

Yearly Report 2009

At a glance

Form of atrocity ↓	Perpetrator →	Security Forces	Bengali Settlers	SF+BS	UPDF	Total
No. of person killed		1	2	-	2	5
No. of person tortured		33	14	-	5	52
No. of person arrested		7	-	-	-	7
No. of person harassed		12	1	-	25	38
No. of person against whom case lodged		-	-	-	-	-
No. of house set fire		-	7	-	-	7
No. of house looted & destructed		-	4	-	-	4
No. of house searched		-	-	-	-	-
No. of person raped		-	3	-	-	3
No. of person sexually harassed		1	2	-	-	3
No. of person kidnapped		-	1	-	10	11
No. of person whose land grabbed		-	-	-	-	-
Total		54	34		42	130

SF+BS = Security Forces & Bengali settlers; UPDF = United Peoples' Democratic Front

Headline of the Report 2009

January 2009

Report on Parliamentary Election in CHT

Post-election violence in Rangamati

6 January 2009: Appointment of State Minister for MoCHTA

7 January 2009: High Court ordered to release on bail of Rang Lai Mro

11 January 2009: Innocent Jumma villager shot death by UPDF armed cadres in Rajasthali

15 January 2009: Jumma and Bengali settlers clash in Longadu

15 January 2009: Returnee PCJSS member arrested by the police in Dighinala

22 January 2009: Report on Upazila Parishad Election in CHT

22 January 2009: PCJSS leader Shaktipada Tripura arrested by police in Dhaka

23 January 2009: Post-election violence in Rowangchari

26 January 2009: Justice Amirul Kabir Chowdhury visits Ranglai at hospital in Dhaka

26 January 2009: Ranglai Mro finally freed

29 January 2009: Meeting of Advisory Committee of MoCHTA held

February 2009

3 February 2009: Meeting between MoCHTA and CHTRC held

15 February 2009: M N Larma Memorial Book launched in Dhaka

22 February 2009: Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission holds press conference

25 February 2009: Fabricated Case filed against Santu Larma in Rangamati

18 February 2009: Bengali settlers filed law suit with the Khagrachari judge's court

March 2009

7 March 2009: Army enter the dining hall of Sadhana Tilla Vihar with their boots

12 March 2009: ambulance carrying the dead body of a Jumma halted by army in Dighinala

18 March 2009: Two innocent villagers arrested in Kudukchari

15 March 2009: Three innocent villagers arrested in Mahalchari

17 March 2009: High Court granted anticipatory bail for two months to Mr. Larma

23 March 2009: Appointment of the Chairman of the Task Force

24 March 2009: Bir Bahadur appointed as Chairman of CHT Development Board

31 March 2009: Govt plans to product gas from Semutang gas field without consultation of CHT institutions

31 March 2009: Government urged to declare roadmap for implementation of CHT Accord

April 2009

5 April 2009: Bengali settlers spread communal tension in Ghilachari

13 April 2009: Army beats up Khagrachari Municipality Councilor

14 April 2009: Settlers attacked a Jumma village at Gilachari in Naniachar

30 April 2009: Prime Minister assures to implement the CHT Accord

May 2009

2 May 2009: Meeting of the Central committee of the PCJSS

2 May 2009: Follow-up of Sajek (Baghaihat) situation

4 May 2009: BPATC Workshop on Curriculum Development for Orientation Course on CHT

4 May 2009: Briefing of the ADB Team to the CHTRC Chairman on case study in CHT

5 May 2009: Vatican City Ambassador raised the CHT issue with the PM Sheikh Hasina

6 May 2009: HC asks government and EC to explain no-elections in CHT

7 May 2009: Bengali settlers asked for Road Blockade on the Rangamati-Khagrachari Road at Naiarchar

7 May 2009: Follow-up of Santu Larma's bail

9 May 2009: Jumma woman killed after rape by Bengali settler in Bandarban

12 May 2009: PCP holds demonstration at DU campus against the rape and killing of Jumma girl

12 May 2009: Tension mounted in Dighinala and Bagaichari upazila

15 May 2009: Fabricated case filed against PCJSS leader in Rangamati

16 May 2009: PCP leader arrested by police in Rangamati

20 May 2009: PCP 20th Founding Anniversary held in Rangamati

20 May 2009: 1st meeting of Parliamentary Standing Committee on MoCHTA held in Bandarban

21 May 2009: Buddhist monk harassed by Captain Shamim in Naniarchar

24 May 2009: Bandarban and Rangamati HDCs reconstituted

23 May 2009: PCJSS member killed by UPDF

25 May 2009: CHT Accord Implementation Monitoring Committee reconstituted

June 2009

5 June 2009: PCJSS leader abducted by UPDF in Barkal

7 June 2009: PCP and PCJSS activists abducted by UPDF in Rangamati

8 June 2009: Attempt to acquire lands for the cantonment in CHT

12 June 2009: BDR tries to establish market at Ruilui in Sajek in order to settle down Bengalis

12 June 2009: Publication of report on Kalpana abduction investigation and punishment of the kidnappers demanded

14 June 2009: Clash between Jumma and Bengali settlers in Ramgarh

13 June 2009: A Jumma youth shot in Rangamati

18 June 2009: BMSC form human chain protesting against Bengali settlers' attack at Boroitoli

20 June 2009: Six innocent villagers tortured in Sajek

26 June 2009: Innocent Jumma youth killed by army at Subalong Bazar

June 2009: 200 Mro families in fear of land-grabbers and terrorists in Bandarban

July 2009

01 July 2009: Lease holders of non-resident Bengalis threatened 12 indigenous Mro villagers

04 July 2009: Conspiracy to arrest the PCJSS leaders in Rowangchari

19 July 2009: Appointment of Chairman of CHT Land Dispute Commission

19 July 2009: Civil society demands trial of M A Matin

20 July 2009: 3rd Meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on MoCHTA

29 July 2009: Government declares to withdraw 35 temporary camps

29 July 2009: Indigenous Peoples Human Rights Report launched in Dhaka
 31 July 2009: Indigenous woman with disabilities raped by a Bengali settler in Dighinala

August 2009

3-5 August 2009: Visit of the Chairman of Land Commission to three hill districts
 5-10 August 2009: Celebration of International Day for World's Indigenous Peoples in Bangladesh
 14 August 2009: Bengali settlers try to attack Jumma village in Longadu
 16 August 2009: dead body of settler recovered at the Jum field in Matiranga
 16 August 2009: Operation on indigenous Chak localities in Naikhyingchari
 16 August 2009: Writ Petition against withdrawal of camps and CHT Accord
 18 August 2009: Dead body of settler woman recovered from Modon Karbari Para under Panchari
 18 August 2009: 4th meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on MoCHTA was held in Rangamati
 19 August 2009: Meeting of the CHT Accord Implementation Monitoring Committee held in Rangamati
 23 August 2009: PCP organises fresher reception ceremony at Dhaka University
 26 August 2009: Meeting on Amendment of the CHT Land Dispute Settlement Act

September 2009

2 September 2009: Dead body of a Bengali settler recovered at Kaptai lake in Longadu
 3 September 2009: Tripura woman killed allegedly by Bengali settlers in Mahalchari
 4 September 2009: Marma girl raped and then kidnapped by Bengali settler in Sindukchari
 7-8 September 2009: Chairman of Land Commission declares to conduct land survey in CHT
 12 September 2009: Chakma family chopped up by Bengali settlers in Kaukhali
 13 September 2009: Tripura girl tried to rape by Bengali settler in Sindukchari
 20 September 2009: Army issue letter on civil matter & concern only for Bengali settlers
 23 September 2009: Deputy Commissioner of Bandarban issued unlawful letter to Headmen
 24 September 2009: Bengali settlers burn down Jumma houses in Laxmichari
 24 September 2009: PCJSS protests against unilaterally announcement of land survey in CHT by Chairman of Land Commission
 26 September 2009: JMB members arrested by RAB in Matiranga
 29 September 2009: Deputy Commissioner of Bandarban issued unlawful letter to Loal Devid Bawm

October 2009

2 October 2009: UPDF kidnapped a returnee member of PCJSS from Bilaichari
 5 October 2009: Meeting of the Task Force held in Khagrachari
 6 October 2009: PCJSS protests against deployment of army for distribution of food grain for returnee PCJSS members
 7 October 2009: Human rights groups urge Land Commission to cancel CHT land survey decision
 14 October 2009: Innocent Marma student injured by UPDF cadres in Khagrachari
 15 October 2009: A Tripura school going girl abused by settler Bengali in Matiranga
 18 October 2009: Tripura school teacher sexual abused by Bengali settlers in Panchari
 18 October 2009: Meeting of the Standing Committee of the CHT Affairs Ministry held
 20 October 2009: Coordination Meeting of MoCHTA held
 25 October 2009: Meeting between CHTRC Delegation and Law Minister held
 26 October 2009: Meeting of the CHT Accord Implementation Monitoring Committee held
 27 October 2009: Meeting between CHTRC Delegation and Education Minister held
 30 October 2009: Tripura woman raped by miscreants at Sonaichari in Chittagong

November 2009

7 November 2009: Regional Consultation on ILO Conventions and IPs Issues held in Bandarban

8 November 2009: Chakma woman attempted to rape by an army in Nanyachar
9 November 2009: UPDF cadres kidnap 2 innocent villagers in Barkal
11-13 November 2009: South Asia Sub-regional Training Seminar on Indigenous Peoples' Rights held in Bangladesh
12 November 2009: Twin brother kidnapped by UPDF cadres
16 November 2009: A Jumma girl attempted to rape by Bengali settlers in Longadu
23 November 2009: Roundtable discussion on implementation of CHT Accord held in Dhaka
25 November 2009: PCJSS member kidnapped by reformist and UPDF cadres in Naniarchar
26 November 2009: An innocent villager beaten by reformist cadres in Khagrachari
27 November 2009: Reformist cadres compelled a woman to leave her village

December 2009

6 December 2009: Meeting on Amendment of CHT Land Dispute Settlement Act 2001
6 December 2009: Meeting on Social Forestry in CHT
8 December 2009: Miscreants attempt to shoot PCJSS leader in Rangamati
13 December 2009: A villager kidnapped by Reformist group in Dighinala
20 December 2009: National Roundtable on ILO Convention 169 and Indigenous Peoples and the Bangladesh Parliament held in Dhaka
23 December 2009: Tourism Development in violation of CHT Accord

Yearly Report 2009**January 2009****(1) Report on Parliamentary Election in CHT**

Like other parts of the country, 9th parliamentary election was held in CHT on 29 December 2008 without major untoward violence. However, allegations have been received that the election was not quite free, fair and neutral. The election was rigged in some upazilas either by the UPDF, Awami League and few units of the military forces. Officially, the candidates of the Grand Alliance headed by Awami League won the polls in the three constituencies of CHT. The results of the three constituencies were as follows:

299 Rangamati constituency

Name of the candidate	Vote obtained
Mr. Dipankar Talukder, AL	114,972
Ms. Moitri Chakma, BNP	56,429
Mr. Ushatan Talukder, independent/PCJSS	51,833
Mr. Jasim Uddin Kabir, independent/Sama Odhikar Andolon	2,565
Ms. Alo Rani Aich, Jatiya Jukta Front	475
None of the above' ('no vote')	32,067

300 Bandarban constituency

Name of the candidate	Vote obtained
Mr. Bir Bahadur U Shoi Sing, AL	78,949
Mr. Saching Prue Jeri, BNP	59,174
Mr. K S Mong, independent/PCJSS	16,286
Mr. Chotan Kanti Tanchangya, independent/UPDF	629
None of the above' ('no vote')	354

298 Khagrachari constituency

Name of the candidate	Vote obtained
Mr. Jatindra Lal Tripura, AL	122,803
Mr. Samiron Dewan, BNP	62,977
Mr. Ujjal Smriti Chakma, independent/UPDF	60,410
Md. Jahedul Alam, independent (AL dissident)	16,561
Mr. Daudul Islam Bhuiyan, independent	12,403
Mr. Pranjabir Chakma, Progressive Democratic Party (PDP)	1,725
Mr. Jahed Ahmad Tutul, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD)	1,133
Mr. Pradip Kumar Mutsuddi, Jaker Party	691
Mr. Arun Shanti Chakma (Bhikkhu), National Peoples' Party	435
None of the above' ('no vote')	643

It is reported that the armed unit of UPDF ordered as well as forced the Jumma voters in remote areas of Rangamati constituency at gun point to cast 'no vote'. This was happened particularly in Naniarchar upazila and several areas of Baghaichari, Kaukhali, Jurachari, Bilaichari and Longadu upazilas. For instance, a group of armed cadres of UPDF took position just half kilometre distance from the polling centre of Nayadam Government Primary School (Nayadam) under Bandukbhanga union in Rangamati sadar upazila and forced voters to cast 'no vote'. On the other, the UPDF armed

cadres prevented the voters of the Sajek union from casting their votes because of their support to PCJSS candidate. As a result, there was poor turnout of 50% voters (compare to average 79% turnout in Rangamati constituency).

It is reported that armed unit of UPDF threatened the Jumma voters for dire consequences if they did not cast their vote in favour of their candidate Mr. Ujjal Smriti Chakma. In addition, the UPDF cadres captured at least 17 polling centres in Panchari, Dighinala and Khagrachari sadar upazilas which report was aired on electronic media on the day.

It is also reported that candidates of Awami League in three constituencies of CHT distributed huge money for purchasing votes violating the electoral rules. Voters from many places also alleged that few unit of the military forces forced voters, particularly Bengali voters, to cast their vote for Awami League's candidates. An army unit blockaded the Bengali voters who were BNP supporters to enter a polling centre at Chitmaran under Kaptai upazila in Rangamati district.

Local people from many places also alleged that fake votes were also cast in favour of Awami League's candidate. For instance, more voters than total once were cast at two polling centres under Fasyakhali union of Lama upazila in Bandarban district.

(2) Post-election violence in Rangamati

Further it is learnt that UPDF armed cadres took actions against villagers who cast their votes to Ushatan Talukder, PCJSS-supported independent candidate in Rangamati district. For instances, a villager from Balukhali village under Rangamati sadar upazila who cast his vote to him was brutally beaten by UPDF men 30 December 2008. The victim got admitted at Rangamati general hospital with serious injuries on the day. In addition, the UPDF threatened 30/25 youths in Jurachari who campaigned for Ushatan Talukder.

On 30 December 2008 UPDF armed cadres kidnapped Mr. Prabhat Chakma (Jhimit) s/o Jama Charan Chakma of Nunchari under Dighinala upazila for campaign in favour of Awami League candidate in Khagrachari constituency. He was kidnapped from Naraichari area of Dighinala upazila from his house. He is suspected killed by the UPDF.

(3) 6 January 2009: Appointment of State Minister for MoCHTA

On 6 January 2009 during the formation of the cabinet, Grand Alliance Government appointed Mr. Dipankar Talukdar as State Minister for the Ministry of CHT Affairs (MoCHTA) and he was bestowed with full responsibilities of the ministry.

However, the CHT Affairs Ministry has been unable to work properly according to its mandate and power and function as almost all the officers in the Ministry are non-indigenous persons (Bengalis). Most of them are either unaware of or insensitive with the CHT and her original inhabitants or racially prejudiced and biased for Bengali settlers in CHT.

(4) 7 January 2009: High Court ordered to release Rang Lai Mro on bail

On 7 January 2009 the High Court ordered to release Rang Lai Mro, the traditional leader of the Mro community, and sitting Chairman of Sulaok Union Parishad Bandarban on bail. Mr. Mro has been detained for 22 months since his arrest in the early hours of 22 February 2008 from his home in Bandarban and his being implicated in a criminal case under the Arms Act for illegal possession of weapons. Mro was hospitalized the day after his arrest and was required to obtain urgent medical treatment for blockages in his arteries which he has still not received.

Lawyers for Mro argued that he should be released on bail on humanitarian grounds in order to receive emergency medical treatment. They also argued that he had been falsely implicated in this case the behest of certain vested interests in reprisal for his steadfast efforts to ensure the rights of persons displaced through forcible occupation of lands including forest areas in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

Mro was brought to the National Heart Hospital on 1 January 2008 in a seriously ill condition but was kept in danda beri (bar fetters) from which he was released after interventions by Ain o Salish Kendra and then the National Human Rights Commission.

A number of national and international organisations had earlier issued appeals for Mro's release, including Amnesty International, the International Commission on the CHT and others.

A Division Bench of the High Court, comprising Justice Md. Mozzamel Hossain and Justice Afzal Hossain Ahmed, issued the order. Dr. Kamal Hossain and Mr Nizamul Huq Nasim moved the petition, with Sara Hossain, Karunmoy Chakma and Pratikar Chakma.

(5) 11 January 2009: Innocent Jumma villager shot death by UPDF armed cadres in Rajasthali

On 11 January 2009 at mid-night an innocent Jumma villager named Mr. Dhuncha Prue Marma (38) of Krongchagoi Para of Gainda under Rajasthali upazila in Rangamati district was shot death allegedly by UPDF armed cadres.

It is learnt that on that day at mid-nights UPDF men encircled the house of Dhuncha Prue Marma and then caught him. He was fired at adjacent area of the village just after kidnapping him.

(6) 15 January 2009: Jumma and Bengali settlers clash in Longadu

On 15 January 2009 a clash between Jumma villagers and Bengali settlers was taken place at Bagachadar area under Longadu upazila in Rangamati district. Following this incident, Bengali settlers made attack on Jumma people at Baranachari bazaar under Barkal upazila (adjacent to Longadu upazila).

It is reported that Bengali settlers have been trying to collect forest product from the area owned by Jumma villagers. On the contrary, Jumma villagers have been trying to forbid them from collecting bamboos and trees from their garden and orchard. However, the Bengali settlers continued to do so. On that day, Bengali settlers also went to the Jumma locality to collect the bamboos and trees and consequently Jumma villagers opposed them. At a stage, the clash was taken place.

In retaliation to this incident, Bengali settlers made attack on Jumma people who went to Baranachari bazaar. That day was the market day. It is reported that many Jumma villagers were injured in this attack. Two Jumma villagers who were seriously chopped got admitted at Al-Rabeta hospital at Longadu. On the other, 8 Bengali settlers were also admitted at same hospital with injuries.

Following this incident, Jumma people were banned Kalanagya bazaar by the Bengali settlers from Kalabanya and Bhushanchara under Barkal upazila. Local Jumma villagers said that Bengali settlers issued this ban on Jumma people aiming to protect Jumma voters to cast their vote at Kalabanya polling centre during forthcoming Upazila Parishad election scheduled to be held on 22 January.

(7) 15 January 2009: Returnee PCJSS member arrested by the police in Dighinala

On 15 January 2009 at the morning police from Dighinala upazila arrested returnee PCJSS member Mr. Jokoj Chakma from Dighinala. It is reported that he was brutally tortured during the police custody. Due to serious injuries, he was admitted at Khagrachari general hospital instead of producing before the court.

(8) 22 January 2009: Report on Upazila Parishad Election in CHT

On 22 January 2009 along side with other parts of the country, Upazila Parishad election was held in 24 upazilas in three hill district of CHT. One upazila named Dighinala upazila parishad election was postponed due to regularity of withdrawal of nomination.

Like 9th parliamentary polls that held on 29 December, Upazila Parishad election was held in CHT without major untoward violence. However, it is reported that the polls of some upazilas were not quite free, fair and neutral. The polls were rigged either by the UPDF or Awami League. The result of the upazila polls in CHT are as follows:

Sl.	Upazila	Chairman	Vice Chair (male)	Vice Chair (Female)
Rangamati district				

1.	Rangamati sadar	Md. Muchha	Md. Jakir Hossain	Minati Chakma
2.	Baghaichari	Sudarshan Chakma	Diptiman Chakma	Sagarika Chakma
3.	Longadu	Tofazzal Hossain	Janey Alam	Safriya Tania (Hawaya)
4.	Barkal	Santosh Kumar Chakma	Kamal Jyoti Chakma	Rai Sona Chakma
5.	Jurachari	Prabartak Chakma	Rup Kumar Chakma	Alpana Chakma
6.	Bilaichari	Joysen Tanchangya	Amar Kumar Tanchangya	Mina Chakma
7.	Naniarchar	Pritimoy Chakma	Kumendu Bikash Chakma	Milky Chakma
8.	Kaukhali	Aung Cha Marma AL	Arjun Moni Chakma (Sudarshan)	Yeni Chakma (Kupa)
9.	Kaptai	Aung Sui Sain Chowdhury	Md. Dilder Hossain	Nur Nahar Begum
10.	Rajasthali	Thowai Sur Thoi Marma	Mui Thoi Aung Marma	Longbati Tripura
Khagrachari district				
11.	Khagrachari sadar	Md. Shane Alam	Nirapad Talukder	Bashari Marma
12.	Panchari	Sarbottam Chakma	Anil Kanti Dey	Shuvra Dewan
13.	Mahalchari	Sona Ratan Chakma	Thoihla Aung Marma	Kakali Khisa
14.	Matiranga	Shamsul Hoque	Md. Delowar Hossain	Fatema Begum Beauty
15.	Manikchari	Md. Abdul Jabbar	Abdul Kader	Shahina Akhter
16.	Ramgarh	Belayet Hossain Bhuiyan	Mongsa Prue Karbari	Aklima Sultana
17.	Laxmichari	Remra Chai Chowdhury	Milan Chakma	Sagorika Chakma
18.	Dighinala	Dharmabir Chakma	Supriya Khisa	Shatarupa Chakma
Bandarban district				
19.	Babdarban sadar	Abdul Kuddus BNP-SOA	Mongcha Thoi Marma AL	Suchitra Tanchangya AL
20.	Alikadam	Md. Abul Kalam JAMAT-SOA	Muhammad Riton	
21.	Thanchi	Khamlai Mro BNP	Olsen Tripura	Han Boiru Tripura
22.	Nakkhyangchari	Tofail Ahmed JAMAT	Nurul Abchhar	Hamida Chowdhury
23.	Ruma	Aung Thowai Ching Marma	Thoi Choya Mro	Omrachaing Marma
24.	Rowangchari	Hla Thowari Marma	Pu Hla Aung Marma	Mra U Ching Marma
25.	Lama	Muhammad Ismail AL	Md. Jahirul Islam	Setara Ahmad

In regard to the Upazila Parishad Election, PCJSS asked its upazila branches and members that any member could directly contest the election if there was any possible to win the polls. Otherwise, they could support to the candidate who was competent and might return the polls. Following this tragedy, PCJSS supported Awami League candidate Mr. Priyananda Chakma in Baghaichari upazila in Rangamati district. However, Mr. Chakma failed to return. Mr. Sudarshan Chakma who was candidate of so-called reformists of PCJSS and supported by the UPDF won the polls. It was widely alleged that the UPDF and reformist group of PCJSS rigged the polls. Armed unit of the UPDF did not allow Mr. Priyananda Chakma to campaign in upper side of the upazila. On the contrary, PCJSS candidate for male Vice Chairman Mr. Diptiman Chakma and female Vice Chairman Ms. Sagorika Chakma won the polls in this upazila.

PCJSS did not field any candidate in Rangamati sadar upazila. Though majority voters (total voters 75,652) were Jumma and there was a possible to win by a Jumma candidate for chairmanship in this upazila, however, contest of three giant candidates among from Jumma and contrarily one candidate among from Bengali community for the chairmanship post pave the way to win by the Bengali candidate named Md. Muccha. For the same reason, the male Vice Chair was also captured by the Bengali candidate.

In Naniarchar upazila, PCJSS supported Mr. Pritimoy Chakma for the post of chairmanship, who was also supported by UPDF. Mr. Pritimoy won the poll. Similarly, male Vice Chair Mr. Kumendu Bikash Chakma and female Vice Chairman candidate Milky Chakma also won the polls in this upazila. Independent candidate for Chairmanship post in Bilaichari upazila Mr. Joysen Tanchangya, who was supported by the PCJSS, won the poll.

In rest of the upazilas under Rangamati district, Awami League candidates succeeded the chairmanship. However, in some upazilas, non-partisan candidates won the vice chair post of both male and female.

In Khagrachari district, PCJSS did not field any candidate for chairmanship. However, PCJSS candidate for male Vice Chair Mr. Mongsa Prue Karbari won the poll. On the other, UPDF candidates in Panchari, Mahalchari and Laxmichari upazilas won the polls. It is alleged that UPDF forced the candidates, who submitted nomination for chairmanship post, to withdraw their nomination in Panchari, Laxmichari and Mahalchari upazilas except its candidates. In rest of the upazilas under Khagrachari district, Awami League candidates won the chairmanship posts while some post of both male and female Vice Chairs were secured by the non-partisan candidates.

In Bandarban district, one PCJSS candidate and two candidates supported by PCJSS for chairman post won the polls. Mr. Aung Thowai Ching Marma who won chairman post in Ruma upazila was the PCJSS candidate. PCJSS also supported Mr. Khamlai Mro who involved with BNP in Thanchi and Mr. Muhammad Ismail who engaged with AL candidate Lama upazila. Both the candidates won the polls.

Most of the upazilas under Bandarban district, the candidates supported by BNP, Jamat-e-Islami and Sama Odhikar Anlodon who were extreme nationalist and fanatic won the polls.

In Rowangchari upazila, primarily authority declared that PCJSS candidate Mr. Kyaba Marma won the post of chairmanship. However, after few hours at mid-night on 22 January, authority changed the result and declared that Awami League candidate Mr. Hla Thowari Marma won the poll. It is alleged that at Betchari polling centre, Presiding Officer declared first to capture 1085 votes by Hla Thowari. However, after few hours this number was changed into 1285. On the other, Awami League supporters rigged the election at Dayal Chandra Para polling centre. Mr. Kyaba Marma put objection to the Election Commission through Deputy Commission who was also Returning Officer of Bandarban district to recount the votes at Betchari polling centre and to hold polls again at Dayal Chandra Para polling centre. However, the Election Commission did not take any action so far. The Election Commission did not post the result of this upazila on its website till 8 February when this report is prepared.

(9) 22 January 2009: PCJSS leader Shaktipada Tripura arrested by police in Dhaka

On 22 January 2009 at mid-night Mr. Shaktipada Tripura (42), Organising Secretary of the Parbatya Chaṭṭagram Jana Smahati Samiti (PCJSS) and Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Forum, was arrested from a rented house at Mirpur in Dhaka.

It is learnt that at around 11.30 pm a group of police from Mirpur police station raided the house at Mirpur in Dhaka where wife of Shaktipara Tripura with her children has been residing since 2007. Police searched house and deranged the cloths and valuables. Then Mr. Tripura, also a traditional leader (Headman) and former UP Chairman, was arrested from the house. However, police did not show any charge or warrant against Mr. Tripura during the arrest. Habilder Shahjahan asked Basanti Tripura, w/o Shaktipada Tripura not to look for his husband at night, however, advised her to contact at Mirpur police station next day early in the morning.

According, Ms. Basanti Tripura with his daughter and son went to Mirpur police station to see her husband at 8.00 am on 23 January. However, she was given misinformation by Mr. Mahiuddin, Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Mirpur police station that Mr. Tripura was not taken there. Again, Advocate Hemanta Tripura went to Mirpur police station and the OC also misbehaved with him. Finally, after showing his lawyer identity card, he managed to meet Mr. Shaktipada at police station. The OC also misbehave with Mr. Sanjeeb Drong when he went to police station to see the victim.

After that at around 2.00 pm Mr. Tripura was taken into Dhaka Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court and produced before Ferdaus Ara's Court. The lawyers for Mr. Tripura, advocate Prakash Ranjan Bishwas, advocate Muhibur Rahman Mihir, advocate Manira Akhter and advocate Hemanta Tripura submitted bail petition. But Ms. Ara rejected the bail petition and sent Mr. Tripura to Dhaka jail.

It is mentionable that during the state of emergency on 14 June 2007 Joint Forces led by army raided his house at Khagrapur in Khagrachari district. Mr. Tripura was absent at the home at that time. However, military forces picked up Mr. Bholash Tripura, Finance Secretary of Khagrachari district branch of Hill Student Council, from his house and two false cases for keeping illegal arms and foreign currency were filed against Shaktipada Tripura and Bholash Tripura with Khagrachari police station. Military forces also seized Mr. Tripura's passport. Since, Mr. Tripura has been passing absconding life. It is also learnt that Mr. Tripura was arrested when he had been preparing to return to Khagrachari to fight the cases.

