial Assembly as an independent candidate and was the only representative of the CHT indigenous community in the first government of Bangladesh.
8 These were (1) autonomy for the CHT and the establishment of a special legislative body; (2) restoration of the Regulation of 1900 in the new constitution; (3) continuation of the offices of the tribal chiefs; and (4) a constitutional provision restricting the amendment of the Regulation of 1900 and imposing a ban on Bengali settlement in CHT.
9 Bhimtara Chakma, Director, South Asia Project, University of Hall, coined the term ‘politics of demography’.
10 Of the electricity produced by the Kaptai dam, 95 per cent is used for the development of the plains, not in the CHT. The dam displaced about 60 per cent of the indigenous population, of these most displaced were Chakmas, about 50 per cent of its population.
11 This chapter, however, focuses on the displacement in the CHT during the Bangladesh period from the 1970s.
12 Although the government has never publicly disclosed the total number of transmigrated Bengalis, researchers estimate numbers between 350,000 and 450,000; conservatively at about 400,000 (Adnan 2004, p. 49; Chakma 2010), p. 292.
13 From the British period when the CHT population was less than 200,000 various surveys concluded that the state should restrict the movement of people to the CHT. In the 1960s soil scientists report that only 3.1 per cent of land in the CHT is suitable for agriculture, 18.7 per cent for horticulture and the remaining 72 per cent for forestry. In the 1950s when the CHT population was less than 200,000 various surveys concluded that the state should restrict the movement of people to the CHT. As a result a large number of indigenous peoples, evicted by the Kaptai dam construction, were forced to move out of the country, as there was no adequate land available for cultivation.
14 They are compiled from different sources, including the CHT Commission Report (1991) and updates, Amnesty International Reports: Levene (1999); Chakma (2010).
15 Mubakhar massacre was reported by Sannad (1980).
16 See also the film entitled ‘Terriﬁying Voices: A documentary based on interviews of the victims of attack in Muhaisnir, Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh on 26 August 2003’, Hill Waith Human Rights Front (HIWHRF).


18 They were largely funded by the Asian Development Bank, UNICEF and UNDP also funded some ‘development’ programs in the CHT. See Arens and Chakma (2002).

19 Assuming four persons in a family.

20 An average indigenous household comprises of 5.1 members, UNDP-GHTDF (2009), p. 32.

21 Following the Accord, the Indian government forcibly repatriated some 65,000 refugees from Tripura. They are invariably referred to as Chakma refugees by media as most of them were Chakmas, including a good number of Tripuri and some Marma families.

References


### Major events: Eastern Burma

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<td>1948</td>
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<td>1962</td>
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<td>1960s</td>
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<td>Purge of Myanmar military intelligence supremo and ceasefire negotiator, General Khin Nyunt</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Pado Mahn Shar, secretary-general of Karen National Union, assassinated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Myanmar military offensives against the Kokang ceasefire group in northeastern Shan State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Elections 7 November under Myanmar government’s 2008 Constitution; renewed fighting in parts of eastern Burma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Burma’s new parliaments convene; tensions remain high; conflict again in Kachin and Shan states and Karen areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Conflict continues in Kachin State; some diminution in Shan and Karen areas with incomplete ceasefire agreements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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