

# **The Positioning of the Bengali Settlers in Chittagong Hill Tracts: A Development Understanding**

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## DECLARATION

This Ph.D Dissertation has been prepared to submit to the Department of anthropology, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Dhaka, Dhaka 1000, Bangladesh in fulfilling the condition of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) program. All the material embodied in this dissertation in original and has not been submitted in part or full for any other Diploma or Degree of this or any other university or institution at home or abroad.

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## CERTIFICATE

This is my pleasure to introduce that Md. Anwar Hossain as a Ph.D scholar of the department of Anthropology, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Dhaka who has prepared and accomplished his Ph.D Dissertation on “**The Positioning of the Bengali Settlers in Chittagong Hill Tracts: A Development Understanding**” under my supervision.

This Dissertation is submitted in the fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) in Anthropology, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Dhaka, during the session of 2012-2013.

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**Dedicated to.....**

**My Father- Late Abdul Kadir**

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**Md. Anwar Hossain**

## Abstract

This anthropological study titled “The Positioning of the Bengali Settlers in Chittagong Hill Tracts: A Development Understanding” has been conducted to determine the actual positioning of Bengali settlers within the development dynamics of the CHT. The major concern of this study has to explore and determine the positioning of Bengali settlers within some dynamics which are the impacting factors for belonging to the CHT. There are some important dynamics such as land disputes, CHT peace accord, refugees and IDPs issues, Bengali settlements context, economic conditions of ethnic groups, basic amenities, business and tourism, social life context and development dynamics in the CHT, that the present research was going through with considered these issues. The present study has categorized the people of the CHT into three broad categories; one of them is minor ethnic groups, popularly known as Phahari, second one is Adi Bengalis, who have been living in the CHT by natural process before the huge migration of Bengali families took place and third one is Bengali settlers, who migrated from plain land as a part of Government policy and sponsorship. During 1979 to 1984 there are around 400,000 Bengalis were said to have been settled in the CHT. As a result of Bengali settlement, the population ratio of Phahari and Bengali in the CHT became nearly equal as of now. However, by the government settlement processes most of the Bengali settlers came to CHT from the Chittagong, Noakhali, Comilla, Sylhet and Mymensing district. The issues of Bengali settlement and the real conditions and position of Bengali settlers in CHT have not been studied earlier. Unfortunately there is a dearth of information about Bengali settlers in the CHT. There is no specific research work been found on the Bengali settlers. Moreover, shortage of attention trained in this regard, lack of resources for conducting research, and similar other reasons might have been responsible for an inadequate number of studies on the Bengali settlers of the CHT. Researchers and development practitioners’ attention has not received a lot in this regard. Due to that with a proper anthropological investigation into the different dimensions of Bengalis migration and development dynamics, certain facts have been carried out to understand the actual scenarios of Bengali settlers positioning in the CHT.

The present study has been conducted in the Khagrachari sadar and Panchhari upazilla area of Khagrachori districts in the CHT. The number of Upazilla (sub district) in Khagrachari district is 09, named- Khagrachari Sadar, Mahalchori, Manikchori, Panchori, Luxmichori, Dighinala, Matiranga, Ramgor and Guimara containing 38 Unions. The total population of Khagrachari district is 613917 (Male- 313793 and Female- 300124), Phahari and Bengali ratio is 52:48. There are eight important Paras/Villages (in terms of respondents) for conducting fieldwork, namely– Shalbon Gucha Gram, Comilla Tila Gucha Gram, Shaat Vaiya Para (Marma), Haduk Para (Tripura), Narayn Khaiya and Upali Para (Chakma), of Khagrachori sadar area and Ultha Chari, Zia Nagar of Panchari Upazilla areas. The weightage of the selected paras/villages for conducting fieldwork this study has considered some factors such as these areas are inhabited by the study people (Chakma, Marma, Tripura, Adi Bengali and Bengali settlers) and most of the Bengali settlers and their residential area ‘Cluster Villages’ situated in the Khagrachari sadar and Panchari Upazilla area.