(10) 23 January 2009: Post-election violence in Rowangchari

Soon after the election on 23 January 2009, 8 Jumma villagers who were supporters to Kyaba Marma in Rowangchari upazila were kidnapped by an armed group of the Democratic Party of Arakan (DPA). Protesting against this kidnapping, Bandarban district branch of PCJSS held a press conference on it on 23 January. It alleged that Bir Bahadur directly instigated the DPA to conduct this incident mainly aiming to make retaliation against villagers who supported Kyaba Marma so that they could not move to the Election Commission for recounting the votes at Betchari polling centre and re-holding the polls of Dayal Chandra Para polling centre.

It is learnt that the armed group of DPA first encircled the house of the father of Kyaba Marma at mid-night. However, he was not at home at that time. Then the armed group of DPA kidnapped the following villagers from their houses:

- 1) Mr. Uchanue Marma (38), s/o Shwehlau Marma of Aungjai Para (he is head teacher of Aungjai Para Register Primary School)
- 2) Mr. Thowaicha Mong Karbari (42), s/o late Kya Aung Marma of Bengchari Natun Para
- 3) Mr. Mong Thowao Ching Marma (55), s/o late Kraimong Karbari of Bengchari (he is member of VDP)
- 4) Mr. Uhai Mong Marma (30), s/o Antaha Marma of Bengchari Para
- 5) Mr. Aungkya Ching Marma (28), s/o Ruiu Marma of Bengchari
- 6) Mr. Laren Tripura (35) of Sadhu Headman Para
- 7) Mr. Pulichan Tripura (30), s/o Sharat Chandra Karbari of Sharat Chandra Karbari Para
- 8) Mr. Shanti Lal Tripura (55) of Sadhu Headman Para.

(11) 26 January 2009: Justice Amirul Kabir Chowdhury visits Ranglai at hospital in Dhaka

On 26 January 2009 National Human Rights Commission Chairman Justice Amirul Kabir Chowdhury visited indigenous leader Ranglai Mro at the National Institute of Cardio Vascular Diseases (NICVD) in Dhaka. Justice Amirul enquired about his health and discussed with the authorities about his release. It is mentionable that Joint Forces arrested Ranglai Mro, a human rights activist, on February 24, 2007.

(12) 26 January 2009: Ranglai Mro finally freed

On 26 January 2009 Indigenous leader Ranglai Mro was freed at last 19 days after the High Court (HC) granted him bail. He was handcuffed to a bed at NICVD and suffered for extra 19 days due to delays in reaching his bail order to the jail authorities from the HC.

(13) 29 January 2009: Meeting of Advisory Committee of MoCHTA held

On 29 January 2009 meeting of the advisory committee of the Ministry of CHT Affairs (MoCHTA) was held at ministry's conference hall of Bangladesh Secretariat in Dhaka. Presided by State Minister

of the ministry Dipankar Talukder, MP, the meeting was attended by following members of the Committee:

- 1) Mr. Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma, Chairman of the CHT Regional Council
- 2) Mr. Jatindra Lal Tripura, MP from Khagrachari constituency
- 3) Dr. Jagat Jyoti Chakma, Chairman of the Rangamati Hill District Council
- 4) Mr. Manindra Lal Tripura, Chairman of the Khagrachari Hill District Council
- 5) Mr. Thanzama Lushai, Chairman of the Bandarban Hill District Council
- 6) Mr. Chawhla Prue Chowdhury Jimi, representative of the Circle Chief of the Bohmang Circle
- 7) Mr. Saching Prue Chowdhury, Circle Chief of the Mong Circle
- 8) Md. Narunnabi, nominated by the government
- 9) Md. Shahjahan Molla, nominated by the government
- 10) Md. Azizur Rahman, nominated by the government

Other two members Chakma Circle Chief Raja Devasish Roy and MP of Bandarban constituency Mr. Bir Bahadur were absent in the meeting. On the other, officials of the MoCHTA were present in the meeting.

Development of the CHT and implementation of the CHT Accord were the agenda of the meeting. State Minister Dipankar Talukder said that for the sake of implementation of the CHT Accord, the development of the CHT should be accelerated. He reiterated that government would implement the Accord.

Participating in the discussion, CHTRC Chairman Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma alias Santu Larma opined that sustainable development depended on law and order situation and general administration. However, the law and order situation in CHT was not favourable to the development. Terrorist activities including kidnapping, extortion etc were going on through the CHT. He also said that military forces have been continuing to influence the general administration in CHT. He expressed that as per CHT Accord, military forces including de facto military rule 'Operation Uttoron' should be withdrawn first for the sake of good governance and sustainable development of CHT.

Chairmen of the three HDCs said that lack of coordination of development activities of the CHT institutions was continuing in CHT. Development activities of CHT have been hindered due to lack of coordination. They opined that development activities of all the CHT institution should be coordinated in proper way.

Though the agenda on implementation of CHT Accord was set for discussion, however, concrete discussion was not made on this issue. Finally the meeting was ended without concrete decision.

February 2009

(14) 3 February 2009: Meeting between MoCHTA and CHTRC held

On 3 February 2009 meeting between MoCHTA and delegation of CHT Regional Council (CHTRC) was held at MoCHTA conference hall of Bangladesh Secretariat in Dhaka. Presided by State Minister of the MoCHTA Dipankar Talukder, MP, the meeting was, among others, attended by-

CHTRC delegation:

1. Mr. Goutam Kumar Chakma, member of the CHTRC and head of the delegation
2. Mr. Raktotpal Tripura, member of the CHTRC
3. Mr. Mahbubur Rahman, member of the CHTRC

MoCHTA:

1. Mr. Jamil Osman, Secretary
2. Ms. Roushan Ara, Joint Secretary
3. Mr. Abul Hossain, Joint Secretary
4. Ms. Nasrin Ara Surat Amin, Deputy Secretary.

Discussion and decision:

1. Point: CHTRC Chairman and Members' Privileges Regulation 1999

Discussion:

The said Regulation was passed by the CHTRC in 1999 as per the Section 46(1) and then sent it to the government for advice as per the Section 46(5) of the CHTRC Act. So far there has been difference of opinions with regard to the monthly remunerations and allowances of the CHTRC members. The Regulation included monthly total amount of Taka 19,000/- including remuneration of 10,000/- whereas the government advised in 2002 to receive monthly only Taka 13,125/- including the honorarium of Taka 4,500/-.

The CHTRC delegation raised the point in details in the meeting as well as raised arguments to follow the provisions of the CHTRC Act which is, in fact, a special Act. The State Minister acceded to it.

Decision:

The Regulation would be updated with regard to the monthly remuneration and the allowances by the CHTRC and the MoCHTA would make attempt to have favourable advice of the government on it.

2. Point: Rent of the Office-cum-Rest House of CHTRC in Dhaka

Discussion:

In 2000 CHTRC, as per discussion of the CHTRC Chairman Mr. Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma with the then Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and subsequent advice of the Minister of MoCHTA Mr. Kalpa Ranjan Chakma, rented a house in Dhaka at the rate of TK 60,000 per month. The government provided allocation of budget for the rent of the said house since the financial year 2000-01.

CHTRC as per Section 35(1) of its Act is entitled to frame and approve its budget and the government is to provide fund for it. So, CHTRC approved its annual budget including the rent of the said house.

Later, in 2004 the MoCHTA asked the CHTRC to receive administration approval for allocation of budget for the rent of the said house. Though it was not legally necessary, yet the CHTRC formally placed its application for the purpose. The MoCHTA has been the actual authority for the approval, but it refrained from it. On the other, the allocation of budget has been totally stopped from the financial year 2008-09.

CHTRC delegation pointed out that they had meetings with the Special Assistant Raja Devasish Roy of MoCHTA and Finance Advisor Mr. Azizul Islam of the former Caretaker Government about allocation of budget for the rent of the house for the financial year 2008-09. In addition to it, an officer of the CHTRC represented the budget meeting who touched the point once again there. So, allotment was provided in the budget adopted by the Finance Ministry.

CHTRC delegation asked for proper solution of the matter.

Decision:

(a) MoCHTA would provide budget allocation for the rent of the house for the financial year 2008-09 if sufficient amount was found in the budget.

(b) CHTRC would, once again, send letter to the MoCHTA about administrative approval for allocation of budget for the said house.

3. Point: To release sufficient fund for the CHTRC Members for 2008-09

Discussion:

CHTRC delegation placed that the issue was raised to the Special Assistant Raja Devasish Roy and Finance Advisor Mr. Azizul Islam of the former Caretaker Government as well as CHTRC

officers explained the matter in the budget meeting for which proper amount was allotted in the budget for the financial year 2008-09. But the MoCHTA did not release proper amount in the first installment to CHTRC and provided instruction to stop payment for rent of the house from the budget.

The State Minister and the Secretary of MoCHTA opined for release of proper amount.

Decision:

MoCHTA would release proper amount for the monthly remunerations and allowances of the CHTRC Members.

4. Point: Transfer of subjects to the HDCs through executive order

Discussion:

CHTRC delegation explained that Hill District Councils (HDCs) could, as per Section 69(1) and (2)(Ka), frame regulations to conduct its functions/subjects. Whereas the government, so far out of about 69 institutions of the 33 subjects/functions, transferred only 20 institutions of the 12 subjects/functions of the First Schedule of the HDC Acts through illegal applications of the Section 23 which in practice a special provision to transfer, if necessary, only institutions from the HDCs to the government and vice-versa. So, it is imperative to transfer all the subjects/functions and related man power and fund to the HDCs through executive order by the related ministries of the government.

The State Minister and the Secretary, in particular, stated that MoCHTA would review whether executive order would be enough to transfer the subjects/functions to the HDCs. MoCHTA reported that there were three institutions, Nursing Training Institute of Rangamati, District Education Offices of three hill districts, Vocational Institute of Khagrachari which could be transferred at any moment. In this regard, CHTRC delegation demanded to send draft paper on the transfer of the said institutions for proper recommendations if any.

Decision:

- (a) It will be reviewed whether issue of executive order would be enough for transfer of the subjects/functions of the HDCs.
- (b) The above-stated institutions, in the mean time, transferred to the HDCs and representative from CHTRC would be invited there.
- (c) The draft paper on transfer of the subjects/functions would be sent to the CHTRC

5. Point: Tribal Employees Special Facilities Rules

Discussion:

CHTRC delegation stated that in order to provide facilities to the employees who have been reinstated to their post after long interval from among the India-returned refugees and returnee PCJSS members as per the CHT Accord, a draft Rules has been under process since 1999. The said draft has been placed by MoCHTA to the Finance Ministry for consent on fund related matter in January 2008. The said draft Rule should be finalised as early as possible.

The MoCHTA officials reported that the Finance Ministry has asked about involvement of total amount of fund to be provided to the reinstated employees.

Decision:

CHTRC would pass the report on the matter as soon as possible.

6. CHTRC Head Office and its Complex

Discussion:

CHTRC delegation placed that after having completed administrative procedure, the government provided budget allocation since the financial year 2007-08 for construction of CHTRC head

office and its complex. If the Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Rangamati cooperated properly payment for the plots of land to the owners could be made. So, MoCHTA should take the initiative.

The State Minister acceded to take initiative for the matter.

Decision:

MoCHTA would communicate with the DC of Rangamati and concerned authorities related to the matter.

7. Point: Status of the Rank of CHTRC Members

CHTRC delegation stated that as per Section 23(2) and 24(1) of the CHTRC Act, the Members have been entitled to have executive power and to dispose functions of the CHTRC respectively. The Chief Executive Officer of the CHTRC holds the status of Joint Secretary and the Vice Chairmen of the CHT Development Board which is under CHTRC also holds the status of Joint Secretary. The CHTRC Members too require certain status of rank or to include them in the Warrant of Precedence so that they can render their duties properly.

The State Minister opined to have a solution of it properly.

Decision:

MoCHTA would take necessary steps on the issue.

8. Point: To allot a house in Dhaka or plot of land with fund for the CHTRC & HDCs

Discussion:

CHTRC delegation asked for a house in Dhaka for Office-cum-Rest House of CHTRC and HDCs or to allot a plot of land with fund. The State Minister responded positive.

Decision:

CHTRC would send a formal proposal to the MoCHTA which would take necessary steps for the purpose.

9. Point: To appoint employees in the vacant post of CHTRC

Discussion:

CHTRC delegation stated that CHTRC created certain posts with the approval of the government as per the Section 29(1) of the CHTRC Act. Of them, five posts were vacant due to death of one employee and transfer of four others. In addition, Establishment Ministry issued instruction to postpone appointment of four employees because of financial restraint in 2005.

Decision:

CHTRC would send letter once again to the MoCHTA with proper notes against the vacant posts.

10. Point: Amendment of the CHT Land Dispute Resolution Commission Act 2001

Discussion:

CHTRC delegation stated that the said Act was passed in 2001. As it contained some provisions contradictory to the CHT Accord, the CHTRC placed recommendations in 2001 to have them amended. A CHTRC delegation headed by the Chairman of the CHTRC had meeting with the Law Adviser and Special Assistant of MoCHTA of former Caretaker Government on 18 September 2008 and finalised Draft on the amendments. CHTRC placed them to the MoCHTA, which passed them to the Law Ministry. Once again a meeting could be held on it,

The State Minister acceded to it.

Decision:

A meeting with the Law Minister, MoCHTA State minister and CHTRC Chairman would be arranged to have the necessary amendments final.

11. Point: Draft Rules of Business of CHTRC

Discussion:

CHTRC delegation stated that the draft on the said Rule was prepared by the government in 2001. The CHTRC placed its recommendations on them. In 2002 the MoCHTA finalised the draft. The draft was again reviewed in the meetings headed by the then Local Government Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, president of the Committee on Implementation of the CHT Accord in 2003-2006. As there was no legal provision in the CHTRC Act about inspection or control over the CHTRC. All the time, its delegations opined to exclude the chapter related to the procedure of inspection over the CHTRC (by the government).

CHTRC delegation reiterated the same stance on the point. The State Minister opined to have it excluded from the said Rule.

Decision:

The draft of the said Rule would be finalised and the chapter related to the procedure of inspection over the CHTRC (by the government).

12. Point: To issue order on CHT Regulation 1900

Discussion:

In 1989 the government made a new Act to repeal the CHT Regulation of 1900. But it refrained from enforcement of that one for certain reason. Instead, it issued a memorandum/circular in 1990 about fullest application of the CHT Regulation. By dint of it, the Deputy Commissioners in CHT tend to apply the provisions of the Regulation even after the enactment of HDC Acts, CHTRC Act and Rules of Business of MoCHTA which often create conflicting situation. On the other, the CHT Regulation could not be amended properly until subsequent regulations were made under the HDC Acts and CHTRC Act after proper delegation of functions to them by the government.

Decision:

The government would annul the memorandum/circular on the CHT Regulation of 1900.

Comments:

It is yet to be waited how long it would take to implement the above-stated decisions of the meeting. It is noted that previously policy makers of the government either were not active or reluctant enough to implement the Accord and strengthen the CHTRC and HDCs including resolution of the land issue related with the Bengali settlers. In addition, there were so many bureaucratic knots mainly because of fundamentalist attitude.

(15) 15 February 2009: M N Larma Memorial Book launched in Dhaka

On 15 February 2009 at 3.00 pm M N Larma Memorial Foundation organized a half-day launching ceremony of this book at CIRDAP auditorium in Dhaka. PCJSS President Mr. Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma alias Santu Larma was present at the programme as chief discussant while President of Gono Forum Mr. Panka Bhattacharja unveiled the book. Besides, leaders of national political parties, eminent intellectuals, academia and indigenous leaders attended the programme as discussant.

Jyotirindra Bodhipiray Larma, president of the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti who signed the CHT Accord in 1997 on the party's behalf, said that even 11 years after signing the deal the country's ruling class has no interest in implementing it.

'Whenever they were asked about the treaty, they just say it would be done, it is going to be done. But nothing has become visible...Though I must admit that the barriers that will be faced in order to implement the treaty cannot be easily crossed,' he said at the launching of a memorial volume on Manabendra Narayan Larma, the founder president of the regional political party who was slain in 1983, at the CIRDAP auditorium in the city.

‘Manabendra was the victim of a local and international conspiracy and the masterminds of his murder are still in the hills and oppressing the people,’ he said.

Ganaforum’s presidium member Pankaj Bhattacharya, while launching the book, said he expects the new government of ‘change’ to be the same in word and deed. ‘The treaty was made with the state, so do not make state a betrayer,’ he said. ‘The nationalism of Mandabendra was not of the ultra sort, nor was it narrow. It was simply a struggle to establish and ensure the rights of his community.’

‘Manbendra was not only a regional leader because he spoke up for all the suppressed people. He was the only person in the first Parliament who raised his voice for trial of war criminals, rehabilitation of biranganas and doubling of the budget for the armed forces. But this man was portrayed as separationist,’ said Pankaj.

The Communist Party of Bangladesh’s general secretary, Mujahidul Islam Selim, said, ‘Larma is not a historic character — he is still present now as his agenda of struggle still exists in society.’

Selim spoke of his realisation that his party’s unquestioning extension of support to Awami League immediately after independence was a wrong step. ‘Then our policy regarding the Awami League was unity and struggle, but it was true that much stress was put on unity and little on struggle. Such unstinting support could save neither Sheikh Mujib nor the country. And the result is the nation was grabbed by evil rightwing forces.’

The Awami League lawmaker from Khagrachhari, Jyotindralal Tripura, who was also a close aide of Manabendra, was choked by emotion while recalling him. ‘He is the man I love most. He was our source of inspiration...When I was studying in college the seniors warned us not to mix with him, saying we would not get any jobs if we did so.’

Tripura expressed his regret that after signing the peace treaty, peace was yet to arrive in the hills. ‘People in the hills overwhelmingly voted to see the agreement implemented. Our leader assured me that it would implemented.’ he said.

Abdullah Sarkar, central leader of the Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal, demanded a judicial probe into Manabendra’s murder. He also called for ensuring the ethnic minority people’s right to land and suggested construction of a monument in memory of Manabendra, along with a library.

Writer Mesbah Kamal said Manabendra was a political philosopher of the region who accommodated the people of other races in the struggle to realise the rights of the ethnic minorities. ‘Everybody lauds the 1972 Constitution as a flawless one but Manabendra pointed out that it does not represent the majority of the people, and nobody after his death said so.’

New Age’s editor Nurul Kabir said the chauvinist approach of the ruling class, under any banner, leaves limited scope to establish the rights of the ethnic minorities. ‘Winning the support of the democratic sections of the Bengalis will remain a very important factor for the realisation of the rights of the minority communities.’

(16) 22 February 2009: Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission holds press conference

On February 2009 CHT Commission organised press conference at National Press Club in Dhaka. The Commission carried out its second visit from 16-22 February, 2009, following the holding of parliamentary elections in December 2008, and a pledge made by the new Government, led by the Awami League, to fully implement the CHT Accord. The objective of this mission was first and foremost to inform the newly elected government about the Commission’s concerns and urge it to take concrete and time-bound measures for the full implementation of the Accord, and to address ongoing human rights violations in the CHT on an urgent basis.

Speakers at a briefing press conference said activating land commission, pursuing voluntary relocation of settlers and demilitarisation of Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) administration within a declared time frame must be considered on priority basis to ensure full implementation of the CHT peace accord.

“CHT administration must be demilitarised as far as it is possible. Land commission must be activated and illegally occupied lands must be recovered and returned to its real owners,” said Dr Shapan Adnan, one of the delegation members of the commission.

The commission also recommended the government for engaging an impartial and accountable body to review vexatious cases to ensure effective redress and reparation to the affected indigenous people who very often fell victim to false cases.

Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission (CHTC) at the press briefing at the National Press club in the city came up with the recommendations after completing its second mission in CHT yesterday and urged the government to initiate concrete and time-bound actions for full implementation of the treaty.

CHTC Chairman Lord Eric Avebury said, “CHTC agrees with the government that the problems of the CHT are primarily political in nature and therefore demand political rather than military solutions.”

The recommendations focused on enhancing the power of civil administration in CHT and protecting human rights and ensuring access to justice in the areas.

The recommendations also mentioned that the ongoing Operation Uttoron in CHT confers on the military rights to intervene in civil matters beyond their proper jurisdiction and urged the government to publicise text of the operation for public scrutiny, saying, “The commission would like to see the phased withdrawal of troops from the areas as mentioned in the accord to be completed within a declared time frame.”

Other recommendations include activating Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Domon Tribunal in every CHT district, implementing provisions for resettlement and rehabilitation of repatriated hilly refugees, survey and updating land records and compiling voter list in the hill district councils, activating land disputes resolution commission and cancellation of unduly prolonged provision for free rations to Bangalee settlers in the areas.

Barrister Sara Hossain and Sultana Kamal also took part in the programme.

(17) 25 February 2009: Fabricated Case filed against Santu Larma in Rangamati

On 25 February 2009 at 9.50 a.m. former general secretary of the PCJSS Mr. Chandra Shekhar Chakma was shot by an unknown person at Champak Nagar in Rangamati town. He got serious bullet injury at right side of his chest. He was got admission first at Rangamati general hospital and then transferred to Chittagong with serious condition.

In connection with this incident, a false case (no. 04, date 25/02/2009 under section 326/307/34 BPC) was filed with Kotwali police station of Rangamati district by Mr. Chandra Shekhar Chakma against unknown persons on 25/02/09. It is learnt that Mr. Chakma gave a signature on a white paper when he was at Rangamati general hospital soon after the incident. Then the statement (ejahar) was written by Adv Shaktiman Chakma on this paper. In the statement, it was stated that he (Chandra Shekhar) was shot when he was returning home from Bazaar after sending money to his son studying in Dinajpur district and reached at the bottom of stairs (Siri) near his house. He mentioned that he knew the culprit in face (age 30/35). It was also mentioned in the statement that Santu Larma and Ushatan Talukder have been threatening to kill him since long time through their cadres and over telephone. He strongly believes that the attack was made under the direct patronization, involvement and planning of Santu Larma and Ushatan Talukder. So, the following persons are involved in conducting and planning the incident:

- 1) Mr. Jyotirindriya Bhodhipriya Larma (Santu Larma) s/o late Chitta Kishore Chakma, Kalyanpur
- 2) Ushatan Talukder (52) s/o Ajit Kumar Talukder, College Gate
- 3) Mriganka Kumar Khisa (38) s/o Purnanga Baran Khisa, Tribal Adam
- 4) Bodhi Satta Chakma (37) s/o Santosh Chakma, Kata Pahar
- 5) Ankur Chakma (35) s/o unknown, Rangapani
- 6) Tantumoni Chakma (32) s/o unknown, Banarupa
- 7) Dhiraj Chakma (30) s/o Sunity Kumar Chakma, Kalyanpur

- 8) Shuvajyoti Chakma (30) s/o unknown, T&T area
- 9) Pahel Chakma (23) s/o unknown, Fishari Para
- 10) Adhiram Chakma (26) s/o unknown, Rangapani
- 11) Tuhin Chakma (26) s/o Probir Chandra Chakma, Biharpur
- 12) Shovan Chakma (28) s/o unknown, CO office area
- 13) Jouban Bikash Chakma (30) s/o unknown, Chakra Para
- 14) Foren Chakma (30) s/o unknown, Chakra Para
- 15) Subarna Chakma (50) s/o late Amita Lal Chakma, Master Colony.

Now, a process is going on to take anticipatory bail from High Court. It is being processed by Adv Karuna Moy Chakma (but unofficially as he is deputy attorney general). Barrister Hasan Arif gave consent to be present during the hearing as a lawyer. It will be put up on Sunday (14 March) at High Court. Hearing may be held on Monday or Tuesday (15 or 16 Mar respectively). All the accused/defendants including Santu Larma are getting preparation to be present in Dhaka for the same.

(18) 18 February 2009: Bengali settlers filed law suit with the Khagrachari judge's court

On 18 February 2009 two Bengali settlers filed law suit with the Khagrachari district judge's court, and the court issued an injunction ordering parties to maintain status quo. It is reported that the Bengali settlers filed a number of false cases against the Jummas.

After obtaining the court order, the army imposed an embargo on house building materials such as brick, cement, iron rod, corrugated iron sheet and sand to be carried beyond Babuchara army check post in the direction of Sadhana Baba Vihar area.

This resulted in immense suffering of the common people who are not being able to build new houses or repair old ones before the onset of the rainy season which is not far off.

Conspiracy to capture 300 acres of land belonging to Sadhana Bana Vihara in Babuchara is still continuing as the army refuses to allow house building materials into areas north of Babuchara army check post. The army suspects that the materials will be used to construct a Buddhist temple there.

Forcible grabbing of Jumma people's land had become rampant after the declaration of a state of emergency in the country in January 2007. Even lands belonging to religious institutions were not spared.

At that time, the army and settlers also made numerous attempts to capture Sadhana Bana Vihara's land by force. But when the Jumma people of the area put up an organised resistance, they retreated but continued their efforts by changing their strategy.

Apart from the embargo, the army regularly checks vehicles carrying Jummas and holds them back for hours on end, for reasons best known to it.

March 2009

(19) 7 March 2009: Army enter the dining hall of Sadhana Tilla Vihar with their boots

On 7 March, they entered the dining hall of the Vihar with their boots on and showered insults on Ven. Buddha Bongsha Bhikkhu, the chief priest of the temple. He and other monks were taking their pre-midday meal at the time.

On another occasion, the army ordered the chief priest to remove the bricks, iron rods and other house building materials from the Vihar area. But the monk told the army point blank that "that is not possible".

(20) 12 March 2009: ambulance carrying the dead body of a Jumma halted by army in Dighinala

On 12 March 2009 an ambulance carrying the dead body of a Jumma was halted at the check post for 4 hours. On the same day, a jeep of a wedding party was also halted and held back for three hours.

Apparently to check out if the court order was being complied with, soldiers from Babuchara sub-zone regularly visit Sadhana Bana Vihara.

(21) 18 March 2009: Two innocent villagers arrested in Kudukchari

On 18 March 2009 two innocent villagers were arrested by army in Kudukchari under Rangamati district. It is learnt that a group of army personnel led by a captain from Kudukchari camp raided the village of Kabukchari and arrested Amal Chakma (45) and Dharma Chan Chakma (45). The Jummas were picked up in the afternoon, and the army took them to the camp.

(22) 15 March 2009: Three innocent villagers arrested in Mahalchari

On 15 March 2009 three innocent Jumma villagers were arrested by army from Sarnath Arannyo Kuthir area in Karallyachari under Mahalchari upazila in Khagrachari district.

Warrant Officer, Md. Wahid of 13 Bir, stationed at Sarnath Arannyo Kuthir, made the arrests at 9am while they were sawing logs in the Kuthir (Buddhist temple) area.

The arrested have been identified as Shanti Ranjan Chakma (45) s/o late Ram Charan Chakma, Amar Singh Chakma (40) s/o Biro Sen Chakma and America Chakma (45) s/o Kalabiza Chakma. They are from the village of Karallyachari.

The army handed them over to the police station in Mahalchari. However, no case has yet been filed against them, said Sunil Jibon Chakma, ex-chairman of Kyang-ghat Union Council.

He further said newly-elected Mahalchari Upazila Chairman, Mr. Sona Ratan Chakma contacted the Mahalchari zone headquarters of the army yesterday and pleaded for their release; but his request went unheeded.

(23) 17 March 2009: High Court granted anticipatory bail for two months to Mr. Larma

On 17 March 2009 the High Court (HC) granted anticipatory bail for two months to Mr. Larma and 14 others in an attempt to murder case in Ranagmati. High Court also asked them to be present at lower court.

A false case was filed with Kotwali police station of Rangamati district by Mr. Chandra Shekhar Chakma against Mr. Larma and other 14 persons following firinb by unknown miscreants on him on 25/02/09.

(24) 23 March 2009: Appointment of the Chairman of the Task Force

On 23 March 2009 the GoB appointed Mr. Jatindra Lal Tripura, MP from Khagrachari of Bangladesh Awami League as Chairman of the Task Force on Rehabilitation of Jumma Refugee Returnees and the Internally Displaced Persons. However, this Task Force is yet to be active.

(25) 24 March 2009: Bir Bahadur appointed as Chairman of CHT Development Board

On 31 March 2009 the present Grand Alliance GoB replaced the General Officer of Commanding (GoC) of 24 Infantry Division of Bangladesh Army from Chairmanship of the CHT Development Board with Mr. Bir Bahadur U Shwe Ching, MP from Bandarban of Bangladesh Awami League.

However, such appointment of a Jumma person to the said post is consistent with the provision of the CHT Accord. But, the CHT Development Board is yet far from cooperating the CHT Regional Council for the supervision and coordination over it as per the CHT Regional Council Act, 1998.

(26) 31 March 2009: Govt plans to product gas from Semutang gas field without consultation of CHT institutions

Very recently, Government of Bangladesh (GoB) undertakes plan to begin production of gas from Semutang gas field in Manikchari upazila under Khagrachari district in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) without having consultation with CHT Regional Council (CHTRC) and Khagrachari Hill District Council (HDC).

It is mentionable that the CHT Peace Accord of 1997 introduces CHTRC as an apex body of CHT administration. According to the CHTRC Act of 1998, it was bestowed with the power of supervision

and coordination of the general administration, law and order and developments of the three hill districts and issuing licenses for setting up heavy industries in this region.

On the other, there is provision in the CHT Peace Accord (Section 19 of Part B) that all development programs at national level shall be implemented through the HDC by the concerned Ministry/ Department/ Institution. According to the HDC Act of 1998, it was also bestowed with the authority of issuing license for local industries and business and receiving part of royalties from license or lease given by the government for exploration and extraction of mineral resources.

The CHT Accord also stipulates that against all the posts of officers of all ranks and employees of different classes of the CHT, the permanent dwellers of the CHT shall be appointed, subject to priority being given to the indigenous Jumma people.

However, violating these provisions, GoB decides to start production of gas from Semutang gas field in Khagrachari district. Kapaeeng Foundation contacted to the office bearer of CHTRC, he, requesting not to mention his name, said that CHTRC was not consulted on this matter. When in February, Industry Minister Mr. Dilip Barua visited the Semutang gas field area, he even did not inform the issue to the CHTRC.

Kapaeeng Foundation tried to contact to the authority of Khagrachari HDC over telephone. But no body was found to receive the call. However, reliable sources confirmed that government or authority of Bapex did not consult with the Khagrachari HDC on this matter.

(27) 31 March 2009: Government urged to declare roadmap for implementation of CHT Accord

On 31 March 2009 a seminar titled “Government Commitment to implement the CHT Accord and active popular support” was jointly organized by Kapaeeng Foundation, a human rights organization of indigenous peoples and Association of Land Reform and Development (ALRD), a national NGO at national press club in Dhaka. Presided over by ALRD executive director Shamsul Huda, the seminar was attended by Advocate Promod Mankin MP and Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Ministry of CHT Affairs as chief guest.

“Government should start implementation of CHT Peace Accord without any delay. Roadmap with timeframe should be set out by the government to implement the accord”, speakers demanded in a national seminar held in Dhaka. They also said that this is the right time to implement the CHT Accord and the government should undertake all possible steps for establishing lasting peace in CHT.

Mr. Mangal Kumar Chakma, Information and Publicity Secretary of PCJSS presented a keynote paper. In his paper, he stated the present status of implementation of CHT Accord. He said that though the then government of Awami League implemented few issues of the Accord, but the main issues of the Accord were not implemented. He urged the government to start implementation of the Accord from May 2009 and to complete it within 2 years. He also urged government to reconstitute the Accord Implementation Committee by appointing the representative of the Prime Minister to the committee by next May. He demanded a clear roadmap from the government to implement the Accord.

In his speech as chief guest, Mr. Promod Mankin said that present government is very keen to implement the Accord. Informing his recent consultation with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, he said that Prime Minister is committed to establish peace in the CHT. Referring to the Prime Minister’s comment in regard to Bengali settlers, he said that Bengali settlers would be withdrawn from CHT phase by phase. He also added that Parliamentary Standing Committee under his stewardship would always play active role in implementing the Accord. He asked the civil society members to submit a draft roadmap of implementation of the Accord to the Prime Minister with sending a copy of it to his parliamentary standing committee.

Mr. Jatindra Lal Tripura, ruling party MP from Khagrachari, said that land commission would be reconstituted to resolve land problem in CHT. He assured that he would rehabilitate the internally displaced persons as per CHT Accord.

Mr. Pankaj Bhattachariya, presidium member of Gono Forum, said that the main obstacle in implementing the peace accord is the fanatic and war-criminal forces. At present the enemy was identified. He urged the government to implement the CHT Accord within two years by reconstituting the Accord Implementation Committee in next May.

Barrister Devasish Roy, Chakma Circle Chief and special assistant to the Chief Advisor of the Caretaker Government said that for the sake of constitutional guarantee of the CHT Accord, the Accord should be inserted in the first schedule of the constitution. Expressing his experience, he added that for the sake of making effective role of the Ministry of CHT Affairs, appointment of the permanent residents prioritizing the indigenous people to the post of officers and employees of the CHT Ministry should be given priority. He called on the government to take immediate steps first to amend the CHT Land Disputes Resolution Commission Act 2001 as per recommendation of the CHT Regional Council. He expressed that it would not be wise to work for him as a member of Land Commission under the existing Land Commission Act for resolution of land disputes as it is contradictory to the CHT Accord.

Barrister Sara Hossain, an eminent human rights activist, said that legal issues, such as, enactment and amendment of acts, rules, regulations of CHT Accord should be done first. Then resolution of land disputes should be given priority in implementing the Accord. Referring to include a subject on indigenous peoples' issues in the training manual of Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC) and National Defense College (NDC), she suggested to incorporate the same issues in the training manual for judicial services. She also informed that during the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in UN Human Rights Council in last February, foreign minister Dr. Dipu Moni did not say anything about the implementation of the CHT Accord. However, Dr. Moni assured that government would submit roadmap of implementation of the Accord during the next session to be held in June 2009. Sara Hossain called on the civil society member to influence government for formulation of roadmap for implementation of the Accord before the next session of UPR.

In his speech as chair of the seminar, Mr. Shamsul Huda said that the withdrawal of temporary camps and Operation Uttoron should be given priority in implementing the peace accord. He added that civil society should take supportive role to the government for speedy implementation of the Accord. He expressed that constitution recognition and seat reservation for indigenous peoples should be made for sake of good governance.

Among others, eminent human rights activist Ms. Rosaline Costa, women rights activist Ms. Delara Rekha, VSO Ms. Hosne Ara Begum, indigenous rights activist Mr. Kirti Nishan Chakma, RDC organizer Mr. Mazharul Islam, indigenous rights activist Mr. Albert Mankin, Santal leader Subodh Baskey etc spoke during the open discussion. Earlier Mr. Rabindranath Soren, Chairperson of the Kapaeeng Foundation delivered the welcome speech while Mr. Dipayan Khisa conducted the start of the seminar.

April 2009

(28) 5 April 2009: Bengali settlers spread communal tension in Ghilachari

On 5 April 2009 hundreds of settlers came out on the Rangamati–Khagrachari road, blocked vehicles and forced the passengers to witness “the destruction” of their pineapple gardens.

There have been reports of heightened tension between Jumma villagers and illegal settlers in Ghilachari under Rangmati district over ownership of land. It is learnt that tension had been brewing over the last few days as the settlers began planting pineapple saplings on lands Jumma villagers claim to be their own.

The Jummas lodged a strong protest about it, but the settlers paid no heed. The matter came to a head 3 days ago when the Jummas destroyed the planted saplings. The settlers instantly made it an issue and tried to whip up communal sentiment against the Jummas.

On 6 April 2009 the Additional Deputy Commissioner of Rangamati, Bishwajit Bhattacharya Khokan and the Superintendent of Police visited Ghilachari at noon. He is reported to have promised to provide compensation to the settlers and urged them to withdraw the road blockade.

On the other, the Jummas expressed surprise at what they consider to be ADC's misplaced attempt to placate the settlers. They accused the ADC of being biased. In another incident, the army carried out a raid into a Jumma village at Ghilachari where large numbers of villagers gathered together to defend themselves in the event of a possible settler attack.

(29) 13 April 2009: Army beats up Khagrachari Municipality Councilor

On 13 April 2009 during national festival of indigenous Jumma peoples Mr. Monang Dewan, Commissioner of Khagrachari municipality was beaten by army at Zero Mile check post in Khagrachari district.

Mr. Dewan went there to enquire into an allegation that the army at the check post was providing shelter to some miscreants who had kidnapped a Jumma woman. After the beating, hundreds of Jummas converged on Zero Mile to lodge their protest. An unconfirmed report said the army personnel involved in the beating have been closed.

(30) 14 April 2009: Settlers attacked a Jumma village at Gilachari in Naniachar

On 14 April 2009 Bengali settlers attacked Nabin Chandra Karbari Para under Gilachari union in Naniachar upazila. Villagers fled from the village. Though the settlers did not set fire the house but the house of the Jumma people were vandalised. It is mentionable that within and between the Jumma and settlers' village there was Bagachari Army Camp situated. No one could do harm without the concern of the Army.

(31) 30 April 2009: Prime Minister assures to implement the CHT Accord

Since the assuming state power this time Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said on 30 April 2009 that her government would implement the CHT Accord in letter and spirit. She reiterated the same time and again while she met the vice admiral of Naval Forces of France and Commander of the Joint Forces in the Indian Ocean Mr. Gerard Volin in April 2009.

May 2009

(32) 2 May 2009: Meeting of the Central Committee of the PCJSS held

On 02 May 2009 a meeting of the central committee presided by the President Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma held in Rangamati. PCJSS National Conference has been due in April-May 2009 and the central committee reviewed the overall situation in CHT to hold it immediately. Considering the fluid situation in CHT PCJSS central Committee decided to postpone it until December 2009. The Central Committee further decided to make every effort to have implementation of the CHT Accord so that CHT Problem is resolved and peace is restored in the region.

(33) 2 May 2009: Follow-up of Sajek (Baghaihat) situation

The tension in Baghaihat area under Sajek union in Rangamati district is prevailing as Bengali settlers with the help of military forces of Baghaihat zone continue to occupy the land of indigenous Jumma peoples. After arson attack on 7 villages of indigenous peoples by Bengali settlers in 20 April 2008, the Bengali settlers constructed houses on the land of indigenous villagers. On the other, most of the indigenous villagers could not come back to their original homesteads due to insecurity and fear of further attack.

For instance, on 2 May 2009 a Bengali settler named Mr. Alkas Leader asked Mr. Sunet Bikash Chakma of Gangaram village of Sajek union to give up a piece of land for him. However, Mr. Chakma denied giving up any land for Mr. Alkas. As result, Mr. Alkas threatened Mr. Sunet for severe consequences if he would not do so. Later, one subeder (lower rank army) from Baghaihat

zone also asked Mr. Sunet to relinquish a part of land from his homestead for Mr. Alkas otherwise it would not be good. This way the Bengali settlers keep on their activities to occupy Jumma people's land.

(34) 4 May 2009: BPATC Workshop on Curriculum Development for Orientation Course on CHT

On 04 May 2009 BPATC (Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre) organised a workshop on Curriculum Development for Orientation Course on CHT at Rangamati Hill District Council Conference Room in Rangamati funded by UNDP-CHDF (United Nations Development Programme-Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Forum).

BPATC Rector Md. Abdus Salam Khan was the Chairperson, Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma, Chairman of CHT Regional Council was the Chief Guest and Barrister Raja Devashis Roy, Chakma Circle Chief and former Special Assistant to the Chief Adviser of the Previous Care taker Govt. and participants were from CHT Regional Council, three Hill District Councils, NGOs and civil societies.

Ms Jishan Ara Arafunnesa conducted the workshop and Ms Jumbee Chakma, Cluster of UNDP-CHTDF was the Co-Ordinator.

The main objectives of the workshop were to assess demand for training of the officers and employees posted in CHT, to receive opinions from the beneficiaries and to develop a Training Module for the purpose.

Mr. Robert Stoleman, Chief, Implementation, UNDP-CHTDF spoke that CHT has a very complicated governance system at the moment and proper orientation on the CHT was imperative. Raja Devashis Roy, Guest of Honour told that training for all officers and employees including the District and other Judges appointed in CHT was necessary. He opined that CHT has a very different administrative set up and the social adjudication as well. Mr. Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma, Chairman of the CHT Regional Council hoped to have positive impact of the initiative taken up by the UNDP in collaboration with the BPATC. He expressed that there were still such officers, who consider CHT as a colony until now. He opined that CHT Accord was signed in 1997 and CHT Regional Council was constituted in 1999 and he and his colleagues (member of the Council) acquired a very bitter experience of opposition from both the civil and military administration in CHT and at the national level. However, he hoped of positive impact of the initiative.

In the workshop Training Modules presented and developed were totally 5 – CHT Profile, Administration, Local Government System, Development and the Peace Process in CHT. Participants were among others, Goutam Kumar Chakma, Member of CHT Regional Council, Advocate Mrinal Chakma, Sunil Kanti De, News reporter who played vital role in the workshop. Mr. Goutam Kumar Chakma while presenting opinion as Group Leader on the Module of Local Government System in CHT drew attention that he and all other indigenous persons present in the workshop would prefer to have been addressed Shri, Babu or Mr. in lieu of Janab, which was used by Ms. Jishan Ara Arafunnesa in conducting the workshop. In response to it immediately Ms Jishan told that all (citizens of Bangladesh) were Bangalee and many of the indigenous persons shouted out opposing it.

(35) 4 May 2009: Briefing of the ADB Team to the CHTRC Chairman on case study in CHT

On 04 May 2009 Ms Yasmin S. Siddiqui, Water resource Specialist, South Asia Department of ADB met CHTRC Chairman J.B. Larma and briefed that ADB has taken up program for case study in CHT on water resources in relation to shifting cultivation, irrigation and energy in the villages. Mr. Dev Nathan, consultant of ADB would run the case study for the period of June to September 2009. After the Study ADB would design programme for the purpose.

During the briefing Ms Yasmin wanted to know about the Land Commission and Mr. Larma told about it. Joining in the discussion Mr. Goutam Kumar Chakma, member of the CHTRC informed of the meeting held between the CHTRC delegation led by him and the State Minister of Ministry of CHT Affairs (MoCHTA) on 03 February 2009, when decision was taken that the Govt. would ammend the CHT Land Dispute commission ACT 2001 in the second session of the Parliament.

While Mr. Goutam asked her whether they would have any role on the matter so that economic development in CHT would have sustainable she responded in positive.

(36) 5 May 2009: Vatican City Ambassador raised the CHT issue with the PM Sheikh Hasina

On 05 May 2009 Vatican City Ambassador Mr. Marino Joseph met the PM Sheikh Hasina in Dhaka while he raised the CHT issue. In response, the PM reiterated that her Govt. would restore peace in CHT through implementation of the CHT Accord.

(37) 6 May 2009: HC asks government and EC to explain no-elections in CHT

On 6 May 2009 the High Court asked the government and the Election Commission why elections to the Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council and Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban district councils would not be held.

The court also them to explain why it was not illegal to not hold elections to Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban following the constitution of the regional council in 1998 and the first election of the councils in 1989. The bench of justices Syed Rifat Ahmed and Mainul Islam Chowdhury gave the local government secretary, CHT affairs secretary, Election Commission secretary and Chittagong divisional commissioner four weeks to reply.

The orders came on a writ petition filed in the form of public interest litigation on Tuesday by Md Kamal Hossain, a resident of Rangamati and president of the CHT students forum. Advocate Tajul Islam said in the hearing the tenure of the CHT Regional Council, under section 12 of CHT Law was five year and there was compulsion to hold the election 60 days before the tenure ended. But, he further said, despite the formation of the first regional council in 1998, there had been no election to date. Similarly, despite compulsion to hold elections to Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban district councils under sections 4(2) and 16(1) of the 1989 law, no election was held after the only election in 1989.

Islam said successive governments ran the CHT administration through unelected interim Parishads of their choice. As a result, the hills people were deprived of their right to vote. The interim parishads did not provide scope for representation of all tribal communities and other people and so, fundamental rights of the people of that area were violated, he added.

(38) 7 May 2009: Bengali settlers asked for Road Blockade on the Rangamati-Khagrachari Road at Naiarchar

On 07 May 2009 Bengali Settlers declared road blockade programme on the Rangamati-Khagrachari Road at Naiarchar Upazilla in Rangamati Hill District.

The Bengali settlers falsely claimed that the Jumma people destroyed the pineapples plants of them and protesting it they made attempts to commit riot against the local Jumma People and protesting it held a rally and meeting in Rangamati town on 20 April 2009 and demanded punishments of Jumma persons.

They continue their demands and asked for road blockade on the Rangamati-Khagrachari Road at Bagachari under Naniarchar Upazilla (Sub-District) in Rangamati Hill District. They may fell upon the Jumma people at any moment, if the local army authority hinted them about it.

It is notable that there occurred a series of incidents through CHT since the assuming of power of the present Mohajote (grand alliance) govt. headed by PM Sheikh Hasina. It is speculated that the Islamic Fundamentalist elements at all levels in CHT have come up with the attempts of disrupting the implementation of the CHT Accord through creating chaos and confusion in the region.

The Jumma people of the area have been passing their days in extreme terror of riots upon then.

(39) 7 May 2009: Follow-up of Santu Larma's bail

On 7 May 2009 the Chief Judicial Court of Rangamati district also granted Mr. Larma's petition for attendance through the engaged lawyers. The court dispelled personal attendance under section 540(a) of Crimal Code Procedure (CrPD).

As per High Court's direction, Mr. Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma alias Santu Larma, president of PCJSS and chairman of CHT Regional Council appeared before lower court at Rangamati Chief Judicial Magistrate Court. It is mentionable that on 17 March 2009 the High Court (HC) granted anticipatory bail for two months to Mr. Larma and 14 others in an attempt to murder case in Ranagmati. High Court also asked them to be present at lower court.

(40) 9 May 2009: Jumma woman killed after rape by Bengali settler in Bandarban

On 9 May 2009 a Jumma woman named Ms. Mya Ching Khoy Marma (18) d/o Binu Aung Marma of Remong Member Para of Gajalia union under Lama upazila in Bandarban district was raped and then killed by Md. Juwel Miah (25), s/o Jalaluddin, manager of Agro Plantation. Mya Ching Khoy Marma was a worker of tobacco garden under Agro Plantation Project in Lama.

It is reported that on 11 May 2009 the police of Lama police station exhumed the body of the victim. It is also learnt that Jewel Miah killed Mya Ching Khoy by hitting her mercilessly with a brick. A murder case was filed with Lama police station following which Jewel was arrested the same day.

(41) 12 May 2009: PCP holds demonstration at DU campus against the rape and killing of Jumma girl

On 12 May 2009 at about 11 am Hill Students Council (PCP) Dhaka metropolitan unit organized demonstration protesting against the rape and killing of an indigenous Marma girl at Dhaka University campus. It is mentionable that Ms. Mya Ching Khoy Marma (18), d/o Binu Aung Marma of Remong Member Para under Lama Thana was raped and then killed by the project employee Mohammad Juwel in Lama upazila (sub-district) under Bandarban district. Killer Juwel, s/o Jalaluddin used chloroform to faint the victim and then raped savagely. Mai Pukong Marma was a worker of tobacco garden under Agro Plantation Project in Lama.

The PCP protest rally started from Aparajeyo Bangla of Dhaka University and moved around the art building and then ended in front of the central library. The speakers of the demonstration demanded to arrest the culprit and to remove Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Lama police station Mr. Rafiqul Islam from Lama. It is alleged that Mr. Rafiqul Islam was trying to defend the culprit Md. Juwel. Students from different organization including Bangladesh Adivasi Student Action Forum, Tripura Student Forum, Hajong Student Association and Bangladesh Garo Student Association expressed their deep concern over the prevailing situation in CHT. They also demanded to the government to implement CHT Peace Accord soon. Mr. Nitol Chakma, Mr. Sunirmol Dewan, Mr. Sohel Hajong, Ms. Priasi Tripura, Mr. Romeo Tripura were the speakers in the demonstration while Rigan Chakma presided over the demonstration.

(42) 12 May 2009: Tension mounted in Dighinala and Baghaichari upazila

On 12 May 2009 the Bengali settlers got excited at the incident as well as have organized the settlers of three settlements at Hutchinsonpur and Harendra Lal Karbari Para of Kabakhali mouza and Modhya Boalkhali settlements of Boalkhali mouza under Dighinala upazila in Khagrachari district. Since the night of 12 May 2009 they posed threat for communal attack upon the nearby Jumma villages shouting frequently in their localities. The Jumma people of the said villages are reported have got fear extremely and took many children and women from there to safe places.

It is mentionable that on 6 May 2009 the UPDF activists in Baghaihat area of Sajek union under Baghaichari upazila in Rangamati district reported kidnapped two settlers from Gangaram area of the said union. The victims were found killed in the area on 9 May. The dead bodies were taken to Khagrachari general hospital for post mortem. One of them hailed from Modhyo Boalkhali under Dighinala upazila in Khagrachari district and the other one from Bagaihut area.

(43) 15 May 2009: Fabricated case filed against PCJSS leader in Rangamati

On 15 May 2009, a case was lodged with Kotowali police station in connection with firing on Mr. Pragati Chakma, a supporter of reformist group. The case was filed against 17 PCJSS leaders including, president of Rangamati district PCJSS Mr. Gunendu Bikash Chakma, convenor of Naniarchar PCJSS Mr. Gyana Ranjan Chakma, general secretary of Rangamati city PCJSS Mr.

Nilotpal Chakma, Ankur Chakma, Fodangtanong Chakma, Dhiraj Chakma, Pohel Chakma, Shubhajyoti Chakma etc. Though Mr. Progati Chakma was shot allegedly by the drug addicted youths, but the reformist group of PCJSS with the support of vested interest group allegedly including Dipankar Talukdar MP and military forces used the incident by filing a fabricated case against the PCJSS leaders with an aim to harass them.

(44) 16 May 2009: PCP leader arrested by police in Rangamati

On 16 May 2009 Shuvajyoti Dewan, general secretary of PCP of Rangamati branch was arrested from Kataltali area of Rangamati town by the police in connection with kidnapping case. This kidnapping case was filed on 24 February 2009 (case no. 03 of Kotowali police station under section 363/34 of BPC) against student leaders, such as, Shubhajyoti Chakma, Juban Bikash Chakma, Adhiran Chakma, Chinese Chakma, Fodangtang Chakma, Tuhin Chakma, Pohel Chakma at el.

At that time, Kalomani Chakma along with his one friend was tried to kidnap by rival youngsters and following this incident the case against above-mentioned persons was motivatedly lodged by Kalomani's father Mr. Pradip Lal Chakma of Kalindupur in Rangamati town. After the discussion, Pradip Lal agreed to withdraw the cases and accordingly submitted petition to the court and police station for the same. Nevertheless, Shubhajyoti was arrested basically to harass the student leaders who were strong voice for implementation of the CHT Accord.

The Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Kotowali police station said to the student leaders off the records (when they rushed police station soon after the hearing the arrest) that he did not have any option except arresting Shubhajyoti as he was put pressure from influential section. He also informed to the student leaders that a section of plaintiff helped to identify and locate Shubhajyoti. It is learnt that at that time (during the arrest of Shubhajyoti), Sudirgha Chakma (a supporter of reformist group) was seen at Kataltali area.

Repeatedly PCP organised demonstration in front of Rani Dayamayee High School. They blockaded road by setting fire on tyre for three hours. PCP also planned to declare strike, but finally stopped it as police assured that they would not object to the bail petition before court. Shubhajyoti was produced before court on 17 May and got bail on 24 May 2009.

(45) 20 May 2009: PCP 20th Founding Anniversary held in Rangamati

On 20 May 2009 20th Founding Anniversary of PCP (Hill Students Council) was held in Rangamati. More than 5,000 people from different places attended the programme. Presided over by Mr. Udayan Tripura, president of PCP, the programme was attended by Mr. Santu Larma as chief guest. Among others, President of Workers' Party of Bangladesh Rashed Khan Menon MP, presidium member of Gono Forum Pankaj Bhattachariya and president of CPB Manjurul Ahashan Khan attended the programme as discussant.

Shantu, who is also the chairman of CHT Regional Council, said the previous Awami League government signed the agreement. So, the present AL government can't avoid its responsibility to implement the agreement fully. He also alleged that a vested quarter is hatching a conspiracy to eliminate indigenous people and destroy the politics of PCJSS. During the state of emergency, false cases were filed against many PCJSS leaders and they were put into jail, the PCJSS chief said.

The speakers demanded to the government to implement the CHT Accord soon. Earlier, leaders and workers of PCP took out a huge procession from the premises of Rajbari Gymnasium on the occasion.

(46) 20 May 2009: 1st Meeting of Parliamentary Standing Committee on MoCHTA held in Bandarban

On 20 May 2009 the 1st meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Ministry of CHT Affairs held in Bandarban. Presided over by Promod Mankin MP, chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Ministry of CHT Affairs, the meeting was attended by ABM Fazle Karim Chowdhury MP, Jyotindra Lal Tripura MP, Abdur Rahman Bodi MP and secretary and officials of the ministry concerned and other departments. Prof Thanjama Lusai, Chairman of Bandarban Hill District Council, was present at the meeting as a guest.

The issues of discussion of the meeting were not learnt. However, State Minister for MoCHTA Dipankar Talukdar said to the press that the CHT Land Commission would be reformed soon. He also added that in the mean time he talked to two persons for the post of Chairman of the Commission and they agreed to join.

(47) 21 May 2009: Buddhist monk harassed by Captain Shamim in Naniarchar

On 21 May 2009 Captain Shamim of Betchari army camp under Naniarchar upazila in Rangamati district harassed and tried to beat Rev. Bishuddhananda Bhikkhu, chief priest of Ratnankur Buddhist Temple in Naniarchar along with his fellow monks and novices while he was returning from Mahalchari upazila after attending a religious event at Tarachari village of Kengelchari area.

It is learnt that vehicle carrying Rev. Bishuddhananda Bhikkhu was halted when it reached at the check post of Betchari army camp around 10.30 am. The army ordered to get down from vehicle for checking. However, Rev. Bishuddhananda Bhikkhu refused to get down, though others got down. Rev. Bishuddhananda Bhikkhu argued not to check the vehicle as it belongs to his Buddhist temple.

Captain Shamim misbehaved him and tried to tie him with a rope. In the meantime, a group of army from hill top of army camp came down to the check post with ropes in their hands. After one and half hours, the Second-in-Command of Naniarchar zone rushed there and apologised for misbehavior and then allowed monks to go their temple in Naniarchar.

Protesting against harassment of Buddhist monk, demonstration was brought out in Chittagong and Naniarchar. It is learnt that two protesters namely Ms Juthika Chakma, and Ms Mika Chakma were arrested in Naniarchar while they were returning from the protest. They were set free from Naniarchar army zone after taking signature on blank white paper.

(48) 24 May 2009: Bandarban and Rangamati HDCs reconstituted

New Government of Bangladesh reconstituted the Rangamati and Bandarban Hill District Councils (HDCs). It is reported that on 24 May 2009 the MoCHTA, in separate fax messages, dismissed the previous interim HDCs formed during the past Caretaker Government.

In Rangamati, Mr. Nikhil Kumar Chakma, General Secretary of Rangamati district AL was appointed as Chairman of the Rangamati HDC and Mr. Aungsui Prue Chowdhury, Ms. Shamima Rashid, Mr. Brishaketu Chakma and Mr. Avilash Tangchangya were appointed as its member. They all are local leader of AL in Rangamati

On the other, Mr. Kya Shoilah Marma was made as the Chairman of Bandarban HDC. He was discharged same responsibility in 1996-2001. Mr. Kazi Mujibur Rahman, Mr. Prasna Kanti Tangchangya, Mr. Kew Sa Prue and Mr. Aung Prue Murang were made as member.

However, government did not bring any change to the Khagrachhari HDC.

(49) 23 May 2009: PCJSS member killed by UPDF

On 23 May 2009 a local PCJSS leader named Mr. Rubel Chakma (30) was chopped to death by the UPDF cadres at Subhalong Bazar area of Subhalong union under Barkal upazila in Rangamati district.

According to eyewitnesses and relatives of victim, on that day at 3.45 p.m. Rubel Chakma was playing with card with some friends on the north side of Subhalong Bazar near by forest office under a tree. At that time Rubel Chakma was chopped to death with a sharp weapon from his behind. At once the miscreant ran away. The family members and eyewitnesses said the attacker was a UPDF's armed cadre.