This anthropological research on the proposed theme and for a comprehensive understanding, different methods have been applied for collecting and interpreting data. An integrated approach (qualitative and quantitative) has been taken for the

purpose of the study. Both primary and secondary data was collected from several of sources using both qualitative and quantitative techniques. Data also obtained through participant and non-participant observation method. Primary data has been collected from different individuals as well as from key informants who have knowledge about Bengali settlers and other ethnic groups of the CHT. Specific information gathered through case studies to supplement the data obtained from other sources. Therefore, the methodological tools and techniques of this study was primary based focused on qualitative one, on the other hand, quantitative methods have been used wherever needed and this have brought strength and comprehensive to this study. However, as an anthropologists and a researcher the long term training in this field has helped to develop an understanding for applying anthropological methods. Which appears to be most important is that there are few things that helped generating the base of the methodological understanding and these are settlement processes, cultural assimilation, development dynamics, behavioral understanding, cultural diversity and ethical consideration during the field study.

The theoretical framework and conceptual understanding of this study, a substantial literature on the integration, internal migration or settlement, and development issues in the context of CHT has appeared, and on this the present review focuses. This literature encompasses theoretical contributions. Study of internal migration and new settlement is a key importance in social sciences as well as economics and it emerges not only the movement of people from one locality to another for new settlement inside the country but also influences on livelihoods and betterment of life. There are some perspectives on integration of different groups confront themselves in the social sciences such as assimilation theory, multiculturalism, and structuralism theory. Not only is each framework useful in its own right in addressing of the study problem, the all complements one another, giving rise to a more dialogical and interdisciplinary tool in understanding oppression in the context of the Bengali settlement and their positioning in the CHT. More importantly, these frameworks help to contextualize the development paradigm in the context of CHT.

The comprehensive reviewing of the literatures was an important segment for this study. Because it provided an up-to-date data for understanding of the subject and identified the methods used in previous research on the topic. Moreover the literary works provided information to corresponding and comparisons to the present research findings. The reviewed literatures acted as a stepping-stone towards achievement of the study objectives. Nevertheless, the literatures reviews provided a solid background to back one's investigation and helped to understand the nature of Bengali settlement and development dynamics in the CHT.

Access to basic amenities such as safe drinking water, electricity, sanitation, health care and communication is imperative for a decent life. The need for these basic amenities has been universally recognized. Belongings always considered as essential to make life easier and more pleasant. The local authority has to provide the isolated people like Bengali settler with basic amenities. Presence of the communication facilities within the villages (Paras) indicates that the Chakma community received more attention from the government and NGOs for their development compared to Phaharis belonging to other ethnic groups. One possible reason for this was that after the CHT Peace Accord of 1997 Phahari communities received more attention from Government and NGOs, whereas Bengali settlers are not getting well communication

facilities from both government and NGOs compared to other groups of the CHT. It is observed that the Bengali settlers' paras (Cluster Villages) were neglected in terms of getting 'common para facilities' like good road communications. Living conditions are the most important factor in people's lives. Housing is often viewed as a barometer for the households of the economy, and this is certainly the case at the moment. As different financial capacities or social determinants in general - may lead to different housing conditions, they can be a potential source of inequalities. In this regards the present study has unfold that the Bengali settlers are living in substandard houses and it supposes to expose that their social and household financial conditions are weaker than other counterparts.

The present study has tried to explore relationship among the ethnic groups of the CHT. Different types of dimensions were observed in terms of their relationship. Usually Phaharis have good relationship with Adi Bengalis but relations with Bengali settlers are quite different. Most of the Phaharis think that, Bengali settlers were the creator of harmful life and destroyed their natural peaceful life in the CHT. Adi Bengalis have been peacefully living inside and beside their *Paras* (Villages) and their relationships with Bengali households are usual. On the contrary, major portion of Bengali settlers informed that the Shanti Bahini (SB) burnt their houses, occupied lands by killing them. On an average adi Bengali and Bengali settler relations are good in condition. So, considering all the circumstances it is very clear that, long after the ceasefire and the peace accord, distrust and suspicion still exist and previous bitter experiences which are reflected in their relationship. However, due to lack of mutual trust between Bengali settler and Phahari could not become cordial dwellers of the CHT.

Household's economy of the different ethnic groups have been studied intensively and with special attention to the Bengali settlers, reasons for that it was assumed, Bengali settlers are going through economic hardship and have very limited access to income generating activities in the CHT. The presence of trade and business in the CHT and their status in this regard is very poor. Where most of the businesses under the controlling of Adi Bengalis, nevertheless there had some traditional small industries and hand looming, bamboo and wooden craft industries are running under the ownership of Phaharis. On the contrary, Bengali settlers' position is very poor regarding their presence in the business sector. However, once the Phahari people were back warded in terms of getting services in the CHT but now they are in onwards in this particular sector. It could be a positive outcome of the CHT Peace Accord. However insignificant number of Bengali settlers were doing job in a lower levels and most of the middle and higher level jobs in the CHT were under the positioning of Phaharis, mainly Chakma and Adi Bengalis.