(50) 25 May 2009: CHT Accord Implementation Monitoring Committee reconstituted

On 25 May 2009 the GoB appointed Sayeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Deputy Leader of the Parliament as the Convenor of the CHT Accord Implementation Monitoring Committee.

June 2009

(51) 5 June 2009: PCJSS leader abducted by UPDF in Barkal

On 5 June 2009 Mr. Kamalendu Bikash Dewan (47), s/o Murolya Dewan, president of Barkal union committee of PCJSS was abducted by UPDF armed cadres at about 7:00 p.m. from his own house of Kusumchhari Mukh area of Barkal union under Barkal upazila in Rangamati district. It is known that a group of armed cadres of UPDF led by Pahr (Prakhar) Chandra Chakma (43) of Kusumchhari Mukh area raided the Kusumchhari Mukh area and abducted Kamalendu Bikash Dewan at gun point and at that time, other three innocent villagers were also beat by UPDF cadres.

(52) 7 June 2009: PCP and PCJSS activists abducted by UPDF in Rangamati

On 7 June 2009 two members of PCJSS (Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti) and PCP (Hill Students Council) were abducted by the armed cadres of UPDF from Dhalyachhari village under Jibtali union of Rangamati sadar upazila in Rangamati district.

The abducted persons were identified as and Bijimoni Chakma (35), member of Jibtali union committee of PCJSS and Mr. Sunirmal Dewan (28), president of Jibtali union committee of PCP.

A group of armed cadres of UPDF numbering 12 led by one Tapan Kumar Chakma raided the office of local timber traders of Dhalyachhari at around 4:30 P.M and picked up the above said members of PCJSS and PCP at gun point.

(53) 8 June 2009: Attempt to acquire lands for the cantonment in CHT***Local PCJSS, public representatives and social leaders protest***

On 8 June 2009 Local PCJSS leaders of Ruma upazila of Bandarban Hill District alleged that there was a process going on to acquire lands for the army in Ruma upazila. The leaders said more than 4 thousands indigenous people would be evicted from their own lands if a large land of 9,560 acres was acquired with a view to extending the Ruma cantonment of Bandarban. There were preparations going on to acquire lands in the name of expansion of cantonment with an aim to evict the indigenous people.

JSS leaders of Ruma upazila, at a gathering, made demand to cancel the process of acquisition of lands for the army in Ruma upazila. On the same day, a memorandum signed by 500 persons including local public representatives and indigenous social leaders was also sent to the Prime Minister through unpazila nirbahi officer (UNO) on the same demand.

Lupru Marma, general secretary of JSS of Ruma upazila committee presided over the gathering and Thoai Sa Nue Marma, organizing secretary and Francis Tripura, joint secretary of JSS of Ruma upazila committee, Hla Thoai Hri Marma, president and Kyasa Pru Marma, general secretary of PCP (Pahari Chhatra Parishad) also spoke at the gathering.

The speakers said the land acquisition process if not cancelled would badly affect the whole Bandarban and the social order of the indigenous people would sustain a serious damage. It would be difficult for them to survive.

The speakers said now outsider people were being rehabilitated granting them lease around 11,500 acres lands which was acquired in the name of training of army at Sualak area of Bandarban Sadar upazila.

It was known by the source of land section of district administration that the process of acquisition of 9,560 acres lands at Paendu, Sengum and Galengya Mauza for training of the Para commandos and expansion of Ruma cantonment was about at last stage. Several surveys had also been conducted to pay compensation of the indigenous people living in that area.

Uhla Ching Marma, Headman of Sengum Mauza and Chairman of Ruma Sadar union council said that though the union council Chairman and the concerned Mauza Headman were to be informed and involved in the actions like land acquisition as per rule, none of them were informed.

(54) 12 June 2009: BDR tries to establish market at Ruilui in Sajek in order to settle down Bengalis

On 12 June 2009 Commanding Officer (CO) from Marishya BDR camp along with El Thanga Pangkhua, Chairman of the Sajek union visited Ruilui area under no. 167 Ruilui mouza of Sajek union in Baghachari upazila. The main objective of the visit was to establish a market at the area close to Ruilui BDR camp. CO granted taka two lacs for setting the market. 6 houses as shop were constructed since after the visit.

Sources said that BDR have been trying to establish a market at that area in order to settle down Bengali settlers through out the border areas. It is learnt that BDR has a plan to settle down Bengali settlers at No. 10 and 9 Mile areas (Shijak thum) of Ruilui area, very close border to Indian Mizoram State. Locals have been opposing against the establishment of market at that area. Lal Thanga Lushai, Headman of Ruilui mouza is also opposing it. There are living basically Lushai, Pangkhua and Tripura ethnic groups.

(55) 12 June 2009: Publication of report on Kalpana abduction investigation and punishment of the kidnappers demanded

On 12 June 2009 Parbatya Chattagram Mohilla Samiti (PCMS) and Hill Women's Federation (HWF) called for publication of the full report on Kalpana abduction investigation and punishment of the kidnappers.

PCMS and HWF jointly organized demonstration in protest of the abduction of Kalpana Chakma simultaneously in Rangamati and Dhaka.

In Rangamati: A protest gathering was organised by PCMS and HWF at outer Stadium in Rangamati. Presided over by President of PCMS Ms. Madhabi Lata Chakma, the protest gathering was attended by Political Affairs Secretary of the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samiti (PCJSS) Ushatan Talukder as chief guest. Among others, Parvin Akhter of Samajtantrik Mahila Forum, Hamid Meer of Chittagong University, Jyoti Prava Chakma of PCMS, Udayan Tripura of Pahari Chhatra Parisahd, Advocate Juhel Dewan of BLAST Rangamati unit, Mr. Sukhamoy Rava of Assamese Welfare Council addressed in the gathering.

Speakers said that soldiers had picked Kalpana Chakma up from her home in Baghaichhari upazila in Rangamati on the night of June 12, 2006 and she never came back. The then Awami League-government, which later signed a treaty with the PCJSS to end the decades-long conflict in the hills, turned a blind eye to her kidnapping during its tenure between 1996 and 2001. In response to protests by the Jumma people and members of the civil society who wanted Kalpana Chakma to be returned to her family, the government formed a committee to investigate the incident. The committee submitted a report, but the government never made it public.

A procession was brought out from Stadium to Banarupa after the public gathering.

In Dhaka: PCMS and HWF organized a human chain in protest of the abduction of Kalpana Chakma in front of national museum at Shahbag in Dhaka.

Different organization including Bangladesh Adivasi Forum, Sammilito Nari Somaj, Nari Progoti Songha, Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK), Kapaeeng Foundation, Samprity Mancha, Adibashi Adhikar Andolon, CHT Hill Student Council (PCP), Bangladesh Indigenous Student's Action Forum, Samajtantrik Chatra Front, Worker's Party (reconstituted), Santal Student's Union, Garo Students Union expressed their solidarity being present there.

Eminent intellectuals and academicians also expressed their solidarity and demanded to the present government to publish whitepaper of all incidents of women rights violation committed by security forces in CHT. They also demanded constitutional recognition of the indigenous people. They termed the abduction of Kalpana Chakma as shame and stigma for the state. The present government must materialize the CHT Accord for the sake of implementation of Charter of Change. The speakers were eminent educationist Professor Sirajul Islam Chowdury, Columnist Syed Abul Moksud, Professor Sadeka Halim, Professor H K S Arefin, Professor Mesbah Kamal, Robayet Ferdous, Advocate Laila

Khaleda, veteran politician Haider Akbar Khan Rono, Farida Akther, Sanjeeb Drong, Rabindranath Soren, Dipayan Khisa and many others. Meo Ching Marma conducted the whole program.

Finally, Meo Ching Marma, President of Hill Women's Federation (HWF) read out a package of demands of HWF and PCMS. These are the followings-

- Publication of report on Kalpana abduction investigation and punishment of the kidnappers
- Publication of whitepaper of all rapes, abduction and massacre.
- Withdrawal of all temporary army camps and de facto military rule 'Operation Uttoron' as per CHT Accord.
- Full implementation of CHT Accord in letter and spirit.

It is mentionable that Kalpana Chakma was abducted from her house at New Lalyaghona village under Baghaichari upazila in Rangamati district on 12 June 1996 by the army personnel of Kajaichari camp led by Lt. Ferdous. Kalpana Chakma was the organizing secretary of HWF. She was a strong voice against military atrocities and repression.

(56) 14 June 2009: Clash between Jumma and Bengali settlers in Ramgarh

On 14 June 2009 clash between Jumma villagers and Bengali settlers occurred at Jalia Para under Ramgarh upazila in Khagrachari district.

It is learnt that Bengali settlers from Jalia Para cluster village have been trying to occupy the land of Jumma villagers at Baroitoli area of Baroitoli mouza and Hafchari union under Ramgarh upazila. Baroitoli area is around 8 kms far from Jalia Para cluster village. Very recently on 7 June Bengali settlers cleaned the scrubs and erected at least 15 houses. Again 14 June early in the morning, a group of Bengali settlers numbering around 70 persons went to the area and started to build houses. But the Jumma villagers opposed them to construct houses. At a stage, clash between two groups started and at least 10 Bengali settlers were injured in the clash. They were admitted to Guimara hospital.

Soon after receiving this news, Bengali settlers of Jalia Para and Guimara cluster made attack on innocent Jumma people indiscriminately at Jalia Para area on Khagrachari-Chittagong road.

Sources said that five Marma rickshaw pullers were beat by the Bengali settlers at Jalia Para area. Among them, two injured rickshaw pullers were identified as Thoihla Prue Marma (35), s/o Aungyajai Marma of Labrechai Headman Para of Guimara union and Apruesi Marma (35), s/o Remrachai Marma of Lubre Para of Guimara.

It is reported that Dhanadas Tripura (21), s/o Sukumar Tripura of Sindhukchari village of Sindhukchari union under Mahalchari upazila was brutally beaten by a group of Bengali settlers with firewood and iron rod when he (Mr. Tripura) reached there. However, he could narrowly escape. He was seriously wounded.

Bengali settlers from Jalia Para and Guimara cluster gathered to attack the Jumma villagers of Baroitoli area. However, the military forces resisted them from the attack. On the other, Mr. Jatindra Lal Tripura, MP from Khagrachari district and Chairman of the Task Force on Rehabilitation of Returnee Jumma Refugees and IDPs called both communities to refrain any retaliation.

It is also learnt that most of the Jumma villagers nearby Jalia Para area took shelter into the remote Jumma villages fearing further attack.

It is mentionable that in 1981-82 Government settled down Bengali settler families who were brought from plain districts and gave land deed without taking approval of Headman of Baghaichari mouza. Due to military attack by the then Shanti Bahini, Bengali settlers were closed to cluster village near army camp. However, since 2000 Bengali settlers started to occupy these lands in different parts of the CHT. With this backdrop, on 1 March 2001 Ministry of CHT Affairs (MoCHTA) issued an office order prohibiting expansion of settlement and asking both Jumma and Bengali settlers to maintain status quo until and unless the disputes are resolved by Land Commission to be formed as per CHT Accord.

(57) 13 June 2009: A Jumma youth shot in Rangamati

On 13 June 2009 around 8.00 p.m. a Jumma youth named Kallol Chakma (23), s/o Prabhat Chakma of Banarupa in Rangamati town was shot by unidentified miscreants at Samataghat under Banarupa area. It is learnt that Mr. Kallol Chakma is a drug addicted. Locals said that this incident might be happened due to conflict among the drug addicted. Locals claimed that Kallol Chakma has been leading a drug addicted group in this area for long time. An armed clash among the drug addicted youths was happened at the same on 2 May 2009 where Mr. Rani Chakma and Sajal Chakma were injured.

(58) 18 June 2009: BMSC forms human chain protesting against Bengali settlers' attack at Boroitoli

On 18 June 2009 Members of Bangladesh Marma Students Council (BMSC) formed a human chain at Muktaman-chha in Khagrachhari town protesting settlers' alleged attempt to grab indigenous people's lands at different places in Chittagong Hill Tracts.

On 14 June, a clash between settlers and indigenous people over a land dispute at Boroitoli in Khagrachhari district left 17 settlers seriously injured.

Later, the Marma students submitted a memorandum to the state minister for CHT Affairs Ministry through Khagrachhari Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Abdullah demanding immediate steps to stop alleged settlers' bid to grab 300 acres of land at Boroitoli in Guimara of Khagrachhari district.

They also demanded forming a high-powered parliamentary committee to investigate the Sunday's incident there, ensuring their traditional land rights through implementing Parbatya Chattagram Land Commission and bringing to justice the settlers and security men involved in land grabbing.

At a protest meeting organised by BMSC at Muktamancha in Khagrachhari hill town yesterday, speakers urged the government to take stern action against the settlers who allegedly wanted to grab 300 acres of indigenous people's land at Boroitoli and their patronisers. They also urged ensuring security of the indigenous communities.

BMSC President Upaching Marma, Secretary Mongsaprue Marma, and Member Kayajai Marma spoke at the meeting.

Earlier on Wednesday, indigenous people of Boroitoli village at a protest meeting on the premises of Khagrachhari deputy commissioner's office demanded stern action against attempt to grab indigenous people's land at Boroitoli.

(59) 20 June 2009: Six innocent villagers tortured in Sajek

On 20 June 2009 six innocent Jummas were tortured in Sajek under Baghaichari upazila in Rangamati district during an army raid on a village.

It is learnt that a group of Bangladesh Army from Baghaihat zone carried out a surprise raid into the village of MSF Para. The soldiers surrounded the village and began searching for what they said "terrorists". Finding no 'terrorist', the soldiers picked up 6 innocent villagers, took them to the camp and tortured them severely. They army beat them with stick and gave electric shocks in their bodies. Five of the torture victims were identified as-

- 1) Mr. Ballya Chakma (50) of village MSF Para;
- 2) Mr. Chuchyang Naga Chakma (40) of Bhuachari;
- 3) Mr. Jagadish Chakma (40) of Karengatoli;
- 4) Mr. Amar Dhan Chakma (45) of Nakshachari;
- 5) Mr. Kaladhan Chakma (50) of Gangaram Dore.

The army released Ballya Chakma, Chuchyang Naga Chakma, Jagadish Chakma and his friend in the evening, the same day, while the rest two were set free the following day.

(60) 26 June 2009: Innocent Jumma youth killed by army at Subalong Bazar

On 26 June 2009 an innocent Jumma youth was shot dead by the military forces of Shuvalong camp of 6 Bengal led by Major Manjur, Warrant Officer Saiful and Corporal Atik in Shuvalong, 30 kms off the district town, under Barkal upazila in Rangamati district.

Mr. Tarun Kusum Chakma (30), s/o Gunadhar Chakma was a permanent resident of Bhushanchara of Harina union under Barkal upazila (sub-district) in Rangamati district, but stayed at Moitreenagar under Rangamati municipality with his family. He was an innocent youth and used to earning by day labour or by collection of forest products for family survival. Couple of days ago, he went to Shuvalong area for earnings. It is mentionable that he was active supporter of PCJSS for implementation of the CHT Accord.

On 26 June Friday was a market day of Shuvalong Bazaar. Like other villagers, he also went to Shuvalong bazaar for marketing. However, a group of members of UPDF, an anti-accord terrorist organisation, with the help of Mintu Bikash Chakma (who is familiar as *Bhumihin Mintu*), caught Tarun Kusum Chakam while he got down Shuvalong Bazaar from a steamer at around 9.30 am. Then he was handed over to Shuvalong camp authority after heavily torture labeling him as miscreant. However, camp authority released him found nothing after interrogation.

Again, UPDF men tried to catch him when he reached at Bazaar after getting release from army custody. Having no alternative to save his life, he tried to escape from UPDF attack and jumped over the lake (Kaptai Lake) near Shuvalong forest outpost. At that time, a group of army led by Warrant Officer Saiful and Corporal Atik of 6 Bengal and a group of UPDF men ran after him by two separate boats when he was swimming for escaping. But the army shot him when he came to land near Dhanmia shrine. He sustained bullet injuries on his leg and scrotum. The military forces led by Warrant Officer Saiful and Corporal Atik started to torture brutally. At a stage, the neck of Tarun Kasum was broken. There were several wounded on his body.

Army personnel arrested another Jumma youth named Elen Chakma from the spot. UPDF claimed him as member of the UPDF who went to spot to help army to catch so-called miscreants.

However, the army authority of Shuvalong camp make several fabricated news in order to conceal their misdeed which were published on several national and local dailies and aired on electronic media. The army firstly made propaganda that a dozen of armed miscreants led by Tarun Kusum Chakma proceeded toward Suvalong Bazar to commit sabotage activities. Being informed, army challenged them when the armed miscreants reached at the place near Dhanmia shrine at about 11.00 am. At one stage, the miscreants started fleeing the scene by firing gunshots at army. The army also retaliated by firing bullets, leaving Tarun Kusum Chakma dead on the spot.

The army made second story that clash between two rival groups took place near Shuvalong bazaar. Being informed, the army rushed there and recovered dead body of Tarun Kusum Chakma from the spot.

The army made another third story that the miscreants led by Tarun Kusum Chakma made armed attack on a group of regular patrolling party of the military forces when they (army) reached Dhanmia shrine. Even, army firstly named Tarun Kusum as Jagadish Chakma.

These stories were fully fabricated and motivated. The people who came to market witnessed that he was caught by UPDF men and handed over to army. Victim's younger brother Palash Chakma said that he was not involved with any terrorist activity. He was fully innocent.

It is also worth mentioning that Elen Chakma, who was arrested during the incident, was claimed as member of the UPDF in a press release by Shantidev Chakma, chief of Rangamati district. Shantidev mentioned that Elen went there to help army to catch the victim and the army mistakenly arrested him. This statement of UPDF proved that UPDF men also involved with this heinous killing.

The dead body was brought in Rangamati sadar hospital for post mortem in the evening on 26 June. The dead body was handed over to victim's elder sister and younger brother afternoon on 27 June.

(61) June 2009: 200 Mro families in fear of land-grabbers and terrorists in Bandarban

About 200 ethnic Mro families in Ronjupara, Penaipara, Chakkoipara and Bhatyapara under Tonkaboti Union in Bandarban Sadar Upazila have been living in fear of land grabbers and terrorists, says Prothom Alo, a leading national Bengali daily.

In a news article today, 25 June, the daily says “Since the attack on a villager of Penaipara on 18 June, the residents of the area have been living in fear of further terrorist attacks on them.”

“The villagers spoke of their sense of insecurity at a press conference held at Bandarban press club on Sunday. The chairman and members of Tonkaboti Union Council and village chiefs at the press conference demanded that land-grabber Shaha Alam and his terrorist gang members are arrested and brought to justice.

“At the press conference Tonkaboti Union Council Chairman Purna Chandra Mro said: ‘Shah Alam, a resident of Choromba area under Lohagora Upazila in Chittagong, has occupied without legal documents hundreds of acres of land belonging to Mro people with the help of his Rohingya terrorist gang. As a result the Mro people of Ronjupara and Penaipara have been unable to cultivate Jum for the last three years, plagued by dire financial crisis and compelled to live a substandard life. Complaints have been lodged with the government administration but to no avail, and the lack of effective measures on the part of the government has been a shot in the arms of terrorist Shah Alam.’

“Expressing anger village chief of Ronjupara, Luring Mro said: ‘I can no longer enter the land where we have been cultivating Jum for generations.’ He said Shah Alam and his terrorists tortured Rengrao while he was working at Jum field. He is still undergoing treatment in Bandarban Sadar Hospital. A case has been filed against six persons including Shah Alam; however police has so far failed to arrest any of them.’

“UP member Majeda Begum and Ashraf Mian told the press conference that they have been living in peaceful co-existence with the Mro. As Shah Alam has illegally occupied the lands of Mro people, who are simple and peaceful, they cannot cultivate their Jum fields and have to live in starvation.

“Bandarban Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Anupam Barua said Shah Alam has no land in Tonkaboti Union. He is doing this defying an order not to occupy Jum lands belonging to Mro people.”

July 2009

(62) 1 July 2009: Lease holders of non-resident Bengalis threaten 12 indigenous Mro villagers

On 1 July 2009 the lease holders who are non-resident Bengalis threatened indigenous Mro villagers of 12 villages (228 families) under Lemu Palong mouza and Duluchari mouza to leave areas. Otherwise, they would be faced severe consequences. Indigenous Mro villagers put memorandum to the Prime Minister of Government of Bangladesh seeking justice. But no action has been taken so far.

Forcible land grabbing has got a very serious turn particularly in Bandarban. For instances, Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) of Naikhyongchari upazila in Bandarban district made plantation and horticulture gardens on the 234 acres of land under Bakkhali mouza and 150 acres of land under Alikhyong mouza in Naikhyongchari upazila in the name of his wife and relatives.

(63) 4 July 2009: Conspiracy to arrest the PCJSS leaders in Rowangchari

Political intimidation at this moment reduced. However, the local army continue conspiracy to arrest following PCJSS leaders in Rowangchari under Bandarban district:

- 1) Mr. Kyoba Mong, who contested for the chairmanship of the Rowangchari upazila in Bandarban and won the election but later announced defeated at a margin of 53 votes only and also president of PCJSS of Rowangchari branch
- 2) Mr. Aung Swe Mong Marma, chairman of Rowangchari sadar union and also vice president of PCJSS of Rowangchari branch and
- 3) Mr. Bharat Sen Tanchangya, general secretary of PCJSS of Rowangchari branch.

It is learnt that local army put pressure upon police authority of Naikhyongchari police station to arrest them referring the letter sent by Matiur Rahman, senior assistant secretary of Home Ministry on 4/07/2008 to MoCHTA, Bandarban Army Brigade authority, Superintendent of Police of Bandarban district, among others, in which above persons were falsely alleged to involve with extortion, terrorist activities and abuse of power. But it is yet to be executed.

(64) 19 July 2009: Appointment of Chairman of CHT Land Dispute Commission

On 19 July 2009 the GoB once again filled up the post of the Chairman of the Land Commission with Janab Khademul Islam Chowdhury, Retired Justice of High Court Division of Bangladesh Supreme Court.

(65) 19 July 2009: Civil society demands trial of M A Matin

On 19 July 2009 civil society organized a human chain in front of National museum against the leasing of huge acres of land by former major general M A Matin in Bandarban district. Distinguished educationalist Siurajul Islam Chowdhury, columnist and researcher Syed Abul Moksud, leader of physicians Mahbub Rashidi, teacher of Dhaka University Robayet Ferdous and Sourav Sikder, national leader Pankaj Bhattacharjey attended in the demonstration.

Abul Moksud termed the leasing as robbery of land. It is unjust that bureaucrats, political leaders and military personals are taking the land of Adibashi people on lease, he added. The govt for change must reveal the list of persons who took the lease, he demanded. Professor Sirajul Islam Chowdhury told, we are living in the array of injustice in this country. One of the major injustices is done against the ethnic minority. We can not do much against the powerful persons. All we can do is to hold demonstration at best long march. We have to organize a united effort. Otherwise we will fail, he added. He also demanded constitutional reorganization of indigenous people. The other speakers are Sohel Hajong, Saktipad Tripura, Robayet Ferdous, Pankaj bhattacharjay. Finally, moderator Hiron Mitra Chaskma put forward the demand of civil society, such as, revealing of the list of leaseholder in the CHT; cancellation of all kinds of lease in the CHT; Trial of M.A.Matin; reorganization of indigenous people in the constitution and implementation of CHT CHT Accord.

(66) 20 July 2009: 3rd Meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on MoCHTA

On 20 July 2009 the 3rd meeting of the Committee held in Khagrachari and the Committee took decision with recommendation to cancel all leases given to non-tribal (Bengali) non-residents.

CHT Accord provides “Out of the lands allotted to non-tribal and non-local persons for rubber and other plantations, the lease (allocation) in respect of the lands of those who did not undertake any project during the last ten years or did not properly utilize the lands shall be cancelled.” This provision has not been implemented till today. In total 1,605 plots covering 40,077 acres of land have been given lease to non-tribal and non-local persons for rubber and horticulture purposes during 80s and 90s. But no one plot has been cancelled so far. Rather, allotments of land under this category continue unabated by the authorities.

(67) 29 July 2009: Government declares to withdraw 35 temporary camps

On 29 July 2009 GoB made announcement about withdrawal of 35 camps from different places of Khagrachari and Rangmati districts. However, GoB is yet to fix full time-limit for closing down all temporary camps. In addition, GoB is also yet to withdraw de facto military rule ‘Operation Uttoron’ from CHT by which military forces have been interfering upon the civil administration and conducting military operation throughout the CHT.

As per the Accord, all temporary camps of Army, Ansar and Armed police Battalion except 6 permanent installations were to be closed down and the time-limit shall be fixed for its purpose. Previously some camps, after the Accord, were withdrawn and of course, some new camps have been set up at various strategic places.

(68) 29 July 2009: Indigenous Peoples Human Rights Report launched in Dhaka

On 29 July 2009 launching programme of “Indigenous Peoples Human Rights Report in Bangladesh 2007-2008” was organised by Kapaeeng Foundation at WVA Auditorium in Dhaka. Presided over by president Kapaeeng Foundation Mr. Robindranath Soren while Professor Zillur Rahman Siddique, former Vice Chancellor of Jahangir Nagar University was present as Chief Guest at this book launching programme. Eminent citizens, human rights defenders, indigenous rights activists, media and development activists attended the launching programme.

Raja Devasish Roy of Chakma Circle Chief, Pankaj Bhattachariya of Gono Forum, Shahriar Kabir of Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee, Rokeya Kabir of Bangladesh Nari Pragati Sangha, Mangal Kumar Chakma of Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity, Barrister Sara Hossain of Supre Court, Sanjeeb Drong of Bangladesh Adivasi Forum and Alexius Chicham of Oxfam also spoke on the occasion.

The report, published by Kapaeeng Foundation with the support of Oxfam, said serious cases of human rights violation of indigenous people include extra-judicial killing, arbitrary arrest, torture, harassment, religious persecution, arson and displacement by land grabbers.

Numerous cases of human rights violation committed by law enforcement agencies with impunity provided by the government is contrary to the laws of the country and should be brought to justice, said the speakers at the launch of the report on Indigenous People's Human Rights in Bangladesh 2007-08.

During the last two years, three people died in military custody, three were killed by settlers and land grabbers, about 50 activists and 20 farmers were arrested, two monks were detained, eight people were tortured in custody and eight women were raped, it added.

The report said 15 incidents of land grabbing and arson by settlers, armed forces, NGOs and private companies also took place during the period.

The report was formally launched by Priyanka Simsang, daughter of slain Chalesh Ritchil of Madhupur who died in military custody, and Ranglai Mro, indigenous rights activist from Bandarban who was arrested allegedly on false charges in 2007.

Speaking on the occasion Sanjeeb Drong, general secretary of Bangladesh Adivasi Forum, demanded apology from the government on various incidents of human rights violation by state forces during the last two years.

Barrister Sara Hossain said the issues of human rights violation of indigenous people should be taken to the higher court. The victims should be compensated, not only by the government but also by the persons directly involved in the incidents.

According to the census of 1991, around 1.2 million indigenous people live in Bangladesh and the total number of indigenous ethnic groups is 27. Non-government bodies however put the number of groups in between 40 to 50 with around three million population.

Pankaj Bhattacharya, presidium member of Gono Forum, laid emphasis on re-establishing the secular nature of the constitution. Without a secular constitution it would be impossible to ensure equal rights of the minority communities, he added.

Chakma Circle Chief Raja Devasish Roy said implementation of Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord and constitutional recognition of indigenous people are necessary to ensure their rights. He said the definition of human rights has an expanded meaning in the case of indigenous people. Their rights to religion, language and culture should be ensured along with basic, political and economic rights.

(69) 31 July 2009: Indigenous woman with disabilities raped by a Bengali settler in Dighinala

On 31 July 2009 a physically handicapped indigenous Chakma woman (20) of Dighir Parh of Boradom under Dighinala upazila in Khagrachari district has been raped allegedly by a field worker of Grameen Bank named Nazrul Islam.

It is reported that on that day at around 3:30 pm field worker of Grameen Bank Nazrul Islam went to Dighir Parh by a motorbike to collect the installment of micro credit. He entered the house of victim

in the name drinking water and raped the victim when he found alone. At that time, victim's parents were not at the house. She was found senseless when the victim's parents returned to home. Then and there she was first admitted at Dighinala upazila hospital and then transferred to Khagrachari district hospital.

A case was filed with Dighinala police station by the victim's guardian. But the culprit is yet to be arrested. A procession protesting against the rape was brought out by Hill Women's Federation and students of different educational institutions in Dighinala on 1 August 2009 demanding punishment of the culprit.

[On 31 July, 2009 at around 3:30 pm an Indigenous girl named Mina Chakma (20), S/o: Sunil Khanti Chakma, Vill: Dighir Parr (Boradom), Dighinala, Khagrachari has been raped by a Grameen Bank employee named Nazrul. It is alleged that the victim was raped at her house]

August 2009

(70) 3-5 August 2009: Visit of the Chairman of Land Commission to three hill districts

On 03, 04 and 05 August 2009 Chairman of the Land Commission with Janab Khademul Islam Chowdhury visited Khagrachari, Rangamati and Bandarban respectively. The Deputy Commissioner wrote letters to CHT Regional Council and Rangamati Hill District Council to send representative and the Chakma Circle Chief Barrister Raja Devashis Roy to meet the Commission Chairman at the Circuit House in Rangamati. Executive Officer of CHTRC Mr. Krishna Chandra Chakma, Chakma Circle Chief and representative of Rangamati Hill District Council called on him there. He is yet to convene a formal meeting of the Commission in the next.

However, the news media publicised that the Chairman held a meeting of the Land Commission on the day and he made announcement that Cadastral Survey would be completed within October 2009.

The Clause 2 of Part D narrates that "after rehabilitation of the tribal refugees and internal tribal evacuees the government shall start survey of land in CHT as soon as possible and after proper inquires ownership of land shall be recorded and ensured."

In violation of this provision the officials of the GoB have been all the time interested to have Cadastral Survey of Lands in CHT with a view to providing land titles mainly to the settlers on the lands they forcibly occupied or illegally allotted by the GoB.

It is important to note here that the Minister of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs also announced the same in his speech in the Indigenous Peoples Day Conference in Dhaka on 9 August 2009.

So it is a question whether the GoB is to take up the Survey of Land in CHT at the moment, which would make the land disputes more critical.

(71) 5-10 August 2009: Celebration of International Day for World's Indigenous Peoples in Bangladesh

Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Forum (BIPF) undertaken 4 day programme to celebrate the International Day for World's Indigenous Peoples in Dhaka demanding "Constitutional Recognition of Indigenous Peoples' Rights". On the other, several organisations at national and regional level organised rally, discussion meeting, cultural function, friendly football match etc marking the Day. Several organisations also published magazines, posters and books on occasion of the Day.

BIPF's Press Conference in Dhaka

On 5 August 2009 BIPF organised press conference at National Press Club in Dhaka. At the press conference, President of the BIPF Mr. Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma alias Santu Larma presented a 13-point charter of demands, which include constitutional recognition of 45 indigenous communities, their entity, language and culture, formation of a separate land commission for indigenous people living on the plains and constitutional recognition of their right to land, implementation of CHT Accord, ensuring their right to education in their mother tongues and practising their culture, and appointment of indigenous teachers in schools.

Mr. Larma claimed that army domination in CHT has not ended yet. He demanded an effective roadmap for implementation of the CHT peace accord. Larma alleged that the trend to grab indigenous people's land with the help of the administration has increased recently, which is threatening the rights of the indigenous peoples throughout the country.

BISAF's Human Chain in Dhaka

On 7 August 2009 Bangladesh Indigenous Students' Action Council organised a human chain at Shahbagh in Dhaka demanding constitutional recognition of the indigenous peoples' rights where hundreds of students and youths attended.

BIPF's Inaugural Ceremony and Grand Rally

On 8 August 2009 BIPF organised inaugural ceremony at the Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka. Presided over by Mr. J B Larma, president of the Communist Party of Bangladesh Mr. Manzurul Ahasan Khan inaugurated the programme of the day as chief guest. He demanded full restoration of the 1972 constitution and incorporation of the rights of the indigenous peoples in it. Among other, Rashed Khan Menon MP of Workers' Party, Khushi Kabir of Nijera Kori, professor Mesbah Kamal of Bangladesh Adivasi Odhikar Andolon, columnist Syed Abul Maksud, Bangladesh Mohila Parishad president Ayesha Khanam, dramatists Ramendu Majumdar and Mamunur Rashid, Adivasi representatives Shaktipada Tripura, KS Mong and Adivasi Forum general secretary Sanjib Drong spoke at the inauguration. Speakers called on the government for constitutional recognition of 45 indigenous communities, their entity, language and culture, formation of land commissions for indigenous communities in the hill districts, and recognition of their rights to education in their language.

Indigenous artists performed a display of dance and this was followed by colorful rally from Shaheed Minar to Shahbag area. Indigenous peoples from different parts of the country and different social and cultural organisations participated in the rally.

BIPF's Indigenous Fair and Discussion Meeting

On 9 August 2009 BIPF organised day-long indigenous fair and half-day (afternoon) discussion meeting at premises of the Engineers Institute in Dhaka. The indigenous fair that supported by Manusher Jonno Foundation was inaugurated by Industry Minister Mr. Dilip Barua. He said that since after 38 years of independence, constitutional recognition of indigenous people was not achieved. He hoped grand alliance would fulfill the issue.

On the other, Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Mr. Shafiq Ahmed attended as Chief Guest in the discussion meeting while presided over by J B Larma. Mr. Ahmed said that the first condition of protecting land rights is to conduct a survey of land in the CHT. He also mentioned that necessary measures would also be taken to recover land of the indigenous people living on plain land. The minister also sought assistance from the indigenous people to bring back the Constitution of 1972 to protect their rights.

J B Larma said that indigenous people are owner of all lands, excluding the reserve forests, in respective mouzas in CHT. There are no khas lands in the region. He came up with the views in reply to the statement of the law minister, Shafique Ahmed, who told the discussion that the government would complete land survey in the hill districts by December 2009. He added that the government was enacting laws for the hill people in CHT. But CHT Regional Council, an apex body of CHT administration, is in the dark about this. The laws should be drafted in consultation with the council.

Among other, Chakma Circle Chief Raja Devasish Roy, State minister for CHT affairs Dipankar Talukdar, Dhaka University professor Sadeka Halim, Danish Ambassador Einor Jhensen, European Union ambassador Brain Forey, Prasenjit Chakma of UNDP and ILO Country Representative Panudda Boonpala and General Secretary of BIPF Sanjeeb Drong spoke in the discussion.

TWA's programme in Dhaka

On 9 August 2009 Tribal Welfare Association (TWA) organised discussion meeting at Shishu Academy in Dhaka. Presided over by TWA president and State Minister for Culture Promode Mankin

MP, Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad attended as Chief Guest. Food Minister Dr. Md. Abdul Razzak, State Minister for CHT Affairs Mr. Dipankar Talukdar MP, President of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal Hasanul Haque Inu and Professor of Dhaka University Dr. Nim Chandra Bkounik attended the discussion as special guest.

Earlier, in the morning, day-long programme of TWA was inaugurated by Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University Prof. Arefin Siddique at Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka. Inaugural ceremony was followed by a colorful rally.

Rangamati

On 9 August 2009 “Indigenous Peoples Day 2009 Celebration Committee, Rangamati” organised discussions marking the International Day of World's Indigenous People. Presided over by Convenor of the celebration committee Mr. Prakriti Ranjan Chakma, Chairman of Rangamati Hill District Council Mr. Nikhil Kumar Chakma inaugurated the rally through releasing pigeons and addressed the meeting as chief guest. PCJSS leader and member of CHT Regional Council Ushatan Talukder, BNP district unit convenor Dipen Dewan, former RHDC chairman and district AL vice-president Chingkiev Rouaza addressed, among others.

Congratulating the present government for taking initiatives for implementation of the CHT Accord, speakers said lasting peace in the CHT is not possible without full implementation of the Accord. They also emphasised primary education through mother tongue and protecting traditional culture and heritage of the indigenous peoples. They also said that social, economic and political rights of the indigenous people are yet to be established and many indigenous families were evicted from their ancestral land and homesteads as outsider Bangalee settlers grabbed their lands.

Earlier, a mammoth colourful procession paraded main thoroughfares in Rangamati town.

Khagrachari

On 9 August 2009 Biswa Adivashi Dibosh Udjapon Committee organised a discussion on the occasion of the Day. Chairman of Task Force on Rehabilitation of Returnee Jumma Refugees and IDPs Jatindra Lal Tripura MP attended the discussion as chief guest. He hailed the government for forming different committees to implement the CHT Accord, forming Land Commission to resolve land disputes in CHT, activating the Task Force and declaration of withdrawal of temporary camps from CHT.

Rajshahi

On 9 August 2009 A procession of indigenous people including men, women and children paraded the roads of Kakonhat municipality in Godagari upazila. Later at a discussion on the municipality office premises, they demanded formation of a separate land commission for the indigenous people of plain land, ensuring primary education in their mother tongue, quota in jobs and putting an end to atrocities on them. Nine NGOs namely Karitas, Ekota, Ashwas, Jaitun, Manwa Nattya Dal, Titas, ESCDF, ASAUS and Shacheton Sharik organised this programme.

Kakonhat municipality Mayor Abdul Majid was chief guest at the meeting presided over by Astha Network President Ganesh Mardi while Jatiya Adivashi Parishad President Anil Marandi, spoke, among others.

Thakurgaon

On 9 August 2009 Thakurgaon District Adivashi Parishad in cooperation with Eco Social Development Organisation, RDRS Bangladesh and Karitas organised a discussion and cultural programme at the district Shilpakala Academy Auditorium in Thakurgaon with a call to recognise constitutional and land rights for indigenous people.

At the discussion with National Adivashi Parishad President Surja Murmu in the chair, speakers also demanded mother tongue-based primary education for indigenous children and indigenous people's quota in higher education and government service.

Sylhet

On 9 August 2009 Divisional Committee for Celebration of International Indigenous Day organised rally and discussion meeting at Saifur Rahman Auditorium in Sylhet. Discussion meeting was presided over by committee convenor Mr. Gouranga Patra while Mayor of Sylhet City Corporation Md. Badar Uddin Ahmad Kanran attended as Chief Guest. Among others, Dr. Tulshi Kumar Das of Shahjalal Science and Technology University, PCJSS leader Mangal Kumar Chakma, Chairman of Sylhet Upazila Parishad and its Upazila Nirbahi Officer spoke in the discussion. A colorful rally was brought in Sylhet city before starting the discussion.

Earlier on 8 August 2009 at a press conference at Sylhet Press Club the leaders of the communities placed a 12-point demand including the indigenous people's participation in all government safety net programmes.

Mymensingh

On 9 August 2009 a day-long programme was organised by International Indigenous Day Celebration Committee at Zila Shilpakala Academy marking the day. Mymensingh Additional Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Mohsin inaugurated the programme. Regional Director of CARITAS Theofil Nokrek, Prof Tahmina Parveen, Brother Gueum, Kazi Azad Jahan Shaheen, Dilip Hagidak and Dr Biliun Animesh Sangma spoke as special guests at the inaugural session presided by Tushar Daring, convener of the committee. Speakers said that the rights of the indigenous people in Bangladesh as well as in the world should be protected for a harmonious society.

On the other, at a discussion titled 'Establishing social, cultural and land rights with constitutional reorganisation', at the same venue, Bangladesh Agricultural University Vice Chancellor Prof Dr MA Sattar Mandal addressed as chief guest. Greener Marak presented the key-note paper at the discussion presided over by Subash Jengsum, president of international indigenous day celebration committee, in the chair. Speakers said that as citizens of the country, indigenous people deserve all kinds of rights but their social, cultural and land rights are yet to be reflected in the constitution. They demanded a separate land commission to establish the indigenous people's rights on land and mitigate their sufferings caused by land grabbers.

Earlier, a colourful rally paraded the main thoroughfares of the town. A friendly football match was also held marking the occasion in the afternoon.

ILO Book Launching Programme

On 10 August 2009 BIPF and ILO jointly organised a book launching ceremony at WVA Auditorium in Dhaka with Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma in the chair. The book titled "The ILO Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Populations, 1957 (No. 107) and the Laws of Bangladesh: A Comparative Review" written by Raja Devasish Roy was published by ILO marking the International Day for World's Indigenous Peoples.

Foreign Minister Dr. Dipu Moni attended the programme as Chief Guest while State Minister for CHT Affairs Dipankar Talukdar and Attorney General for Bangladesh Mr. Mahbubey Alam were present as special guest. Welcome speech was delivered by ILO country director Ms. Panudda Boonpala. Among others, Prof. Dr. Mizanur Rahman of Dhaka University, eminent human rights defender Barrister Sara Hossain, PCJSS leader Mangal Kumar Chakma, indigenous rights activist Ajoy A Mree spoke in the programme.

(72) 14 August 2009: Bengali settlers try to attack Jumma village in Longadu

On 14 August 2009 a group of Bengali settlers tried to attack Jumma villages at Bagachadar union under Longadu upazila (sub-district) in Rangamati district. At least four Jumma villagers were allegedly beaten and looted in this assault.

It is learnt that as per recent government declaration of withdrawal of 35 temporary camps, Kathaltali camp was declared to withdraw and accordingly, out of 30 personnel of the camp, 15 were closed to Longadu zone on 13 August 2009 and rest of forces were supposed to withdraw on 14 August 2009.

It is also reported that early in the morning on 14 August Bengali settlers from Thega Para under Bagachadar union very closed to Kathaltali camp gathered at the place near to the camp and blockaded the camp to prevent withdrawal of the forces.

At a stage around 11.30 am, a group of Bengali settlers from Thega Para equipped with lather sharp weapon and stick tried to attack on indigenous Jumma villages namely Ranjit Para and Bagachadar village. However, Jumma villagers opposed the Bengali settlers' attack.

At that time, following Jumma villagers were attacked at Thega Para village by Bengali settlers while they were returning home from Boiragi Dokan bazaar (market). This attack was made when the victims reached at Thega Para, a village of Bengali settlers situated middle of Ranjit Para and Boiragi Doka Bazaar. They were severely beaten and looted. The victims were:

1. Mr. Vim Chakma (22), s/o Banshi Mohan Chakma of Ranjit Para (cell phone & Tk 200 looted);
2. Mr. Surja Chakma (38) s/o late Rangachan Headman of Chibarega (cell phone & Tk 1000 looted);
3. Mr. Amalendu Chakma (35) s/o Bara Bandhu Chakma of Ranjit Para (Tk 1,200 looted);
4. Mr. Chandra Mohan Headman alias Bandukya (68) s/o late Jarmajoy Chakma of Rangi Para.

They were also compelled to sign in a paper stating that they were not beaten and looted by the Bengali settlers.

It is learnt that sensing the incident, Vice Chairman of Upazila Parishad Mr. Jane Alam, Officer-in-Charge of Longadu police station Mr. Dajjala and one Subedar (lower level commander) of Kathaltali camp rushed the spot. However, they seized all the sticks from Jumma villagers except Bengali settlers. They also held a meeting with representative of Bengali settlers and Jumma villagers at Kathaltali camp where a committee was formed with following representatives:

Bengali settlers: Makbul, Shamsul Sarder, Jamshed leader, Kasem member, Borhan member, Gaffar (an army) and Wasim Ali Akand chairman (Bagachadar UP).

Jumma villagers: Binoy Prasad Chakma, Tarit Kanti Chakma, Profulla master, Bina Chakma (UP member), Rupen Chakma, Sunil Kanti headman, Runu Chakma (UP member) and Subhash Chakma.

The members of the committee were asked to pacify the own community. However, the Jumma representatives alleged that Jumma villagers did not attack the Bengali settlers, rather Bengali settlers tried to do so. Hence, action should be taken against the Bengali settlers.

(73) 16 August 2009: dead body of settler recovered at the Jum field in Matiranga

Soon after the starting of withdrawal of 35 camps, mock was staged by recovering three dead bodies of Bengali settlers from the Jumma localities in Khagrachari district. Jumma villagers claimed that the recovery of dead bodies at Jumma localities was a pre-planned act of Bengali settlers in order to justify insecurity of Bengali settlers and to create ground for communal tension to attack on Jumma localities.

A dead body of Bengali settler was recovered at the Jum field near the Sorbeswar Para of Matiranga upazila under Khagrachari district on 16 August 2009. The dead body was identified as Md. Sohag (17) s/o Md. Hossain under Matiranga upazila. Bengali settlers, at first, spread propaganda that the deceased was killed by Jumma villagers. But later the shoes of deceased were recovered from the house of one Khalil Mian who was absconding since 16 August. Police of Matiranga police station also arrested Abu Taher who was suspected to involve with this killing.

(74) 16 August 2009: Operation on indigenous Chak localities in Naikhyongchari

On 16 August 2009 a group of BDR of 15 Battalion from Naikhyongchari camp and RAB jointly conducted operation at Baishari area under Naikhyongchari upazila in Bandarban district in the name of rescuing supervisor of rubber plantation Mr. Hefazuddin. It is mentionable that Mr. Hefazuddin and labourer of the plantation Md. Najer were kidnapped on 15 August allegedly by an extortionist group led by Prokash Chakma who introduces himself a member of UPDF. Later, the kidnappers released Md. Najer and demanded ransom for releasing of supervisor of rubber plantation Mr. Hefazuddin.

It is learnt that during the operation, the BDR and RAB first encircled the Badurjiri Chak Para under Naikhyongchari upazila and caught 7 innocent Jum cultivators belong to Chak community.

Soon after the arrest, they were taken to a local primary school and tortured brutally there. Then they except Aungchagya Chak were released. Aungchagya Chak was kept under BDR custody since the arrest.

Again, on 22 August 2009 BDR and RAB jointly conducted operation to rescue the kidnapped person. They took more 12 indigenous Chak villagers as helpers for searching operation.

But BDR and RAB failed to rescue the kidnapped person. Due to failing, they became angry upon the helpers of innocent Chak villagers. Then the Chak villagers were gathered to a local junior high school and inhumanly started to torture by turn by the BDR and RAB there. Besides them, the 8 Chak villagers were also brutally tortured by the BDR and RAB at the junior high school.

After meeting retaliation, most of villagers were set free on 22 August, but 7 innocent villagers were kept under BDR custody. The Chak villagers called on Mr. Bir Bahadur, ruling MP from Bandarban for taking necessary measure on 23 August. Mr. Bahadur assured them to look into the matter. It is also learnt that more 5 villagers were also released on 23 August afternoon, but following 2 Chak villagers were handed over to the police and produced before court-

- 1) Mr. Aungchagya Chak (37) s/o Thuila Khai Chak of Badurjiri village;
- 2) Mr. Mong Wai Chak (20) s/o Kijairi Chak, Madyam Chak Para.

At the last, it is reported that kidnapers released Mr. Hefazuddin, supervisor of rubber plantation, at 8.00 a.m. on 24 August 2009 at Alikadam.

It is also learnt that the miscreants comprising of 2 Chakma youths and one Chak youth named Kyasai Chak were caught by the local Chak villagers on 26 August 2009 and handed over to. Sources confirmed that they are merely an extortionist group. It is also reported that Kyasai Chak got allegedly involved with UPDF activities when he studied at Agriculture Diploma Institute of Shukarchari under Rangamati sadar upazila.

(75) 16 August 2009: Writ Petition against withdrawal of camps and CHT Accord

On 16 August 2009 Advocate Md. Tajul Islam, a leader of Jamat-E-Islami, on behalf of Badiuzzaman (a settler leader at Kowkhali Upazilla and member of the JEI), submitted a writ petition against the step of the GoB about withdrawal of some camps. Petitioner alleged that the government decided to pull out troops from CHT bowing down without considering the security of Bangalee settlers there and this would make the border with India unsafe and facilitate entry of foreign terrorist and smuggler groups.

On 16 August 2009 the Hight Court directed the government to suspend the ongoing withdrawal of troops from the CHT until 19 August scheduled for next hearing.

On 19-20 August 2009 the High Court vacated its earlier order directing the government to suspend withdrawal of troops from CHT. The final hearing of Writ Petition no. 2669 of 2000 (Mohammad Badiuzzaman v Bangladesh & Others) and Writ Petition no. 6451 of 2007 (Advocate Md. Tajul Islam v Bangladesh & Others) would be held in October 2009.

(76) 18 August 2009: Dead body of settler woman recovered from Modon Karbari Para under Panchari

Soon after the starting of withdrawal of 35 camps, mockery was staged by recovering three dead bodies of Bengali settlers from the Jumma localities in Khagrachari district. Jumma villagers claimed that the recovery of dead bodies at Jumma localities was a pre-planned act of Bengali settlers in order to justify insecurity of Bengali settlers and to create ground for communal tension to attack on Jumma localities.

Second dead body of settler woman (25 yrs) was recovered from the Jumma-inhabited Modon Karbari Para under Panchari upazila on 18 August 2009. Bengali settlers spread that deceased woman was missing on 17 August 2009 while she went to collect vegetables from the jungle and she was

allegedly killed by Jumma villagers. But Jumma villagers claimed that dead body of the woman was kept at the stream near Modon Karbari Para in order to create communal tension to make situation turmoil. On 18 August 2009 the Bengali Settlers also brought out a procession in Panchari protesting killing of the woman in Panchari. Fearing Bengali settlers' attack, most of women and children of of Modon Karbari Para and adjacent villages were shifted to safe areas.

(77) 18 August 2009: 4th meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on MoCHTA was held in Rangamati

On 18 August 2009 the 4th meeting the Parliamentary Standing Committee on MoCHTA was held at Peda Ting Ting resort in Rangamati presided over by the committee member ABM Fazle Karim Chowdhury, as its chairman Promod Mankin relinquished from the chairmanship for his induction in the cabinet as a state minister. Chairman of the CHT Regional Council Mr. Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma alias Santu Larma also attended the meeting on special invitation.

During the meeting, the committee recommended cancellation of the 260 plots, leased out to influential people, for violating the terms and condition of the allotment. It is also reported that the committee also recommended reorganising of the Task Force on Rehabilitation of Returnee Jumma Refugees and IDPs with requisite number of manpower to make it more active.

It is mentionable that the Parliamentary Standing Committee does not have executive power, rather makes only recommendation to the Ministry for implementation.

(78) 19 August 2009: Meeting of the CHT Accord Implementation Monitoring Committee held in Rangamati

On 19 August 2009 the first meeting of the committee was held in Rangamati. Other two members of the committee, namely, President of PCJSS Mr. Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma alias Santu Larma and Chairman of Task Force Mr. Jatindra Lal Tripura, MP from Khagrachari also attended the meeting. State Minister for CHT Affairs Dipankar Talukder and CHT Development Board Bir Bahadur, MP from Bandarban were present at the meeting on special invitation. Besides, government officials including Secretary of the Ministry of CHT Affairs (MoCHTA) attended the meeting. It is reported that without consistent of the rules, Chairmen of three Hill District Councils, Deputy Commissioners of three hill districts and Chairman of Chittagong Development Authority were also invited in this meeting.

It is reported that it was basically inaugural meeting of the committee. This meeting did not discuss details on the provisions of the CHT Accord. That is why no decision has been brought out from this meeting. However, Convenor of the committee Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury reiterated that the CHT Accord would be fully implemented immediately. Finally it is decided that the next meeting would be held after the Ramadan.

It is noted that it is yet to be known how affectively the Convenor would play her roles for the implementation of the Accord. Previous experiences show that this Committee was fully dependent on the MoCHTA, which hardly played any positive role for execution of any decision of it. That is why it is necessary to consider whether this Committee should have any separate independence office for its proper functioning.

(79) 23 August 2009: PCP organises fresher reception ceremony at Dhaka University

On 23 August 2009 Pahari Chatra Parishad (PCP) (CHT Hill Students Council), Dhaka City branch organised a fresher reception ceremony and a cultural program at Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) auditorium of Dhaka University (DU) for student newly got admitted in different educational institutions in Dhaka. Around 200 students attended the programme. Among them, 50 new students participated in the reception. The main theme of the reception programme was to strengthen the Jumma peoples' movement for rights to self-determination.

Presided over by Prasenjit Chowdhury, acting President of PCP Dhaka City branch, the fresher reception was attended by Mr. Jatindra Lal Tripura, ruling MP from Khagrachari, as chief guest. Among others, the following dignitaries were present at the reception programme as special guest-

1. Dr. Harun-ur-Rashid, Pro-Vice Chancellor of DU,
2. Dr. Dalem Chandra Barman, Professor of Peace and Conflict Department of DU
3. Mr. Shakti Pada Tripura, Organizing Secretary of PCJSS and Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Forum,
4. Mr. Udayan Tripura, President of PCP and
5. Mr. Fakruddin Kabir Atik of Progressive Students' Alliance.

In his speech as the chief guest, Jatindra Lal Tripura, also the chairman of Task Force on Rehabilitation of Returnee Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons said that present grand alliance government undertook steps for the stability in the CHT. The Prime Minister is very sincere in regard to implementing CHT Accord. He added that pull out of one Brigade Army and 35 army camps were going on.

Professor Harun-ur-Rashid said that at present quota for indigenous students has been increased from 0.7% to 1%. He added he would try his best to assist indigenous students in regard to university admission.

Dr. Dalem Chandra Barman said that besides studying, indigenous students have to involve in different social, political and cultural activities. Some students must go outside the country, some should go back to the place where they came from and some should enter into administration, he added.

The other speakers urged the students to participate in the movement for achieving the just rights of indigenous peoples.

The chief guest then distributed crest among the fresher. The new students were awarded with flowers. Mr. Juyel Chakma, executive member of PCP Dhaka City branch and student of Marketing Department of DU delivered welcome speech while Mr. Juyel Chakma, student of Tourism Department of DU also spoke on behalf of new students. Mr. Bablu Chakma, general secretary of PCP Dhaka City branch moderated the reception programme. The reception programme was followed by a pompous cultural programme performed by different artists from different indigenous peoples.

(80) 26 August 2009: Meeting on Amendment of the CHT Land Dispute Settlement Act

On 26 August 2009 a meeting on the amendment of the CHT Land Dispute Settlement Act 2001 held in Dhaka presided over by Janab Mohammad Rezaul Karim Heera, Minister of the Ministry of Land of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

Among others the following persons were present in the meeting: Mr. Goutam Kumar Chakma, Member, CHT Regional Council; Mr. Raktotpal Tripura, Member, CHT Regional Council; Mr. K. S. Mong, Member, CHT Regional Council and officials of Land Ministry, CHT Ministry, Chittagong Division and three hill districts.

The Government of Bangladesh passed the CHT Land Dispute Settlement Act 2001 in July 2001 to settle the land disputes related to the Indigenous Jumma people (Peoples of Highland) of CHT and the Bengalee Settlers rehabilitated in 1980s under the scheme of the GoB. The said Act contained some provisions contradictory to the CHT Accord and the CHT Regional Council, as per its Act (Section 53) put recommendations for amendment on them in 2001. CHTRC had series of meetings with the previous Four Party Alliance GoB and the Caretaker GoB and arrived at understandings on all the contradictory provisions.

On 03 February 2009 CHT Regional Council Delegation led by Goutam Kumar Chakma had a meeting with the State Minister Mr. Dipankar Talukdar of CHT Affairs Ministry, when decision was taken that the CHT Ministry would held meeting with the Law Ministry to finalise the Draft of the amendments on the Land Commission Act.

Instead of the said decision on the Land Commission Act the meeting on the issue was arranged by the Land Ministry on 26 August 2009.

In the meeting the Land Minister started to have discussion on the recommendations of the CHT Regional Council and when the Land Minister wanted to know opinion from the Deputy Secretary of the Law Ministry she clarified that she found no such inconsistency in any recommendation (of the CHTRC) and the Law Ministry would provide its opinion when those would be passed to there, then he (Land Minister) placed the recommendations one after one and few points were discussed. Those were most important as follows:

- 1) Recommendation No. 2 on the Section 2 (Ch): The recommendation on including the India Returned Refugees under the 16-Point Package Deal signed between the GoB and the Refugees Leaders in 1992 in the definition of Rehabilitated Refugees was opposed by GoB side. Hence CHTRC delegation agreed to omit it.

It is noted that the Deputy Secretary Janab Abdur Rouf pointed out that the 16-Point Package Deal was signed by the GoB headed by Khaleda Zia of BNP (Bangladesh Nationalist Party) in 1992 and hence, should not be followed. The Land Minister supported it and opined to drop the recommendation on them.