The households' income, expenditure, and savings are revealed in the table 6.5. On an average, Adi Bengali households stood first in position followed by Chakma households in terms of income, expenditure, and savings. The Marma and Tripura household's income, expenditure, and savings were almost same, though Marma households little were bit ahead than Tripura. It is very interesting that there has no similarity between income and expenditure of the Bengali settler. Without ration their households' monthly deficit was 416.67 Tk. Bengali settlers- large part of the population are economically dependent on government rations, the gap in living standards between Bengali settlers and other inhabitants of CHT has been widening in course of time.

The study has been tried to unfold the development features of the CHT. However, it was also needed to explore the actual positioning of Bengali settlers within the development dynamics in the CHT. It is observed that after the CHT peace accord Phaharis are getting more facilities from the both International Organizations (IOs) and non government organization (NGOs) than Bengali settlers, though they are as marginalized as ethnic minorities. The development initiatives of the IOs and NGOs, which is mostly in favor of Phaharis. Bengali settlers' issues are very insignificant in the index of International Donor Agencies and NGOs. Therefore, it is evidentially proven that Bengali settlers in CHT are backward in position that there has very limited space or option for them to gain socio-economic benefits thereby without boosting from both GOs and NGOs position it would be more difficult to go equally with other groups of CHT.

Land issue is the most crucial one of the CHT problems. On average Phahari households own more land than both types of Bengalis in the CHT where they (*Phahari*) had least number of registered ownership documents. Most of the Phahari's lands fall under the category of traditional-customary property. Most of the Bengali settler respondents informed that, in general "Phahari's has lands without documents and Bengali settlers' have documents without lands" this is the main climax of the CHT land problems. The Chittagong Hill Tracts Land Dispute Resolution Commission (Amendment) Act, 2016 added a provision that "No appeal shall be maintainable against the judgment of this commission and the decision of this commission shall be deemed to be final". The Bengalis are protesting against this clause because they seemed to be deprived without appeal provision. In the Land Commission there has no representative from Bengali Settlers, whereas most of the land dispute cases were pit Bengali settlers against Phahari people. The Bengali settlers worried for that, if once the Land Commission gives decision against them then they have no alternative place to put up their land documents for reviewing again.

The Peace Accord introduced a special governance system for the CHT with a CHT Regional Council (CHTRC) as the apex body of three Hill District Councils (HDCs) under a special Ministry for Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs (MOCHTA). Two-thirds of the seats in the CHTRC and HDCs, including the positions of chairs, are reserved for Phahari people and one-third for permanent Bengali residents. All most all the offices headed by Phahari with two-third reserved seats and also they are enjoying all the local level official power in the CHT. Whatever the total population of Bengali settlers in the CHT hence they have no official power at all, they are only demographic figure of CHT.

According to the Peace Accord, the internally displaced refugees will be rehabilitated by the Task Force. One of the most contentious issues in connection with the rehabilitation of these internally displaced refugees is over the role of the Task Force. Not only is their rehabilitation still pending, but a major conflict erupted between the government and the JSS leadership over the mandate of the Task Force, or more concretely over the question whether Bengali settlers should also be considered internally displaced people. The inclusion of Bengali settlers who were brought into the region under the transmigration programme carried out between 1979 and 1984 in the list was denounced by PCJSS and the Jumma Refugees Welfare Association, which boycotted subsequent meetings of the Task Force. The Task Force made a list

of the internally displaced people that shows now there are at least 1,28,364 internally displaced families in the CHT of which 90,208 families are 'tribal' and 38,156 are 'non-tribal'. Notwithstanding, these depreciated refugees (including Phahari and Bengali settlers) are wistfully waiting for a better life. The peace could be rebuilt in the CHT by the rehabilitation of repatriated and internally displaced refugees.