It was, of course, a question whether the GoB side opposed it mainly to deprive the Jumma people as much as possible. CHTRC Delegation agreed to drop it for they would be able to enjoy the facility for the land disputes even as non-refugees as well.

- 2) Recommendation No. 3 on Section 2 (Chh): This recommendation included to insert the words “Regulation, Order and Custom or Usages’ in the definition on “Existing Law”. ADM of Rangamati opposed to insert the word ‘Regulation’ in Particular. But the ADM of Bndarban argued to include it and pointed out that CHT Regulation, 1900 had been in force till the date. CHTRC Delegation too placed arguments for it and read out the definition of the “Law’ narrated in the Article 152 of the Bangladesh Constitution, which very clearly included the words “regulation and custom or usages’. The Land Minister expressed his opinion to review it further.
- 5) Recommendation no. 8 on section 6(1)(ka) about inserting the words “all the lands illegally given in settlement and occupied” and the words “Procedure” in settling land disputes. The ADM of Rangamati opposed it and the Deputy Secretary opined to review it further. The Land Minister too acceded to it. CHTRC members differed on it. This recommendation remained controversial.
- 6) Recommendation No. 9 on section 6(1)(ka) about inserting word “Procedure” in settling land disputes was adopted unanimously.
- 7) Recommendation no. 10 section No. 6(1)(ga) on inserting the words “Fringe Lands” for settlement of land disputes. In this regard, the ADM of Rangamati put proposal to have it out of the jurisdiction of the Land Commission and if necessary to amend the provision of the Accord related to it. CHTRC delegation narrated that Kaptai Lake Area was acquired under the CHT Land Acquisition Act 1958. When the then Government could not provide lands to all the affected Jumma families and Fringe Lands started to come out of the Lake water during dry season the an Standing Order was issued in 1967 to provide ownership to the owners or their heir on them. Some other officials and the Land Minister opined to review it further. So, this recommendation remained undecided.
- 8) Recommendation No. 11 on section 6(1)(ga) about omission of the provision keeping certain land areas like Reserve Forest, Kaptai Lake Areas etc out side the jurisdiction of the Land Commission: The ADM of Rangamati, the Deputy Secretary of the Land Ministry opposed the recommendation. CHTRC delegation opined that as there was no such provision in the CHT Accord so that one should be omitted. The Land Minister opined to review it further in legal aspect. Hence, this recommendation remained undecided.

In this stage the ADM of Rangamati, The Deputy Secretary of the Land Ministry and the Joint Secretary of the CHT Ministry put proposal to review the recommendations in the legal aspects and to omit or modify them as far as possible. Goutam Kumar Chakma again and again pushed to review the

recommendations in line with the CHT Accord. He indirectly raised whether participation of representatives or involvement of the Deputy Commissioners was a legal procedure for amendment of any law in the country. The Land Minister adjourned the meeting and requested CHTRC delegation for not getting sorrows and assured of meeting the Prime Minister on the matter.

It is noted that as per the Rules of Business of the CHT Ministry, the Land Commission Act is to be taken up for amendment by the CHT Ministry. On 03 Feb 2009 decision was taken in the meeting with the CHT Regional Council delegation chaired by the State Minister Dipankar Talukdar of CHT Ministry that a meeting for the purpose of finalising the drafts on amendments of the Land Commission Act would be arranged with the Law Ministry. But the CHT Ministry did not do it.

Remarks: It appears that the Government of Bangladesh is not yet prepared to amend the Land Commission Act and to resolve the land disputes at all. Unless the Prime Minister sincerely instruct the Law Minister and the State Minister of the CHT Affairs Ministry who are the proper authorities to finalise the Draft of the Amendments on the CHT Land Dispute Settlement Act 2001, Hide and Seek game on the matter must continue.

September 2009

(81) 2 September 2009: Dead body of a Bengali settler recovered at Kaptai lake in Longadu

Soon after the starting of withdrawal of 35 camps, mock was staged by recovering three dead bodies of Bengali settlers from the Jumma localities in Khagrachari district. Jumma villagers claimed that the recovery of dead bodies at Jumma localities was a pre-planned act of Bengali settlers in order to justify insecurity of Bengali settlers and to create ground for communal tension to attack on Jumma localities.

Dead body of a Bengali settler was recovered at Kaptai lake in Longadu area in Rangamati on 5 September 2009. The deceased was identified as Motaleb Mistri (45) of Battali of Baghaichari upazila in Rangamati. Bengali settlers alleged that Motaleb Mistri was killed by Jumma villagers.

Spreading communal tension, Bengali settlers by 8 jeeps from Longadu and 2 jeeps from Merung areas rushed to Baghaichari upazila headquarters at mid-night around 1.30 am on 6 September 2009 in order to make communal attack on Jumma localities. They tried to bring out a procession with the dead body. But the local administration prevented them to organise such fanatic procession.

It is also noted that Bengali settlers being completely dependent on the free ration of the GoB they can do nothing unless they get permission from the army authorities. Under above circumstances, it is yet to be observed whether the GoB would implement this provision at all.

(82) 3 September 2009: Tripura woman killed allegedly by Bengali settlers in Mahalchari

On 3 September 2009 at night one indigenous Tripura woman named Ponemala Tripura (50) w/o Bhibishan Tripura was allegedly killed at Sindukchari village of Sindukchari union under Mahalchari upazila (sub-district) in Khagrachari district. Her dead body was recovered from their Jum (traditional shifting cultivation) field of Sindukchari by the villagers in the morning on 4 September. Four Bengali settlers were suspected to have involved with this killing.

It is learnt that this year Ponemala Tripura and her husband Bhibishan Tripura have cultivated two jum farms for more earnings. Both Husband and wife stayed night separately to protect corps from wild animals at temporary jum houses. They usually worked at their jum farms and stayed separately at two jum farms on 3 September. On that day at dawn her husband Bhibishan Tripura called her but he (husband) did not receive any response from his wife (Ponemala) and went to the jum house where his wife was staying. But he did not found her there. Then Bhibishan suspected that something is wrong. Then and there he informed it to the local Tripura community people and they started searching jointly nearby jungle of jum farms and lastly they found her dead body at one kilo far from her jum field.

It is widely believed that she was kidnapped from her jum farm and murdered at the night (3-4 September 2009). This jum farm is two kilometer far from the locality (Tripura village). It is also learnt that she has land dispute with following settler's leader namely-

- 1) Md. Afsar Gazi, s/o Hamid Gazi of Sindukchari,
- 2) Khairul Islam, s/o late Azgar Ali of Sindukchari,
- 3) Rustam Ali, s/o unknown of Sindukchari,
- 4) Noab Ali, s/o late Afsar Gazi of Sindukchari in Khagrachari district.

Several times they went there to grab the land of Ponemala. Local Tripura community people and police went to the spot for recovering her body.

Update on the killing of Ponemala Tripura

Source said that the incident of killing of Ponemala Tripura was committed allegedly by Bengali settlers namely Md. Afsar Gazi, Khairul Islam, Rustam Ali and Noab Ali, in order to occupy Ponemala Tripura's land. Ponemala Tripura also applied for registration of this land.

It is learnt that the Bengali settlers first tried to occupy land of Ponemala Tripura in 2006. That time settlers failed to occupy due to strong role of CHT Regional Council and Civil Society. However, Bengali settlers destroyed huge orchard that planted by Ponemala Tripura on this land.

Again, Bengali settlers tried to occupy the land on 10 May 2009. That time, Bengali settlers make attack and again destroyed huge plantation. Even, they made new plantation. They threatened Ponemala Tripura and his husband to kill them if they deny to leave the land. Ponemala Tripura submitted written objection to Mr. Jatindra Lal Tripura, ruling MP from Khagrachari and also chairman of the Task Force on Rehabilitation of Returnee Jumma Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons.

Mr. Tripura forwarded this objection to the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) of Mahalchari upazila (sub-district) Mr. Shariful Arif asking him to take necessary action on this case. However, UNO did not take any step against it.

It is alleged that Ponemala Tripura became victimised due to negligence of UNO of Mahalchari upazila.

It is learnt that Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Guimara police station Mr. Rashed took signatures from four Tripura villagers namely Bhibishan Tripura (victim's husband), Naba Mohan Tripura (victim's son), Dohendra Tripura (villager elder) and Khanjoy Tripura (member of Sindukchari union) on a white paper when police went to spot for investigation. Police explained, during the taking signature, these signatures are nothing but just for witness that police went to spot for investigation. But it is alleged that with these signatures, OC of Guimara police station motivatedly filed a case under section 302 of Bangladesh penal code where OC included a name of innocent Tripura villager Mr. Sholo Ana Tripura along with the perpetrators of Bengali settlers mentioned above. It is reported that mentioning of one Tripura is to make case weak. But victim's relatives did not believe that any Tripura could involve with this incident.

It is reported that military authorities of Sindukchari zone led by Lt. Colonel Kamrul of 32 Field Artillery and Guimara police station led by OC Rashed have been creating pressure on relatives including victim's husband to make understanding with the Bengali settlers. For this purpose, Mr. Sui Nue Prue Chowdhury, chairman of Sindukchari union was asked to be present at Sindukchari zone on 6 September 2009 while victim's relatives were asked to be present at Guimara police station.

Post mortem of dead body was done at Khagrachari district hospital on 5 September 2009. Post mortem report is yet to be received. It is reported that wound was found at victim right ear. But it is suspected that victim was killed sinking in the water of hill stream. Police did not arrest any body so far.

Follow-up of killing of Ponemala Tripura

Sources reported that on 6 September 2009 police arrested an innocent Tripura villager named Sholo Ana Tripura (38) s/o Sajai Tripura from Sindukchari. Bhibishan Tripura, husband of deceased Ponemala Tripura claimed that Sholo Ana Tripura was not involved with the killing. Bhibishan Tripura told it to OC of Guimara police station and requested OC to release him. But OC did not release him. On the other, the main culprits of Bengali settlers were arrested though they are moving openly.

(83) 4 September 2009: Marma girl raped and then kidnapped by Bengali settler in Sindukchari

On 4 September 2009 an orphan Marma girl (13 years) of Nakbai Para of Sindukchari area under Mahalchari upazila in Khagrachari district named **Athuibai Marma d/o late Mongsa Thowai Marma** was raped and then kidnapped by Bengali settler named Md. Ripan (35) s/o Shahjahan Patowari of Zianagar village under Manikchari upazila in Khagrachari district.

It is learnt that Md. Ripan, a construction labour who has two wives was brought as labourer by Mr. Babul contractor Tintahari village of Manikchari upazila to work for construction of culvert of Drung stream at Nakbai village under Sindukchari union. The victim along her family lives near the Drung stream. Md. Ripan frequently visits victim's house in the name of drinking of water.

On 4 September 2009 victim's mother Ms. Myama Marma went to the Pathachara Buddhist temple to attend the funeral ceremony of the monk leaving victim alone at the house. By taking advance of this opportunity, Md. Ripan entered the house of victim and offered victim to go with him for searching job at garment factory. At a stage, Md. Ripan raped the victim and then kidnapped forcefully.

Victim was taken to Noakhali district. On 14 September 2009 two constables named Md. Rafiq and Tajul Islam arrested Md. Ripan along with the victim in Noakhali while Md. Ripan along the Marma girl was suspiciously moving there. Md. Ripan and victim were handed over to the Guimara police station on 15 September 2009. On that day, victim's mother Ms. Myama Marma filed a raping and kidnapping case under section 10 of Women and Children Repression (Amendment) Act of 2003 against Mr. Ripan on 15 September 2009. On 16 September statement of the culprit Md. Ripan and the victim was taken by the judicial magistrate court of Khagrachari district.

On 15 September the victim was taken to Khagrachari district hospital for medical check-up. But the medical report is yet to be received.

(84) 7-8 September 2009: Chairman of Land Commission declares to conduct land survey in CHT

On 8 September 2009 Chairman of the CHT Land Commission Md Khademul Islam Chowdhury, a retired judge, declared to start the work of land survey in three hill districts from next October 15. He said that the land survey will start with surveying the land of those who returned home from India as registered refugees in the light of CHT Peace Accord.

He told this to journalists after the joint meetings with its few members and government officials held in Rangamati and Khagrachari on 7 and 8 September 2009 respectively.

He said the survey would be completed in six months. If the survey cannot be completed in the scheduled time, the commission would extend the deadline, he added. Justice Khademul said alongside the survey the commission would also start the work on dispute regarding land of the affected people.

Replying to a question on internal refugees, he said applications would be called from them to know from which land they have been evicted. He said the commission would also look into the illegal lease of land in the hill areas as it has been tasked with the matter. Justice Khademul said the commission would obviously look into illegal settlement and extra land settlement or transfer and sale of land violating the settlement rules.

Asked about continuous absence of CHT Regional Council Chairman Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma alias Santu Larma from the commission meeting, justice Chowdhury said, "That doesn't mean he is not cooperative."

It is mentionable that both meetings in Rangamati and Khagrachari districts were unlawfully called by Deputy Commissioner of Khagrachari within a day notice. Except Chairman of Khagrachari HDC Mr. Ruhity Karbari and Additional Divisional Commissioner of Chittagong Md Nurul Islam, other members of Land Commission, such as, Chairman of CHT Regional Council and Circle Chiefs were not present at the meeting.

(85) 12 September 2009: Chakma family chopped up by Bengali settlers in Kaukhali

On 12 September 2009 around 1.30 am a Chakma family was chopped allegedly by Bengali settlers at Choto Dulu Para under Kaukhali upazila (sub-district) in Rangamati district (Bangladesh).

It is learnt that the head of family Mr. Basudev Chakma alias Boba (35) s/o Buddha Moni Chakma was seriously wounded. He was admitted at Kaukhali upazila hospital.

(86) 13 September 2009: Tripura girl tried to rape by Bengali settler in Sindukchari

On 13 September 2009 a Tripura girl (18 years) of Manjoy Karbari Para of Sindukchari area under Mahalchari upazila in Khagrachari district **named Ms Nomer Bala Tripura w/o Shahit Kumar Tripura** was tried to rape by a Bengali settler named Md. Alamgir (27) s/o Altaf Munsu of Muslim Para of Sindukchari area.

It is learnt that on that day around 11.00 am victim was taking lunch for her father at Jum field of Choto Mura Para under Sindukchari, at that time Md. Alamgir blocked her and tried to be closed by talking with the victim. But failing to be closed, Alamgir first hit victim from the back that cause to falling lunch basket from hand of victim. At this stage, victim tried to run for escaping, but Alamgir caught her from the back. At a stage of scuffle, victim became naked and was pulled to the bottom of hill of Paisongchara. Then Alamgir tried to rape and kill by holding victim's throat tight. Hearing the shouts, victim's father Mr. Matindra Kumar Tripura proceeded toward the spot. Sensing the present of victim's father, Alamgir rapidly left the spot. Victim sustained several injuries including nose and mouth.

After rescuing his daughter, victim's father Mr. Matindra Kumar Tripura went to the office of the Sindukchari union and put objection before the chairman and members of the union. At that time, Mr. Rashedul Islam Bhuiyan, Sub-Inspector (SI) of Guimara police station was also present at Sindukchari union office. But he did not take any action against the culprit. Victim filed a case under section 10 of Women and Children Repression (Amendment) Act of 2003 against Md. Alamgir on 13 September 2009. But police did not arrest the culprit so far.

Durbar Network and several women organisation organised press conference on 16 September 2009 protesting violence against Jumma women including following three incidents, such as-

- (1) rape of Chakma woman (20 yrs) with disabilities by Grameen Bank named Nazrul Islam in Dighinala on 31 July 2009,
- (2) killing of Ponemala Tripura by Bengali settlers on 3 september 2009 at Sindukchari and
- (3) rape and kidnapping of Tripura girl (18 yrs) by Md. Alamgir on 13 September 2009.

The rights groups demanded arrest and trial of Bengali settlers involved with these incidents.

(87) 20 September 2009: Army issue letter on civil matter & concern only for Bengali settlers

On 20 September 2009 Major Moinuddin Shamim of Rangamati sadar army zone, on behalf of Zone Commander, issued a letter to all army camps under Rangamati sadar zone asking to send civil development project for the Bengali settlers. This letter was issued referring letter of Rangamati army region memo no. 322/2/GS(I)/shantakaran date 17 September 2009.

The letter said that Integrated Community Development Project (ICDP) supported by UNICEF is being implemented by CHT Development Board. The letter requested to send possible project proposals for Bengali settlers living under concerned army camp. The letter also stated that the project proposals will be submitted to CHT Development Board through Upazila Nirbahi Officers for approval. Army zone authority again requested to the camps to send project proposals for Bengali settlers to be implemented by any other NGOs.

This letter is proved that military forces deployed in CHT have been serving only for Bengali settlers. 'Shantakaran' (pacification) was mentioned in the memo number of the letter. This means that military forces have been supporting the Bengali settlers under Pacification Project under which military forces receive 10,000 matrix tones of food grain (rice) in every year.

(88) 23 September 2009: Deputy Commissioner of Bandarban issued unlawful letter to Headmen

On 23 September 2009 Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Bandarban district Mr. Mizanur Rahman issued a letter to all Headmen of Bohmong circle ordering not to issue any land deed to any person without permission from him. Issuance of this letter is contradictory to the rights of indigenous Jumma peoples in CHT. He also threatened that Headman would be removed from his headmanship if any Headman handed over such deed.

It is mentionable that according to Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation of 1990, Headmen of CHT region have the rights to give settlement of 0.30 acre of land to any mouza resident and accordingly to issue land deed to him.

It is also worth mentioning that the land lands under the jurisdiction of mouza are regarded as common property of mouza residents. The common lands are those which belong to the indigenous community with shared rights of access. The indigenous people have right to these lands and its resources, by virtue of their common ownership of these areas, and traditional economic activities such as fishing, hunting and gathering are carried out in these areas. Jum lands fall within this category, as do the lands used for orchards, grazing and for growing sungrass (used to make thatched roofs). The forests are also included within this category of mouza commons, and are the common property of the indigenous community with equal rights of access, use and extraction.

However, Deputy Commissioner of Bandarban issued this letter violating the rights of indigenous Jumma peoples and rights & responsibilities of Headmen. He one-sidedly claimed these lands as state-owned. He also indiscriminately alleged against the Headmen to have involved with corruption.

Local residents believed that DC of Bandarban district starts these activities when the possibility of functioning of land commission for resolution of land disputes in CHT is seen.

(89) 24 September 2009: Bengali settlers burn down Jumma houses in Laxmichari

On 24 September 2009 at night the Bengali settlers burnt down 3 Jumma houses in Laxmichari under Khagrachari district. It is learnt that a group of Bengali settlers from Mogaichari launched an overnight raid on the village of Bainamachara under Dulyatoli Union last night and set the houses ablaze. The houses belong to Naibo Chakma (55) s/o Nayan Sen Chakma, his son Rashik Chakma (33) and Sudikya Chakma (30) s/o Mono Kumar Chakma. All their belongings in the houses were burnt to ashes.

It is also reported that Bengali settlers also burnt down 4 huts used by the guards of a controversial fruits garden raised by one Anisur Rahman, a Bengali businessman. Anisur raised the garden on an area of 1,000 acres of land that the Jummas claim they own.

(90) 24 September 2009: PCJSS protests against unilaterally announcement of land survey in CHT by Chairman of Land Commission

On 24 September 2009 PCJSS sent a letter to the Minister for Land and the State Minister for CHT Affairs protesting against unilaterally announcement of land survey in CHT by Chairman of CHT Land Dispute Resolution Commission Khadimul Islam Chowdhury by violating the CHT Accord.

PCJSS in its letter accused that the newly appointed chairman of the CHT Land Commission violated the CHT Accord by unilaterally announcing land survey in the CHT.

It is mentionable that Khadimul Islam Chowdhury, a retired judge who was appointed chairman of the CHT Land (Dispute Settlement) Commission on July 19, during his visit to the three hill districts on 7-8 September 2009 in Rangamati and Khagrachari, announced cadastral survey of CHT lands.

PCJSS alleged in its letter issued by the party's acting General Secretary Pranati Bikash Chakma that Chairman of Land Commission did not hold any formal meeting of the Commission ever since he was appointed its chairman. Instead, he wrote to the Deputy Commissioners of the hill districts without any lawful authority to hold view exchange programmes.

PCJSS said that the main task of the commission was to settle the disputes over the CHT lands. Conducting cadastral survey of CHT lands could never be under the purview of the Land Commission Act. The Commission is authorised to ask local administration to supply necessary data or evidence and, if needed, can assign those authorities to report back to it after investigation or inspection, according to the law. PCJSS said that conducting land survey without resolving the disputes would complicate the situation in the CHT. PCJSS put following demands for starting resolution of land disputes in CHT-

- (1) to cancel immediately Land Commission chairman's unilateral decision of land survey;
- (2) to amend the CHT Land Dispute Resolution Commission Act 2001 as per recommendations of CHT Regional Council'
- (3) to appoint officers and employees including secretary of Land Commission for setting up of its office and to ensure appointment of permanent residents of CHT giving priority to indigenous Jumma peoples to these posts;
- (4) to allot adequate logistic support and fund separately for making capable and effective of office of the Land Commission;
- (5) to hold formal meeting of Land Commission as per regulations.

(91) 26 September 2009: JMB members arrested by RAB in Matiranga

On 26 September 2009 the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) busted a training camp of the banned Islamist outfit Jamaatul Mujahideen Bangladesh and arrested five operatives, including its 'second-in-command' in Chittagong division, from Matiranga upazila in Khagrachari district.

It is learnt that the outfit was running a training camp in the remote Shantipur village in Matiranga upazila of Khagrachari district. JMB operative Delwar Hossain Sajib established the training camp under the guidance of its sura member Shahed alias Osman. He took lease of four acres for the camp in the name of plantation on the directive of JMB amir Sayedur Rahman.

The RAB raided the hideout on that day at night and arrested the outfit's Chittagong division 'second-in-command' Abdur Rahim (26) alias Zahid alias Habib alias Saiful alias Saifullah. On the confessional statement of Rahim, the RAB team arrested the outfit's ehsar (full-time) member Delwar Hossain alias Sajib 32, and his employee Younus Ali, 20, at Shantipur on 27 September. Delwar owns a poultry farm in the area.

On the statements of the arrested, another team conducted a drive in Signboard area in Gazipur and arrested Delwar Hossain alias Dulal, 23, on that day morning. A third team of the battalion arrested JMB ehsar member Monir Hossain alias Ripon, 25, at Dighirpar in Comilla in the same morning. The RAB also seized a large number of militancy-related books, grenade components and explosive substances from their possession.

Arrested Abdur Rahim, at the briefing at the RAB headquarters, told newsmen that he along with other JMB operatives had made a futile attempt to attack an election campaign rally of BNP chief Khaleda Zia in Comilla on December 24, 2008.

RAB on that day recovered three improvised hand grenades from Nabiabad village in Devidwar upazila of Comilla, about an hour after Khaleda addressed an election rally four kilometres away at Chandina upazila headquarters. The RAB men also arrested two operatives of the banned Islamist outfit and seized a 10kg bomb from a JMB den at Nabiabad village.

(92) 29 September 2009: Deputy Commissioner of Bandarban issued unlawful letter to Loal Devid Bawm

On 29 September 2009 Deputy Commission of Bandarban district issued an unlawful letter to Mr. Loyal Devid Bawm, a member of CHT Regional Council to stop construction of building for tribal museum at Shita Pahar (Chimbuk-Thanchi road) of Pantala mouza under Ruma upazila in Bandarban district. He claimed that construction of building on government land without permission is illegal. However, Mr. Bawm got permission/recommendation from Mr. Lumlai Mro, Headman of Pantala mouza & local Jumma villagers and accordingly applied for registration for this land.

October 2009

(93) 2 October 2009: UPDF kidnapped a returnee member of PCJSS from Bilaichari

On 2 October 2009 UPDF armed cadres kidnapped Mr. Bimalananda Chakma (62) s/o Mereiya Chakma, a member of PCJSS who came to normal life as per CHT Accord in 1997. He is vice president of PCJSS of Bilaichari thana branch. He was kidnapped on that day 7.30 pm from his home at Kerongchari village under Kengrachari union of Bilaichari upazila in Rangamati district.

Two local UP members and two village karbaries communicated with the UPDF leaders at Bangalkaba area of Bilaichari. But UPDF leaders denied kidnapping of Bimalananda Chakma. It is mentionable that kidnapers asked family members of victim not to communicate with them when they were kidnapping Bimalananda Chakma at gun point from his home. Relatives believed that he may be killed.

(94) 5 October 2009: Meeting of the Task Force held in Khagrachari

On 5 October 2009 meeting of the Task Force on Rehabilitation of Returnee Jumma Refugees and Internally Displace Persons was held at Khagrachari circuit house.

Presided over by Chairman of Task Force Mr. Jatindra Lal Tripura, MP from Khagrachari constituency, the meeting was attended by following members of the Task Force-

- (1) Mr. Ruithy Karbari, Chairman of Khagrachari Hill District Council
- (2) Mr. Aung Prue Mro, Representative of the Chairman of Bandarban Hill District Council
- (3) Mr. Brishaketu Chakma, Representative of the Chairman of Rangamati Hill District Council
- (4) Mr. Santoshita Chakma Bakul, Representative of Jumma returnee refugees
- (5) Major Lokman, Representative of GOC of 24th Infantry Division, Chittagong Cantonment
- (6) Mr. N A N Siddique, Member-Secretary of Task Force and Commissioner of Chittagong division
- (7) Mr. S M Shafi, Member of Task Force and Representative of Bengali community.

Due to unavoidable reason, representative of the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS) was absent. No representative from CHT Affairs Ministry attended the meeting. Concerned government officials including Deputy Commissioner of Khagrachari district and ADC of Rangamati and Bandarban district were also present in the meeting.

This meeting was an initial meeting of the newly reconstituted Task Force. There was no specific agenda item of the meeting for discussion. However, the agenda items of next meeting of the Task Force were decided. The agenda items were (1) to determine the process of identification and inclusion of actual internal displaced families; (2) 20-points package facilities; (3) holding of Task Force monthly meeting; (4) field level visit and staffing and funding of the Task Force.

As per decision to hold meeting of Task Force monthly, the next meeting is scheduled to hold in the month of November 2009.

(95) 6 October 2009: PCJSS protests against deployment of army for distribution of food grain for returnee PCJSS members

On 6 October 2009 PCJSS strongly protested against the deployment of army in distributing the food grain as ration for PCJSS members who returned normal life as per CHT Accord signed in 1997. It is mentionable that as regular basis, Ministry of CHT Affairs (MoCHTA) sent letter on 14 September 2009 to Deputy Commissioners (DC) of three hill districts including concerned authorities granting food grain as ration for PCJSS returnee members for the months of July-September 2009. Accordingly, DC of Rangamati district also issued letter on 1 October 2009 to district and sub-district authorities to distribute the food grain to PCJSS members referring to the letter of MoCHTA. But Rangamati DC included in its letter to distribute food grain in presence of army.

Protesting to it, PCJSS sent a letter on 6 October 2009 to Rangamati DC requesting to cancel the condition of presence of army during distribution of food grain (rice). PCJSS said in its letter that concerned authorities have been distributing food grain since 1998 as per procedure of MoCHTA. But during the State of Emergency, military forces have been deployed for the same. PCJSS is of opinion that State of Emergency is already over. Now elected government assumed in the state power. So, army are not needed to deploy for a civil works like distribution of food grain. Deployment of army for such civil work is illegal and harmful to good governance. Hence, PCJSS requested DC to distribute food grain as per procedure of MoCHTA.

(96) 7 October 2009: Human rights groups urge Land Commission to cancel CHT land survey decision

On 7 October 2009 at a press conference held at Reporters' Unity auditorium in Dhaka, human rights groups urged the Land Commission to scrap its decision to conduct a land survey in CHT before resolving the land disputes.

They made the demand following the announcement of the CHT Land Commission on September 8 to start a land survey from October 15 which will end on March 15 of next year.

The press conference titled 'Importance of resolving land dispute and land survey in CHT ' was organised jointly by the Association for Land Reform and Development Commission (ALRD), Ain O Salish Kendro, HDRC, Nijera Kori, Bangladesh Adivasi Forum, Kapaeng Foundation and Khagrachari Headmen Association. The press statement was signed by Rtd justice Md. Golam Rabbani, Ms. Sultana Kamal of Ain O Salish Kendro, Ms. Khushi Kabir of Nijera Kori, Prof. Abul Barakat of Dhaka University, Mr. Samshul Huda of ALRD, Mr. Sanjeeb Drong of Bangladesh Adivasi Forum, Mr. Shakti Pada Tripura of Khagrachari Headmen Association, Mr. Sudatta Bikash Tanchangya of CHT Forest and Land Rights Movement and Mr. Dipayan Khisa of Kapaeng Foundation.

Rights groups said in the written statement that the decision to conduct land survey in the CHT before resolving the disputes over the ownership of lands would only intensify the complexities. He added that the announcement of starting land survey before resolving the disputes over the ownership stands against the spirit of CHT Accord and the election manifesto of the government. He also raised question about the experience of the officials of the Directorate of Land Record and Survey to conduct land survey in CHT and said the decision to complete the land survey in CHT within five months is nothing but an imaginary plan.

They made following demands for total disputed land in CHT and strengthening the Land Commission-

- (1) to stop any initiative of land survey in three hill districts of CHT;
- (2) to amend the CHT Land Dispute Resolution Commission Act 2001 as per recommendation during the current session of the Jatiya Sangsad on urgent basis;
- (3) to identify land disputes of different places of CHT and to initiate for formulation of database on this regard;
- (4) to start land dispute resolution in consultation with CHT Regional Council, Circle Chiefs, CHT Affairs Ministry and other concerned leaders of indigenous peoples as per CHT Accord;

- (5) to appoint necessary officers and employees including secretary of Land Commission immediately in order to setting up of its office as per CHT Accord;
- (6) to strengthen Land Commission as independent commission in accordance with democratic norms to ensure that it could not be turned a rubber of any person;
- (7) to allot adequate fund for strengthening and making office of the Land Commission effective.

The statement of the rights group was read out by Samshul Huda, Executive Director of ALRD while former Justice Golam Rabbani and Bangladesh Adivasi Forum General Secretary Sanjib Drong were present at the press conference.

(97) 14 October 2009: Innocent Marma student injured by UPDF cadres in Khagrachari

On 14 October 2009 UPDF cadres brutally beat an innocent student named Chaihla Marma (20) who also works at a garage in Khagrachari for earning.

It is learnt that on that day UPDF was observing road blockade programme in Khagrachari. During the road blockade, Chaihla Marma was caught when he was going to home by bicycle and then he was brutally beaten by the UPDF picketers. Chaihla Marma sustained injuries on head. He was first admitted at Khagrachari sadar hospital and then referred to Chittagong Medical College hospital with serious condition. Marma community brought out procession protesting against the brutal beating of innocent student.

(98) 15 October 2009: A Tripura school going girl abused by settler Bengali in Matiranga

On 15 October 2009 at 11.00 am, a school going girl named **Jasho Bala Tripura** (17), d/o Dugal Tripura of village Arbari of Bailyachari area under Guimara union of Matiranga upazila (sub-district) in Khagrachari was molested by a Bengali settler Md. Hossen s/o Jasmat Ali of village Rasulpur under Matiranga in Khagrachari district while she was going to school. She is a Secondary School Certificate (S.S.C) candidate from Matiranga Pilot High School. It is also learnt that, settlers leader whipped the culprit Md. Hossen and beg apology to Jumma leaders including Guimara Union Parishad councilor Renu Bala Tripura.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Guimara Thana, Sub-Inspector Mr. Badiuzzaman visited the spot afternoon but nobody has come to complain him.

(99) 18 October 2009: Tripura school teacher sexual abused by Bengali settlers in Panchari

On 18 October 2009 at 11.00 am a pre-primary school teacher of UNICEF Para Kendra Nayika Tripura (16), d/o Sindhu Kumar Karbari (65) and Rohini Tripura of village Sindhu Karbari Para of Waduk Para of Panchari Mouza under Panchari upazila (sub-district) of Khagrachari district was abused by two unknown Bengali settler while taking bath near the stream.

It is learnt that while taking bath in stream suddenly two Bengali settlers came and made tighter her mouth and show knife and tried to rape her but due to shouting of victim culprit were fled away. Unfortunately she was not able to mention their name but confess that, those settler's faces were known to her.

A FIR was lodged in Panchari police station and she was sent to Khagrachari sadar hospital for medical test. Local Tripura community leader Mr. Shushil Jibon Tripura, General Secretary of Bangladesh Tripura Kalyan (Welfare) Samsad (BTKS), Mr. Sukanta Tripura, Organizing Secretary of BTKS Headman Khetra Mohan Roaza, Chairperson of Durbar Network Shefalika Tripura, General Secretary of Khagrapura Mahila Kalyan Samity (KMKS) Shapla Tripura, Kuheli Chakma of Durbar Network, Advocate Anupam Chakma, Legal Adviser of Zabarang Kalyan Samity, Pramod Bikash Tripura, EX President of Tripura Student Forum, Bangladesh, Joytee Tripura, Office Secretary of BTKS has visited her in hospital.

After completing some formalities she was sent to Khagrachari Judicial Magistrate Court and it is learnt that a case was filled in Judicial Magistrate Court, Khagrachari.

(100) 18 October 2009: Meeting of the Standing Committee of the CHT Affairs Ministry held

On 18 October 2009 at 11.00 a.m. the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee of the Ministry of CHT Affairs (MoCHTA) held at Cabinet Room of the Jatiyo Sangsad in Dhaka presided over by Janab Shah Alam, President of the Committee. Among others the following persons were present in the meeting:

Members of the Standing Committee –

- 1) Mr. Dipankar Talukdar, State Minister, MoCHTA
- 2) Mr. Bir Bahadur Ushwesingh, MP, Bandarban
- 3) Mr. J. Jatindra Lal Tripura, MP, Khagrachari
- 4) Janab (Retd. Captain) Giasuddin Ahmed MP, Mymensingh
- 5) Janab K.M. Khalid, MP, Mymensingh
- 6) Ms Aethin Rakhain, MP, Women Seat

CHT Regional Council

- 7) Mr. Goutam Kumar Chakma, Member, CHTRC
- 8) Mr. Krishna Chandra Chakma, Executive Officer in Charge, CHTRC

Officials

- 9) 9 Janab Abul Hossain, Joint secretary, MoCHTA and 2 other officers of MoCHTA
- 10) One member from Bandarban Hill district Council
- 11) Representatives of Deputy Commissioners of Rangamati, Khagrachari & Bandarban Hill Districts.

Discussion & Decisions

(1) In the meeting the proceeding of the fifth meeting of the committee held in Rangamati on 18/08 2009 was approved, which contained mainly about a decision of cancellation of some hundred plots of lands leased out but were not used within the 10 years and allotment of lands through discussion with the MoCHTA, CHTRC and HDCs. With regard to the decision about allotment of lands, CHTRC member Goutam Kumar Chakma asked to do it as per the CHT Accord after resolution of land disputes and rehabilitation of Tribal refugees and internally Displaced Tribal Families and to add some words about it in the decision. The Committee assured that the allotment would be done as per the decision through discussion with CHTRC & HDCs. So there was nothing to worry about it.

(2) MoCHTA placed a brief report on the development of the implementation of the CHT Accord. The matter of issuing permanent Resident Certificate in CHT was pointed out. J L Tripura asked to exclude Deputy Commissioners (DCs) in issuing this one. But the MoCHTA official Abul Hossain explained the DCs have been doing it as per the CHT Regulation, 1900. Goutam Kumar Chakma told that there was no provision in the CHT Regulation for it. Finally, it was decided that CHTRC would place it in writing about it and then recommendation would be provided to MoCHTA for action.

(3) The issue of starting Land Survey as recommended by the Land Commission Chairman was discussed. Goutam Kumar Chakma told that the meetings convened by the Land Commission Chairman were not of the Commission and the Chairman of the CHTRC, who is a member of the Commission could not attend them owing to improper and urgent notices. Goutam Kumar Chakma explained that CHT Land Survey is not a function of the Commission. It has been a Quasi Judicial Body to settle land disputes in CHT only. He further explained that Land Survey in CHT at the moment based on the Bhumi Khatian (CHT) Ordinance, 1984 would mean legalise the plots illegally provided to the settlers in 1980, which would make the land disputes more complicated. The Committee asked CHTRC to place report on it later and based on it decision would be taken by the committee.

(4) Mr. Bir Bahadur MP urged the committee to arrange a conference on the Acts and Rules of CHT for proper orientation of the concerned authorities.

(5) Goutam Kumar Chakma, as instance raised the point of drafting the National Education Policy without consultation of the CHTRC, which might be conflicting with the HDCs Regulations in the coming days. Mr. Giasuddin Ahmed, at it asked Goutam Kumar Chakma to place recommendation, if any to the Committee soon. Goutam Kumar acceded to it and the Committee adopted it.

(101) 20 October 2009: Coordination Meeting of MoCHTA held

On 20 October 2009 a coordination meeting was held by the Ministry of the CHT Affairs (MoCHTA) at the conference hall of MoCHTA in Dhaka. Presided over by Mr. Dipankar Talukdar, State Minister of MoCHTA, the following persons were present in the meeting-

- (1) Mr. Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma, Chairman, CHT Regional Council
- (2) Mr. Jatindra Lal Tripura, MP and Chairman, Task Force on Rehabilitation of the Returnee Refugees and IDPs
- (3) Mr. Bir Bahadur, MP and Chairman of the CHT Development Board
- (4) Mr. Kyashwehla Marma, Chairman, Bandarban Hill District Council
- (5) Mr. Nikhil Kumar Chakma, Chairman, Rangamati Hill District Council
- (6) Mr. Ruithi Marma, Chairman, Khagrachari Hill District Council
- (7) Mr. Khademul Islam, Chairman, CHT Land Dispute Commission
- (8) Mr. Masud Ahmed, Secretary and other Officials of MoCHTA
- (9) Secretary of Land Ministry
- (10) Dr. Aslam Alam, Director General of Directorate of Land Survey and Settlement
- (11) Three Deputy Commissioners of three Hill Districts
- (12) Superintendent of Police, Bandarban Hill district
- (13) Mr. Jafar Ahmed, Additional Superintendent of Police, Khagrachari Hill district
- (14) Additional Superintendent of Police, Rangamati Hill district

Discussion was held on the matters of law and order situation, land issues, brick field, development projects etc. of CHT in the meeting.

CHTRC Chairman Mr. J B Larma raised the issues of the implementation of the CHT Accord, transfer of subject to the HDCs prioritizing law and order, police (local), land and land management, secondary education, environment, youth development, local tourism etc; withdrawal of all temporary camps and de facto military rule 'Operation Uttoron'; approval of Rules of CHT Regional Council and three HDCs; setting up of offices for the Task Force and Land Commission etc.

Jatindra Lal Tripura and Mr. Bir Bahadur said that Land survey should be, as per CHT Accord, conducted after resolution of the land disputes and rehabilitation of Jumma Refugees and internally Displaced Jumma Families.

In the meeting the Deputy Commissioners spoke about the law and order situation. Sourendranath Chakraborty, DC of Rangamati told that the law and order situation in the district was well. Incidents compared to Plain districts were less. But there were elements, who all the time made attempts to highlight the situation the worst just to create chaos. He explained how based on a rumour some elements (Bengalee muslims) got fullest preparation to set fire on the houses (of Jumma People) at Tribal Adam of Banarupa Area of Rangamati District Headquarter at deep night around 1.30 am on 01 September 2009. He personally went the spot and stopped the incident.

It is noted that there was instigation from the Settlers' leaders in collaboration with some local army commanders. The Jumma people too were ready to resist the communal rioters.

DC of Bandarban reported that in the recent months 19 persons of Neighbouring Myanmar were killed and 11 arms were captured including three persons of so-called CHTNF (Chittagong Hill Tracts National Liberation Front), a small band of extortionists.

DC of Khagrachari reported the incident of arrest of Islamic terrorists on 3 October 2009 in Matiranga Thana Area.

Additional Superintendent Police (SP) of Khagrachari blamed UPDF (United Peoples Democratic Front) for extortion of money and creating chaos through holding rallies recently and he demanded banning of it.

In the meeting Mr. Khademul Islam, Chairman of the Land commission opined that he was a Justice and would function independently and would start land survey in CHT at the moment.

Mr. J B Larma told that Chairman of Land Commission is not independent rather a member of the Commission. CHT Accord says that land survey will be conducted after the completion of the rehabilitation programme and resolution of land disputes. He said that land problem in CHT should be resolved as per CHT Accord.

Dr. Aslam Alam, Director General of Land Records and Survey Department said that fund allocation should be made first and logistic supports should be provided for land survey in CHT. He added that if land survey were held that would take about 15 years and proper funding as well. So, that would not be possible at the moment.

Mr Dipankar Talukdar said that quoted the provision of the CHT Accord about the land survey and opined to have stern action against the Islamic fundamentalist terrorists in CHT. He reiterated to have implementation of the CHT Accord.

In fact, there was held discussion only and no specific decision was made in the meeting.

(102) 25 October 2009: Meeting between CHTRC Delegation and Law Minister held

On 25 October 2009 a 4-member delegation of CHT Regional Council (CHTRC) led by Mr. Goutam Kumar Chakma called on Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Ministry Mr. Shafique Ahmed at his office of Bangladesh Secretariat in Dhaka. The other members of the CHTRC delegation were Mr. Raktotpal Tripura, Mr. Mahbubur Rahman and Mr. K S Mong Marma. Secretary of the Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Ministry was also present in the meeting.

CHTRC delegation submitted following points for implementation before Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Ministry-

- (a) to enact or amend any law related to CHT in consultation with CHTRC as per CHT Accord and CHTRC Act 1998;
- (b) to synchronise CHT Regulation of 1900 with the CHT Accord, CHTRC Act 1998, HDC Acts 1998 and Rules of Business of MoCHTA;
- (c) to transfer all subjects to the HDCs through office order instead of agreement between concerned HDC and concerned ministry;
- (d) to appoint permanent residents giving priority to indigenous Jumma peoples to all jobs in CHT;
- (e) to include recommendation of the CHTRC in the Education Policy;
- (f) to conduct land survey in CHT after the resolution of land disputes and completion of rehabilitation programme;
- (g) to amend the CHT Land Dispute Resolution Commission Act 2001 as per recommendations of CHTRC;

The Law Minister assured that he would go through the points. In replying to the amendment of the CHT Land Dispute Resolution Commission Act 2001, he told that he would do so in consultation with Land Ministry. He also suggested the CHTRC delegation to send detailed proposal on issues of (a) and (b) items mentioned above from CHTRC soon and then he would take necessary action as per recommendation. He agreed to hold next meeting on these issues formally.

(103) 26 October 2009: Meeting of the CHT Accord Implementation Monitoring Committee held

On 26 October 2009 meeting of the CHT Accord Implementation Monitoring Committee was held at the office of Deputy Leader of the Parliament in the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban in Dhaka. Presided over by Ms. Sayeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Convenor of the CHT Accord Implementation Committee and Deputy Leader of the Parliament, the meeting was attended by other two members of the Committee, namely, Mr. Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma, President of PCJSS and Mr. Jatindra Lal Tripura, Chairman, Task Force on Rehabilitation of the Returnee Refugees and IDPs.

Besides, among others, State Minister for Ministry of the CHT Affairs (MoCHTA) Mr. Dipankar Talukdar, MP; Chairman of the CHT Development Board Mr. Bir Bahadur, MP; Chairman of the CHT Land Dispute Resolution Commission Mr. Khademul Islam; Secretary of MoCHTA Mr. Masud Ahmed and Divisional Commissioner of Chittagong division were also invited in the meeting.

The main agenda of the meeting was to assess the progress of the implementation of the CHT Accord. Among others, amendment of CHT Land Dispute Resolution Act 2001 as per recommendation of CHT Regional Council, transfer of subjects to the three Hill District Councils (HDCs), approval of Rules of CHT Regional Council and three HDCs; setting up of separate offices for CHT Accord Implementation Monitoring Committee, CHT Land Commission and Task Force and appointment of adequate staffs for proper functioning of these offices, withdrawal of all temporary camps and de facto military rule 'Operation Uttoron' etc were discussed in the meeting.

In particular, transfer of subject to the HDCs prioritizing law and order, police (local), land and land management, secondary education, environment, youth development, local tourism etc through office order instead of the agreement between the HDC and concerned ministry were discussed.

Finally, decisions were made to set up three separate offices for the CHT Accord Implementation Monitoring Committee, CHT Land Commission and Task Force and to take effective measures for appointment of adequate staffs and providing logistic support for proper functioning of these offices.

In the meeting the issues of Land disputes and land survey were emphatically discussed. The Chairman of Land Commission emphasized for the land survey at the moment. Mr. Bir Bahadur, MP and J B Larma, President of PCJSS in particular explained that unless land disputes were resolved through the Land Commission land survey could not be arranged in CHT.

(104) 27 October 2009: Meeting between CHTRC Delegation and Education Minister held

On 27 October 2009 a 3-member delegation of CHT Regional Council (CHTRC) led by Mr. Goutam Kumar Chakma called on Education Minister Mr. Nurul Islam Nahid at his office of Bangladesh Secretariat in Dhaka. The other members of the CHTRC delegation were Mr. Raktotpal Tripura and Mr. K S Mong Marma.

CHTRC delegation proposed to transfer subjects of secondary education, primary education in mother tongue and vocational education through office order and to include recommendation of the CHTRC in the draft Education Policy.

The Education Minister assured that he would see the points and try to do so. He also said that he would go to Rangamati for opinion sharing with the mass people on setting up a Science and Technology University in Rangamati. In replaying the query about setting up said university, CHTRC delegation said that they had reservation on this issue considering backward socio-economic condition of indigenous Jumma peoples and other related realities and circumstances. However, the CHTRC delegation invited Education Minister to visit Rengamati for opinion-exchange with residents of CHT and concerned authorities for the same.

(105) 30 October 2009: Tripura woman raped by miscreants at Sonaichari in Chittagong

On 30 October 2009 an indigenous Tripura woman (19 years) was become a victim of gang raped in Sonaichari of Sitakunda under Chittagong district.

It is learnt that, in the hilly region of Keshabpur of Sonaichari Union under Sitakunda upazila (sub-district) a 19 years young girl from Rangamati (who was there to visit their relatives) was gang raped by local Union Parishad (Local government council councilor) member Jahur and his 7 associates. Forcefully she was taken by them in the hilly region at evening.

She was recovered by her relatives unconsciously at next morning and then taken to Sitakunda police station. After filling a case at Sitakunda police station she was examined by doctors.

Case was filled against Jahur Member (45), Suman (28), Hannan (32), Nuruzamman (42), Shamim(32), Selim (34) and Mona (45). All of them were inhabitant of Keshabpur village under Sonaichari Union of Sitakunda upazila of Chittagong district.

It is mentionable that Sitakunda area is exclusively indigenous Tripura inhabitant area especially in mountain region of Sitakunda and very unfortunately it has become a common feature of this area. They are very poor and depend on forest resources.

November 2009

(106) 7 November 2009: Regional Consultation on ILO Conventions and IPs Issues held in Bandarban

On 7 November 2009 Regional Consultation on ILO Conventions No.107 and 169 and Indigenous Peoples Issues in Bangladesh was held Bandarban Hill District Council Auditorium in Bandarban district.

The regional consultation was jointly organised by Kapaeng Foundation and International Labour Organisation (ILO). Mr. Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma, Chairman of CHT Regional Council was present as chief guest at the inaugural session of the consultation while Raja Devasish Roy, Circle Chief of Chakma Circle presided over the session. Besides, Member of Bandarban Hill District Council Mr. Aung Prue Mro and representative of Circle Chief of Bohmong Circle Mr. Chaw Hla Prue Jimmy were present at the inaugural session as special guest. Director of ILO Dhaka office Ms. Panudda Boonpala delivered welcome speech while Assistant General Secretary of Kapaeng Foundation Mr. Pallab Chakma conducted the session.

Mr. Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma in his speech said that several rights of the ILO Convention no. 107 and 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples were recognised in the CHT Accord. However, he added that though 12 years after the signing of the Accord have passed, the main provisions of the Accord remain either unimplemented or partially implemented. He urged CHT leadership including traditional and political leaders to play active role to implement the Accord and ILO convention for the sake of indigenous peoples. He also emphasised on good relation between and effective coordination of CHT Regional Council and three Hill District Councils.

Ms. Panudda Boonpala said that ILO would work for vocational training and capacity building of indigenous peoples in Bangladesh. He believed that government of Bangladesh would consider for ratification of ILO Convention 169.

Mr. Aung Prue Mro demanded to declare Chimbuk hilly range under Bandarban district as Mro region. Mro community is one of the smallest ethnic groups in CHT.

The inaugural session was followed by three working sessions. First session focused on aims and objective of ILO activities in Bangladesh, overview of PRO 169 activities in Bangladesh and ILO Policy on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (Convention 107, 169 and 111). Challenges in the implementation of CHT Accord and ways forward was discussed at the second session. Third session discussed on Land Rights and Land Disputes in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

Speakers said that the government of Bangladesh should ratify ILO convention on 169 as it is progressive version of ILO convention 107 which was ratified by Bangladesh in 1972. They urged government to recognise the customary land rights of indigenous peoples immediately as per ILO convention 107 and 169. They raised voice to resolve the land disputes as per CHT Accord and to amend the CHT Land Dispute Resolution Act 2001 as per recommendations of CHT Regional Council for the same. Speakers expressed hopes that Awami League-led present grand alliance government would come forward to implement the Accord as per her election commitment.

Around 80 participants from three hill districts of CHT from category of traditional leaders, public representatives, teachers, lawyers, returnee refugees, women rights activists, development workers, media activists, youths etc participated in the consultation. Among others, South Asia Coordinator of Pro 169 of ILO New Delhi Office Ms. Sara Webster, Member of the CHT Regional Council Mr. K S Mong, Ms. Unue Prue Chowdhury and Mr. Loyal Devid Bawn, Member of Rangamati HDC Mr. Abhilash Tanchangya, former Chairman of Rangamati HDC Goutam Dewan, Sanjeeb Drong and Shaktipada Tripura of Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Forum, Mr. Mangal Kumar Chakma of PCJSS, National Coordinator on Promotion of the Rights of IPs from ILO Dhaka office Mr. Abhilash Tripura, eminent academic Prof Mong Sa Nu at el attended the consultation. The consultation was followed by evening cultural programme.

(107) 8 November 2009: Chakma woman attempted to rape by an army in Nanyachar

Introduction

On 8 November 2009 an army from Ghilachari army camp under Nanyachar army zone of 1 Bir Bengal allegedly attempted to rape a Chakma woman named Ms. Jamuna Chakma (21) w/o Shyamal Kanti Chakma of Krishnamachara village of Ghilachari union under Naniachar upazila (sub-district) in Rangamati district. The culprit was identified as Md. Ziaul. Later local people observed road blockade programme protesting against the incident. During the road blockade programme, agitated people allegedly hit and broke the glasses of an army pick-up. On the contrary, army personnel beat the protesters with stick and firewood leaving some women and men seriously injured.

Beginning of the incident

On that day around 3:00 pm Ms. Jamuna Chakma went to nearby well to bring water. At that time, army person Md. Ziaul also went there from their nearby sentry post in name of bringing drinking water. When he found Ms. Jamuna Chakma alone, he tried to grab her from behind and attempted to rape. But Ms. Jamuna Chakma could narrowly run away and reach nearby turmeric and ginger field where some Jumma villagers were working.

No sooner of the incident, husband of Ms. Jamuna Chakma along with neighboring villagers went to the Ghilachari camp and put objection against Md Ziaul. The camp authority, making eye-watch punishment to the culprit, tried to terminate the matter by offering some money to husband of Ms. Jamuna.

Immediate protest

But the local people and the victim's husband did not agree on the verdict of the Ghilachari camp authority. That's why, soon after hearing the verdict of the Ghilachari camp authority, the local people in participation of a huge number of women brought out a procession protesting the incident.

At one stage, on that day around 5:00 pm Lt. Colonel Md. Mushfikur Rahaman, Commander of Nanyachar army zone visited the spot and gave assurance of appropriate punishment of the actual criminal to the people demonstrating.

Demonstration continues, demands to the upazila leaders visiting the spot

On 9 November 2009, the local people again brought out a procession at Ghilachari area along the Rangamati-Khagrachari road. At that time, Chairman of Nanyachar upazila council Mr. Pritimoy Chakma, Upazila Executive Officer (UNO) of Nanyachar upazila Md Jahirul Islam, Chairman of Nanyachar union Mr. Panchanon Chakma, Chairman of Burighat union Mr. Pranati Ranjan Chakma and Chairman of Ghilachari union Mr. Mithu Chakma council visited the spot and at one stage, they were surrounded by the demonstrators. They were compelled by the demonstrators to give undertaking to fulfill the following demands:

- (1) to punish the army involved with this incident without any delay;
- (2) to withdraw Ghilachari army camp;
- (3) to ensure security of life of the Jumma villagers;
- (4) to stop harassment and torture on women;

Investigation Committee formed

On 12 November 2009 an Investigation Committee was formed in initiative of upazila chairman and upazila executive officer. The committee is as follows:

(1) Convener- Kumentu Chakma, vice chairman of Nanyachar upazila, (2) Member- Md. Rafique, S I of Nanyachar police station, (3) Member- Reni Chakma, women affairs officer of Nanyachar upazila, (4) Member- Mithu Chakma, chairman of No. 4 Ghilachari union council, (5) Member- Babul Karmakar, representative of Awami League of Nanyachar upazila.

The Investigation Committee has not yet published any report.

Army surrounded local leaders' and villagers' houses

On 12 November 2009 a group of army from Ghilachari camp conducted operation at Ghilachari area. During the operation, army surrounded the houses of (1) Pulak Chakma, s/o Bandajya Chakma, member of No. 2 Ward of Ghilachari union council and (2) Ananta Bikash Chakma, s/o Jersen Chakma of Ghilachari village of Ghilachari union.

Again, on 13 November 2009 army encircled the houses of (1) Mithu Chakma, s/o Sukra Kumar Chakma, chairman of No. 4 Ghilachari union council, (2) Amar Jiban Chakma, s/o Rabindra Nath Chakma, ex-chairman of Ghilachari union council and (3) Jogendra Chakma, s/o Mohan Banshi Chakma, member of No. 7 Ward of Ghilachari union council.

Again procession, hit on army pickup (car) and army attack on villagers

On 17 November 2009, the villagers again brought out a procession Ghilachari area along Khagrachari-Rangamati road. At one stage, protesters broke the front glass of a pickup of army when an army pickup was trying to overtake the procession and women protesters hit the army personnel with their wearing cloth 'Pinon'. On the contrary, army also beat the demonstrators. In this brutal attack, the following persons were seriously injured:

- (1) Ms. Jhinu Chakma (25) w/o Kalaboa Chakma, village- Kabukchari Mukh,
- (2) Ms. Maya Chakma (15) d/o Buddha Kumar Chakma, student of class 9 of Mahaprum high school, village- Kabukchari Mukh,
- (3) Ms. Chadra Mela Chakma (36) w/o Suresh Kumar Chakma (Barpeda), village- Kutukchari Nich Para of Kutukchari union,
- (4) Mr. Anil Chakma (42) s/o Nandi Kumar Chakma, village- Pakujyachari of Mahalchari upazila of Khagrachari district,
- (5) Ms. Kalabi Chakma (45) w/o Rajmoni Chakma, village- Kutukchari Badalama chara of Kutukchari union.

Among them, the first 4 persons were got admitted to Rangamati general hospital with serious injury.

(108) 9 November 2009: UPDF cadres kidnap 2 innocent villagers in Barkal

On 9 November 2009 at 7:00 am an armed group of UPDF numbering 9 led by Laxmi Ranjan Chakma (26) s/o late Brisha Ketu Chakma, village- Aima Chara Mukh under Aima Chara union of Barkal upazila kidnapped 2 innocent villagers from Shuvalong area under Barkal upazila of Rangamati district. The persons kidnapped are as follows:

- (1) Mr. Pattar Moni Chakma (38) s/o late Kina Chan Chakma of village- Subari Pada of Bhushan Chara union of Barkal upazila. (He is also a member ward no.4 of Bhushanchara union council);
- (2) Mr. Joy Kumar Chakma (37) s/o late Dina Mohan Chakma of village- Boiragi Para of Bhushanchara union.