However, considering all these issues it is revealed that, though the Phahari-Bengali population ratio is near about same nonetheless development initiatives are not taken equally for all. Bengali settlers are seemed to be deprived on account of getting equal opportunities from the IOs and NGOs development initiatives. However, Bengali settlers have been going through various forms of struggles ranging from economic hardship to the politics of existence in the CHT. The political turbulence which lasted for a little more than two decades (1974-1996) in CHT have barred development organizations from taking any significant initiative directed towards the poor in the region. The signing of the Peace Agreement in 1997 created an environment for such ventures in the region. The Huge Development activities were started after a joint assessment by the government and the UNDP (2003) reported that the CHT is safe for development workers in the CHT. On the line of the constitutional recognition International Donor Agencies and NGOs have taken various development initiatives for the CHT people especially for the Phahari people. On the contrary, Bengali settlers are not under consideration of these International Agencies and NGOs, thereby many problems are creating among the CHT groups for prejudiced development initiatives. Though the huge development initiatives have been undertaken by IOs and NGOs for Phaharis but no specific development initiatives has taken for the betterment of Bengali settlers. Bengali settlers demanding that all development initiatives should be taken equally for the all communities of the CHT including Bengali settlers because it also has to be considered that they are almost one fourth populations and as marginalized group as the minor ethnic groups of the CHT.

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## List of Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADR	Alternate Dispute Resolution
ADRF	Alternative Dispute Resolution Forum
ALRD	Association for Land Reform and Development
AP	Affected Person
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BRDB	Bangladesh Rural Development Board
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CBO	Community-based Organization
CHT	Chittagong Hill Tracts
CHTDB	Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board
CHTDF	Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility
CHTRC	Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council
CHTRDP	Chittagong Hill Tracts Rural Development Project
DC	Deputy Commissioner
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DFID	Department for International Development
EA	Executing Agency
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
Gob	Government of Bangladesh
HH	Household
HDC	Hill District Council
HRC	Human Rights Council
IA	Implementing agency
IP	Indigenous People
IPP	Indigenous Peoples Plan
IGA	Income Generating Activities
IDP	Internally Displaced People
KII	Key Informant Interview
LGI	Local Government Institution
LAR	Land Acquisition and Resettlement
LARP	Land Acquisition and Resettlement Plan
LGED	Local Government Engineering Department
MOCHTA	Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tract Affairs
NGO	Non Government Organization
PCJSS	Parbatya Chatragram Jana Samhati Samiti
SAP	Seriously Affected Person
SIDA	Swedish International Development Authority
UNDIP	United Nations Decade for Indigenous Peoples
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Action
UNHRC	United Nations Human Rights Council
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UP	Union Parishad (union council)
USF	Unclassified State Forests

## **CHAPTER -1: INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Introduction and Background**
- 1.2 Statement of the Study Problems**
- 1.3 Objectives of the Study**
- 1.4 Significance of the study**
- 1.5 Theoretical framework of the Study**
- 1.6 Conceptual Understanding of the Study**

## 1.1 Introduction and Background

The Chittagong Hill Tracts (henceforth CHT) is a distinct region in terms of its ethnic, cultural and ecological diversity to the rest of Bangladesh, situated in southeastern part of the country. The area of the CHT is about 13,184 sq km, which is approximately one-tenth of the total landmass of Bangladesh (Rafi, and Chowdhury, 2001). The region comprises three districts: Rangamati, Khagrachari, and Bandarban. The districts comprise seven main valleys formed by the Feni, Karnafuli, Chengi, Myani, Kassalong, Sangu and Matamuhuri rivers and their tributaries and numerous hills, ravines and cliffs covered with dense vegetation which are in complete contrast to most other districts of Bangladesh (Shelley 1992: 35). Geographically the CHT can be divided into two broad ecological zones: (a) hilly valley and (b) agricultural plains. It is surrounded by the Indian states of Tripura on the north and Mizoram on the east, Myanmar on the south and east and Chittagong district on the west. At the time of the incorporation of the hills of Chittagong into the British administration the CHT was inhabited by twelve ethnic groups along with the Bengalis. These 12 ethnic groups are: Chakma, Marma, Tripura, Pankho, Khumi, Lusai, Murang (Mro), Bonojogi, Tanchanga, Bawm, Kheyang, and Chak. These ethnic groups are different from each other in terms of language, customs, religious beliefs and socio-political organizations. Nevertheless, in most cases these groups are collectively treated as 'Phahari' not only by the neighboring Bengalis but also by different scholars through their writings. However, the present study has categorized people of the CHT into three broad categories; one of them is minor ethnic groups, collectively and popularly known as Phahari.<sup>1</sup> Second one is Adi Bengalis,<sup>2</sup> who have been living in the CHT for generation to generation by natural process during the British period and before the huge migration of Bengali families took place and third one is Bengali settlers,<sup>3</sup> who

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<sup>1</sup> Phahari referred to all ethnic groups other than Bengali residing in CHT. Though the word 'Phahari' is a local term in Bangla, indicating the ethnic minority living in CHT, but most of the time they express themselves as a Jumma nation and even indigenous people of the CHT. However, in the present study, I have mentioned the term 'Phahari' is referred to Chakma, Marma, and Tripura in this thesis.