It is learnt that on that day at above-said time Pattar Moni Chakma and Joy Kumar Chakma including others were coming towards Rangamati from their home with banana for selling by a country-boat. When they reached Furamukh area of Shuvalong union under Barkal upazila, they along with others were stopped by UPDF armed cadres. UPDF cadres asked the boat-drivers whether they had yearly pass or not. At that time, UPDF cadres seized also the cell phones of the boat passengers. At one stage, UPDF cadres kidnapped the two persons. While leaving the spot UPDF cadres said to the boatmen to contact them after 7 days for the kidnapped persons.

(109) 11-13 November 2009: South Asia Sub-regional Training Seminar on Indigenous Peoples' Rights held in Bangladesh

On 11-13 November 2009 'South Asia Sub-regional Training Seminar on Indigenous Peoples' Rights: Promotion and Implementation of ILO Convention 169 and UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples' at the BCDM (BRAC Centre for Development and Management) of Rajendrapur in Gazipur, Bangladesh. The event was jointly organised by Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) and Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Forum (BIPF) and supported by the ILO PRO 169 and the UNDP-CHTDF.

The inaugural session of the seminar was presided over by President of the BIPF and Chairman of Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Regional Council Mr. Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma (Santu Larma) while Mr. Sanjeeb Drong of BIPF conducted the session. Among others, Deputy Director of ILO Dhaka office Mr. Gagan Rajbandari, Joint Secretary of CHT Affairs Ministry Md. Abul Hossain, Ms. Sarah Webster from ILO Delhi Office, Ms. Chandra Roy from UNDP-RIPP Bangkok office and Secretary General of AIPP Ms. Joan Carling spoke at the inaugural session.

Santu Larma urged the government to ratify the ILO Convention No 169 and implement the Convention No 107 on Indigenous and Tribal Populations. He added that the government should fully implement the CHT Accord. He also said that rights of indigenous peoples cannot be achieved if strong political movement was waged. He urged the indigenous activists to emphasis to develop political leadership among the indigenous peoples and to support the political movement for the same.

Mr. Gagan Rajbandari said that ILO was committed to working for the development of indigenous people in Bangladesh.

A total of 60 participants, organisers and volunteers from Bangladesh, Nepal, India, the Philippines and Malaysia attended the seminar. The seminar focused on key aspects relating to the implementation of indigenous peoples' rights in South Asia, including consultation and participation; land and natural resources; self-government; conflict and peace; constitutional reform; cross-border contacts and systematic and coordinated action of the States.

In different sessions of the training seminar, Raja Devasish Roy discussed on UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and IP Rights to Land, Territories and Natural Resources; Ms. Sarah Webster on overview of PRO 169 activities in Bangladesh and ILO Policy on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (Convention 107, 169 and 111) and Conflict resolution, ILO Convention 169 and UNDRIP; Ms. Joan Carling on Effective Participation: Free, Prior and Informed Consent and Ms. Chandra Roy on UNDP Policy of Engagement with Indigenous Peoples and UNDG Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples. Three experiences on conflict resolutions were also presented at the seminar. These were Nepal Peace Agreement by Mr. Bijaya Kumar Danuwar, CHT Peace Accord by Mr. Mangal Kumar Chakma and Situation in North-East India by Mr. Ram Wangkherakpam. Besides, Nepal's Experience of ILO Convention 169 was also presented by Mr. Bharat Karki of Ministry of Local Development of Government of Nepal.

The purpose of this training seminar was to promote the implementation of indigenous peoples' rights in the South Asia through training on relevant international standards and discussion and dissemination of experiences, good practice and lessons learned. Furthermore, it was aimed to strengthen the capacity of indigenous and tribal peoples, to engage in meaningful and effective participation of development, policy, legislative and administrative processes, and to articulate their concerns within the context of these processes.

The participants recommended strengthening the capacity of indigenous people and their organisations to decide their own priorities for the process of development; engaging in meaningful participation, to be consulted at all levels of decisions and policy, legislative and administrative processes affecting indigenous peoples. They also stressed the need for holding dialogues between the government and the indigenous people with mutual trust and good faith.

A reception was offered by ILO Dhaka office where Country Director of ILO Dhaka office attended.

(110) 12 November 2009: Twin brother kidnapped by UPDF cadres

On 12 November 2009 at about 5:00 am an armed group of UPDF cadres numbering 12 led by Nagar Chan Chakma (26) s/o unknown of village- Baradam of Langodu upazila kidnapped twin brother (1) Deba Chakma (22) and (2) Dippo Chakma (22) s/o Fuleswar Chakma of village- Batyapara of Langodu union under Langodu upazila (sub-district) of Rangamati district. It is learnt that the kidnapers said to the victims' family to contact with them at nearby Dajar Para village about the kidnapped brothers. It is mentionable that as per family members UPDF cadres claimed 8 lakh taka to the victims a week ago.

(111) 16 November 2009: A Jumma girl attempted to rape by Bengali settlers in Longadu

On 16 November 2009 at about 1:30 pm two settler Bengali boys attempted to rape a Jumma girl while she was returning home from her school in Longadu upazila (sub-district) of Rangamati hill district. Accused Bengali boys were punished in a local arbitration meeting arranged by Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) and Zone Commander of Maini army zone.

It is learnt that Mukti Chakma (14) d/o Purnendu Bikash Chakma of village South Ghonomor of Bhasanya Adam union under Longadu upazila is a student of Ghonomor Sena Maitri Junior High School. On that day she was returning home after attending the school examination around 1:00 pm. At one stage, when she reached at Modyam (middle) Ghonomor area at about 1:30 pm, two settler Bengali boys named (1) Md. Alauddin alias Milan (16) s/o Kalo Mia and (2) Hasan Ali (14) s/o Abdul Mannan of village South Ghonomor caught her and tried to rape her taking into nearby bushes. However, she could narrowly escape. But her dresses were torn up by the culprit boys.

After lodging a complaint and seeking justice from the victim's side, upazila chairman Tofazzal and vice chairman Janey Alam along with some settler Bengali leaders went to the house of victim and held an arbitration meeting with local Jumma leaders. But no solution came out from the meeting, as the victim side wanted justice and punishment of the criminals and on the other the upazila chairman Tofazzal advised the victim side to keep calm and patient. Later, at one stage, the settler Bengalis tried to create communal instigation.

Next day on 17 November 2009 another arbitration meeting in participation of both Bengali and Jumma sides was held led by Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) and Zone Commander of Maini army zone and the both sides reached a solution. The meeting found the accused boys guilty of the occurrence and the accused boys were sentenced to punish with cane and pay financial fine respectively 5000 taka to the victim's family. The guilty boys and their guardians gave an undertaking to this effect that they would never commit such crime and never try to create communal instigation.

(112) 23 November 2009: Roundtable discussion on implementation of CHT Accord held in Dhaka

On 23 November 2009 a roundtable discussion titled "Implementation of Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Accord: Problems and Ways Forward" was organised by Manusher Jonno Foundation and Kapaeng Foundation at WVA auditorium in Dhaka. Presided over by Executive Director of Manisher Jonno Ms. Shaheen Anam, ruling Member Parliament (MP) and member of CHT Accord Implementation Committee Mr. Jatindra Lal Tripura attended the discussion as Chief Guest.

Among others, MP and chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on education ministry Mr. Rashed Khan Menon, former advisor to the Caretaker Government and eminent human rights activist Ms. Sultana Kamal, general secretary of Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Forum Mr. Sanjeeb Drong, organising secretary of PCJSS Mr. Shaktipada Tripura and teacher of Dhaka University Mr. Robaet Ferdous were present in the discussion as discussant. Member of the CHT Regional Council and also central member of PCJSS Mr. Goutam Kumar Chakma presented the keynote paper on present state and ways forward for implementation of CHT Accord while vice chairperson of Kapaeng Foundation Mr. Dipayan Khisa delivered welcome speech in the discussion.

Speakers at a roundtable called on the government to announce a clear roadmap to implement the CHT Accord quickly. They also demanded immediate steps to settle land disputes before the land survey and to resume withdrawal of military camps from the hill districts. They also called on the government to take immediate steps to prevent activities of Islamist militants in the hill districts.

Groups linked to the militants are manipulating local politics. The speakers also stressed the need for constitutional recognition of the indigenous people.

Jatindra Lal Tripura MP, member of CHT Accord Implementation Committee, said the government is keen to implement the peace accord. However, it must do it before the end of its tenure and prioritise the issue of settlement of land dispute.

Sultana Kamal, co-chair of the CHT Commission and former adviser to the caretaker government, said that 12 years have elapsed since the peace accord was signed. Meantime, the ratio of Bangalee to indigenous people has changed along with the political leadership. Indigenous people were removed from the decision-making level. The settlers have also invested and now have economic interests. She also said the government must be careful to implement the CHT accord with a clear goal.

According to official statistics, there are 11 indigenous communities in CHT namely Chakma, Tanchangya, Tripura, Mro, Murong, Marma, Bawm, Pankhua, Khayang, Chak and Lushai. Adivasi leaders, however, said the number would be higher.

The ratio of Adivasis to Bangalee settlers now stands at 49:51, which used to be the other way around. CHT covers about 10 percent of the total land of the county.

Rashed Khan Menon MP, chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on education ministry, said political interactions between Adivasi leaders and mainstream political parties is necessary to implement the accord.

He also said that Islamist militants are provoking the settlers in CHT using religious sentiments, which needs to be addressed immediately.

He added that steps should be taken to withdraw temporary military camps from the CHT, as there are six cantonments in the region.

Shaheen Anam, executive director of MJF, said the government must not forget the pledges made in the election manifesto.

She also called for following a clear roadmap to implement the peace accord.

Sanjeeb Drong, general secretary of Bangladesh Adivasi Forum, Robayet Ferdous, associate professor of journalism department, Dhaka University, Gautam Kumar Chakma, member of CHT Regional Council, Saktipada Tripura of Parbatya Chattagram Janasanghati Samity, and Dwipayana Khisha, vice-chairperson of Kapaeeng Foundation, also spoke.

(113) 25 November 2009: PCJSS member kidnapped by reformist and UPDF cadres in Naniarchar

On 25 November 2009 around 2:00 pm a returnee PCJSS member Mr. Debabrata Chakma alias Karlo (42) s/o Karma Das Chakma of village- Krishnamachara of Ghilachari union under Naniarchar upazila (sub-district) of Rangamati district was kidnapped from Naniarchar Bazaar by Pragoti Chakma (38) s/o Tripura Charan Chakma of village- Bhuiya Adam of Ghilachari union and Sumanta Chakma (28) s/o Prahlad Chakma of village- Gulshachari of No. 3 Burighat union of Naniarchar upazila who are known as so-called reformist activist.

It is mentionable that Mr. Debabrata Chakma alias Karlo has been staying at TTC area under Rangamati municipality for long time. He is no more involved with PCJSS activities and is involved with fishing business for earnings for survival of his family. He went to Naniarchar Bazaar on that day for his fishing business.

It is learnt that soon after kidnapping, the kidnappers handed Mr. Karlo over to the UPDF commander of Naniarchar area Mr. Orchid Chakma alias Robi (42) s/o unknown from Kowkhali upazila.

It is reported that after four days on 29 November 2009 Mr. Karlo was released in lieu of taka 200,000/- as ransom.

(114) 26 November 2009: An innocent villager beaten by reformist cadres in Khagrachari

On 26 November 2009, Mr. Pratijagot Chakma (50) s/o Pahr Chandra Chakma, an innocent villager of village- Betchari Madyam Para under Kamalchari union of Khagrachari sadar upazila of Khagrachari district went to join a funeral ceremony of the village. On the way of returning to his home he was halted at the shop of Kamini Ranjan Chakma. In the mean time, Plaban Chakma (18) s/o unknown accompanied by two associates named Jiban Chakma and Nirvik Chakma known as reformist activist arrived at the shop and then beat Mr. Pratijagot Chakma mercilessly. The miscreants put logs on the chest of Pratijagot Chakma. Thus, Pratijagot Chakma got injured seriously and he was admitted to Khagrachari General Hospital.

(115) 27 November 2009: Reformist cadres compelled a woman to leave her village

On 27 November 2009 at about 8:30 am cadres of so-called Reformist Group of PCJSS forcibly compelled Mrs. Santana Chakma (30) w/o Bindu Tripura of village- Choto Kangara Kheya of No. 9 Merung union under Dighinala upazila (sub-district) of Khagrachari district to leave her house and village with her 11 year old son and 7 year old daughter. While being compelled to leave her house Mrs. Santana Chakma was beaten, the house and household articles were destroyed by the reformist cadres. Now, victim Mrs. Santana Chakma has taken refuge in Langodu and got admitted to Langodu hospital. It is learnt that Mrs. Santana Chakma's husband Bindu Tripura is a supporter of PCJSS and CHT Accord.

December 2009

(116) 6 December 2009: Meeting on Amendment of CHT Land Dispute Settlement Act 2001

1. On 06 December 2009 a meeting was held on amendment of CHT Land Dispute Settlement Act 2001. Mr. Rezaul Karim Heera, Land Minister was in the Chair. Among others following persons were present

Government side-

- 1) Chairman, parliamentary Standing Committee on Land Ministry
- 2) State Minister, Land Ministry
- 3) Secretary, Land Ministry
- 4) DS Abdur Rouf, Land Ministry
- 5) Joint Secretary, Law Ministry
- 6) Joint Secretary, CHT Ministry
- 7) DS, CHT Ministry
- 8) Additional Commissioner, Chittagong Division
- 9) ADM of DCs Office, Rangamati
- 10) ADM of DCs Office, Bandarban
- 11) ADC, Revenue, Khagrachari

CHTRC Delegation-

11. Mr. Goutam Kumar Chakma, Member, CHTRC.
12. Mr. Raktotpal Tripura, Member, CHTRC

Discussion and Decision

In the meeting discussion was held on the recommendations placed by CHTRC and the opinions of the DCs and Commissioner of Chittagong on them and decisions were adopted as follows:

- 1) Point 1: Preamble of the Accord- To replace the name of the National Committee on CHT Affairs and Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samiti correctly was agreed in the meeting.

- 2) Point 2: Section 2 (Cha) – Definition on Rehabilitated Refugees determined in the Act would remain unchanged.
- 3) Point 3: Section 2 (Chha)- Definition on Existing Laws determined in the Act would remain unchanged.
- 4) Point 4: Section 3(2)(Ga) – Representation of CHTRC Chairman or his representative in the Commission meetings would remain unchanged.
- 5) Point 5: Section 3(2)(Ga)- Representation of concerned HDC Chairman only in the Commission meetings would remain unchanged.
- 6) Point 6: Section 3(2)(Gha)- Representation of concerned HDC Chairman only in the Commission meetings would remain unchanged.
- 7) Point 7: Section 4(1)- the provision on Head Office of the Land Commission at Khagrachari would remain unchanged in the Act.
- 8) Point 8: Section 6(1)(Ka)- As per the Accord CHTRC recommended that Land Commission would settle all land disputes including those of the Refugee returnees. But the Govt side opined to be confined to the land disputes related to the Refugee returnees only as stated in the Act. This point remained undecided.
- 9) Point 9; Section 6(1)(Kha) Land disputes would be settled as per the Existing Laws, Customs and Usages as per the Accord was adopted.
- 10) Point 10: Section 6(1)(Ga)- To settle land disputes all over CHT including Fringe Lands (Kaptai Lake Project Areas). But the Govt side opined to be confined to the land disputes related to the Refugee returnees only as stated in the Act. This point remained undecided.
- 11) Point 11: Section 6(1)(Gha)- The Act contained that Acquires Lands, Reserve Forest Areas, Kaptai Lake Areas (Fringe Lands), Betbunia Earth Satellite Centre and Lands recorded in the name of the Govt. and local authorities would remain out of jurisdiction of Land Commission. .CHTRC recommended to omit it. Govt. side did not agree at it. This point remained undecided.
- 12) Point 12: Section 6(4)- The Act contained that Commission or Chairman or any member entitled by Commission would inspect on grounds, investigate or accept statements of witnesses. CHTRC recommended adding officials also(in order to expediting functioning of the Commission). Govt. side did not accept it. **Decision was that this provision would remain unchanged in the Act.**
- 13) Point 13; Section 7(3)- The Act contained that the Quoram of the Commission meeting would require the Chairman and two other members. CHTRC recommended that other two members would be concerned HDC Chairman and concerned Circle Chief. As the Govt. side did not accept the recommendations and
- 14) Point 14: Section 7(4)- The Act contained that if any matter remained unresolved in any meeting that could be decided in the later meeting even in absence of members, who were present in the former meeting. CHTRC recommended that in that case all members should be duly given notice of the later meeting.
- 15) Point 15: Section 7(5) – The contained that Commission would take decision unanimously and in case of failure decision of the chairman would be final. CHTRC recommended to adopt decision by majority of the Commission members including the Chairman.
- 16) Point 16: Section 9- To correct the word to submit application to the Commission was adopted.
- 17) Point 17: Section 10 – To use the word Zella Prashasak in lieu of the word Deputy Commissioner not agreed by Govt. side. Decision was that this provision would remain unchanged.

- 18) Point 18: Section 10- To add a new sub-section about allowing the applicant to modify his application before disposal of the matter. It was adopted.
- 19) Point 19: Section 12- The Act contained that Com could entrust, any power except giving decision on settlement of disputes, to the Chairman or any member or any officer. CHTRC recommended for including specially inspection, investigation and taking statements as well. The Govt. side did not agreed. Decision was that this provision of the Act would remain unchanged.
- 20) Point 20: Section 13(2)- To add a new sub-section as per the Accord on providing priority to the Tribal persons in the appointment in the posts of secretary and other officials of the Commission was adopted.
- 21) Point 21: Section 17(1)- To add the word 'urgently' with the words implementation of judgment of Com was not accepted by the Govt side. Decision was that the provision of the Act would remain unchanged.
- 22) Point 22: Section 18- As per the Accord Rules on Settlement of disputes would be framed in consultation of the CHTRC was adopted.
- 23) Point 23: To adding a new section about dealing the matter of Land Com by the CHT Ministry in lieu of the Land ministry. As it was not necessary at all it was not adopted.

The undecided points (8, 10 and 11) would be decided in the next meeting to be held with limited persons like the Land minister, State minister of land ministry, Chairman of the Standing Committee and CHTRC delegation.

It is noted that the Point 8 on section 6(1)(Ka) of the Act narrated to have settlement of land disputes of the Refugee returnees, who got repatriation under the 20 point Package Deal of 1997 only. It excluded the Refugee Returnees, who returned under the 16 Point Package Deal in 1992-1994 and all others. The Point 11 on section 6(1)(Ga) narrated to have resolution of land disputes on the lands illegally given in settlement or occupied provided that Reserve Forests, Kaptai Lake Areas, Betbungia Earth Satellite Centre and the lands recorded in the name of Govt. or local authorities would be excluded.

It is important to note that although the Accord provides that the Land Commission would settle all land disputes related to illegal occupation as well as illegal settlement of lands but the Govt. side has intention to have Reserve Forests, Kaptai Lake Areas and the lands recorded in the name of Govt. authorities (obviously illegally claimed recorded vast areas of the army cantonments where settlers have been resettled and continues so until the date).out of the jurisdiction of the Land Commission. **That is why it is the most vulnerable point about proper solution of the land disputes in CHT.**

It is noted that Mr. Abdur Rouf, DS of Land Ministry made attempts to misguide the meeting in every point. He always pointed out that interests of the Bengalees would suffer. He and Abul Hosain of CHT Ministry opined to include DCs of CHT in the Land Com (to increase number of Benagalee representative). The Chairman of the Standing Committee too at some points sided with Rouf. It has been observed that there was every effort to refuse proper amendment of the Act.

(117) 06 December 2009: Meeting on Social Forestry in CHT

1 On 06 Dec 2009 meeting on Social Forestry in CHT held in the Environment and Forest ministry. The Minister was present for few while. The Secretaries of the Forest Ministry and the CHT Ministry and Chief Conservator of Forests and many other of the Forest departments in CHT were present. On the other CHTRC delegation with K.S.Mong and Nurul Alam, Members attended it. CHTRC delegation stated that CHTRC in consultation with the 3 HDCs and 3 Circle Chiefs and other local leaders, passed recommendations on the Draft Rules of Social Forestry that except the Reserved Forests other Forests were under HDCs as per the legislation framed under the CHT Accord. In addition, unless land disputes were not resolved social forestation could not be done even in reserved forests. So, the CHT should be excluded in the said Rules. But the Forest Ministry did not included

the recommendations of the CHTRC. Instead it has taken up programme once again to have social Forestation in CHT.

2. In this regard the delegation reiterated to cancel the programme for CHT and transfer the subject to the HDC so that they could enhance forestation through framing regulation.

3. It is noted that Forest Deptt. Officials are very much hungry to have aid from ADB, obviously for misappropriation of money in particular.

(118) 8 December 2009: Miscreants attempt to shoot PCJSS leader in Rangamati

On 8 December 2009 around 12:45 am a group of miscreants attempted to shoot Mr. Arabinda Chakma (47) of Rajdip area under Rangamati municipality, a returnee PCJSS member and General Secretary in charge of Rangamati sadar upazila committee of PCJSS. It is learnt that at that time the miscreants surrounded the house of Arabinda while Arabinda Chakma with his family members was in sleep. At a stage, the miscreants shot at the house 2/3 rounds. However, nobody was injured in this arm attack.

(119) 13 December 2009: A villager kidnapped by Reformist group in Dighinala

On 13 December 2009 at about 8:00 am an armed group numbering 11 led by Ajay Tripura (30) and Milan Chakma (29) known as reformist group kidnapped an innocent villager named Paripurna Chakma (29) s/o Gongga Dhar Chakma, village- Choto Kangara Kheya under Merung union of Dighinala upazila of Khagrachari district from a shop named Moner Manusher Dokan of Songrachari of Dighinala. It is learnt that at that time Paripurna Chakma was going to Dighinala from his village Choto Kangara Kheya. Other more two persons of the armed group were identified as Jewel Chakma and Subhash Chakma.

(120) 20 December 2009: National Roundtable on ILO Convention 169 and Indigenous Peoples and the Bangladesh Parliament held in Dhaka

On 20 December 2009 a national roundtable on 'ILO Convention 169' and 'Indigenous Peoples and the Bangladesh Parliament' was organized by ILO and RDC at Spectra Conventional Centre, Gulshan, Dhaka. The objective of the roundtable was to create awareness on ILO C169 and advocate Parliamentary role on Indigenous Peoples issues.

The first session of the roundtable with theme "Ratification of ILO C169: Way Forward" had started at 10 o'clock chaired by Prof. H K S Arefin. Mr. Dipankar Talukdar, State Minister of the CHT Affairs Ministry was present as Chief Guest and Mr. Masud Ahmed, Secretary In-charge of CHT Affairs Ministry was present as special guest at the first session. Country Director of ILO Ms Panudda Boonpala had delivered welcome speech.

Mr. Coen Kompier, Senior Labour Standard Specialist, ILO Delhi office had presented the overview of ILO 169. Mr. Goutam Kumar Chakma, Member of CHT Regional Council and Mr. Sanjeeb Drong, General Secretary of Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Forum spoke as panel discussant.

State Minister for CHT Affairs Dipankar Talukdar reiterated government commitment to implement the CHT Accord. He expressed his optimism that present government would ratify the ILO Convention 169 as most of the rights contained in the ILO 169 were recognized by the CHT Accord. He expressed his support to form a parliamentarian caucus for indigenous peoples' causes. He said that CHT Affairs Ministry already sent a letter to correct the derogatory matters regarding indigenous peoples from textbooks. He also informed that the government had already started the process of forming a separate land commission to settle the land disputes of the plain land indigenous people.

The Second Session with theme "Indigenous Peoples and the Bangladesh National Parliament" was held at 01 o'clock chaired by Dr. Harun-Ur-Rashid, Pro Vice Chancellor and moderated by Mr. Hasanul Haque Inu, MP. Prof. Mesbah Kamal had presented the Key note Paper on 'Indigenous Peoples and the Bangladesh Parliament',

Mr. Jatindra Lal Tripura MP, Chairman, Task Force for Rehabilitation of Jumma Refugee and IPD's was present as Chief Guest at the second session and Mr. Shawkat Momen Shahjahan MP from

Tangail, Ms Rubi Rahman MP, Rawshan Jahan MP and Shanaullah Lovelu were present as special guest.

Mr. Jatindra Lal Tripura said that it was good initiative to form a parliamentary caucus for indigenous peoples' causes. He said that Prime Minister would support if she was convinced the right things. He was optimistic to implement the CHT Accord by the present government within rest 4 year tenure. However, he expressed his concerns over anti-accord activities of extreme nationalist and communal groups in the banner of Sama Odhikar Andolon.

MPs who attended roundtable as special guest supported the initiative of ILO and RDC to form a parliamentary caucus. They expressed their commitment to work for the causes of indigenous peoples.

Finally national roundtable formed a committee with following Parliament Members to works for forming a 'Parliament CAUCUS for indigenous peoples' causes' within next parliament session-

- (a) 5 MPs of indigenous peoples;
- (b) 3 MPs from Awami League (namely Shawkat Momen Shahjahan, Rubi Rahaman and Rawshan Jahan);
- (c) 2 MPs from Workers' Party (Rashed Khan Menon and Fazle Hossain Badshah);
- (d) 1 MP from Jatiya Samastantrik Dal (Hasanul Haque Inu).

The roundtable also formed a 3-member technical support committee with Mr. Goutam Kumar Chakma, Mr. Mesbah Kamal and Mr. Sanjeeb Drong.

The roundtable was ended with vote of thanks by Abhilash Tripura, National Coordinator, Promotion of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples of ILO Dhaka office.

(121) 23 December 2009: Tourism Development in violation of CHT Accord

On 23 December 2009 in a meeting of the parliamentary standing committee on planning ministry undertook decision to promote tourism industry in CHT. The meeting was held at CHT Development Board conference in Rangamati with Committee Chairman Col (retd) Oli Ahmed in chair. The meeting was attended by members of the parliamentary standing committee, namely, planning minister Air Vice Martial (rtd) A K Khandakar, Md. Azizul Haque Chowdhury MP, Hamida Banu MP, Nawab Ali Abbas Khan and Shamsul Islam. Besides, secretary of planning ministry Habibullah Majumdar, secretary of CHT affairs ministry Masud Ahma, chairman of Tourism Corporation Hemayet Uddin Abdul Malek, deputy director of UNDP-CHTDF Prasenjit Chakma and Orshowja Chakma.

As part of the tourism development in CHT, the parliamentary standing committee on planning ministry decided to build road along the bank of Kaptai Lake. The road will be connected with Bandarban, Khagrachari and Chittagong districts. Decision was also taken to set up cable car, zoo and recreation centre for children along the road side.

It is mentionable that as per CHT Accord, the subject of 'local tourism' was vested with the three Hill District Councils (HDCs). As apex body of special administrative arrangement for CHT region, the CHT Regional Council (CHTRC) has the right to coordinate and supervise the subjects.

However, the subject of local tourism is yet to be transferred to HDCs. The parliamentary standing committee did not discuss to transfer subject to the HDCs. Moreover, the parliamentary standing committee undertook this decision without having consultation with HDCs and CHTRC. Even, representatives of these institutions were not invited in the meeting. Hence the decision of development of tourism in CHT is direct violation of CHT Accord. Though present government has been reiterating its commitment to implement CHT Accord fully, however, no initiative for implementation of main issues of the CHT Accord except reconstitution of few committees has been undertaken during the tenure of last one year.

It is also learnt that upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) of Bandarban sadar upazila (sub-district) Mr. Anupam Barua set up tourist centre at Kana Para area under Bandarban upazila by occupying land of indigenous people. A connecting road is also being constructed by the food for work project.

The owners of this land, namely, Mr. Mong Nue Prue Marma, Mr. Lal Lung Ruyal Bawm and Mr. Lal Pian Than Bawm contacted with UNO and objected against the construction of tourist centre on their land. However, UNO rejected their claims and filed case against them with Bandanban police station.

The owners of land submitted memorandum to state minister of CHT affairs ministry Mr. Dipankar Talukdar seeking justice and security. But no action has been taken against it so far.