<sup>2</sup> The term Adi Bengali I have referred the people who have been settled in CHT during the British Period. Moreover, the Bengali who did not migrate through Government policy and sponsorship, they have been resided in the CHT by the natural process like service, business and relatives etc. In the whole study I have mentioned Adi Bengali as a singular number and Bengalis as plural.

<sup>3</sup> Bengali settlers are those people who were settled in the CHT by the government policy and sponsorship. They also popularly have known as 'Settler' in the CHT. Bengali settlers brought to the CHT in the late 1970 through 1980s under Government policy and military execution. A total of 400000 Bengalis were settled in CHT during the above mentioned period. The government gave them land, shelter, and free monthly food rations.

migrated from the plain land as a part of Government policy and sponsorship. Human migration is the movement by people from one place to another with intentions of permanently settling in the new location. The movement is often over long distances from the existing locality. The settlers in the CHT are mostly poor land less and under subsistence level Bengali speaking Muslims. They were come from different areas within Bangladesh particularly Chittagong, Noakhali, Comilla and Sylhet districts. The then Government provided them with rations of rice, *Khas* land,<sup>4</sup> money and shelter. Bengalis began to migrate in small numbers into the Hill Tracts as early as the seventeenth century. In the mid nineteenth century and later the Chakma chief Dharam Bux Khan and his successor, Rani Kalindi, brought Bengali cultivators to work on the chief's land and to teach flat land farming to the Chakmas in general. These cultivators later became permanent resident of CHT. During the nineteenth century only tribal chiefs had their own land and the Bengali became sharecroppers, who were not settlers then. Later, some of them purchased land. Nevertheless, the Bengali population remained small in terms of quantity. The CHT became the part of Pakistan in 1947, as part of partition strategy of British India. The government lunched a policy which might be described as 'internal colonization' through on the limited scale, by the settling non-tribal Muslim families in the area. After partition of Bengal a large number of Muslim refugees from India were rehabilitated in some areas of CHT. The abolition of special status in 1964 opened up the CHT to outsiders. Then Bengali Muslim families started settling there in large numbers<sup>5</sup>. But it was not a Government's sponsored settlement. In the general election of 1973, held in independent Bangladesh, M.N. Larma was elected member of the parliament from the CHT. As an only member of the CHT, Larma declared in the constituent Assembly of Bangladesh: 'Our area is a tribal area. Various tribals live here... The constitution does not say anything about them'<sup>6</sup>. He emphasized: 'We are the citizens of

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<sup>4</sup> *Khas* land is referred to the Government own land. The government has in its possession vast areas of land in the CHT. These were called *khas* land as were huge areas of land, originally belonging to government estates. However, Phaharis seemed that the lands are common land or community land in CHT.

<sup>5</sup> For more see: Barua, B.P. 2001, *Ethnicity and National Integration in Bangladesh: A Study of the Chittagong Hill Tracts*. New Delhi: HAR-ANAND Publications Pvt. Ltd.

<sup>6</sup> Bangladesh Gana Parishader Bitarka: Sarkari bibarani [Bangladesh Constituent Assembly Debates: Official Proceedings] (Dacca: Government Printing Press, 1972), vol. 2 No. 9 (October 25, 1972), p. 292.

Bangladesh. We consider ourselves Bangladeshi not Bengalis'<sup>7</sup>. He had opposed the term Bengalees (Bengalis) as inserted in Article 6 of the 1972 Bangladesh Constitution, because he feared that it would put at stake the ethnic and cultural identity of the hill people<sup>8</sup>. During the Constituent Assembly he had moved an amendment for the restoration of autonomous region for the tribals and their special rights. The ruling party rejected Larma's amendment and interpreted this as a challenge to Bengali nationalism and a conspiracy against Bangladesh sovereignty. He boycotted the session as a mark of protest. Voices were raised in and outside the Constituent Assembly for declaring the CHT as an autonomous region. On another occasion, he added: I am a Chakma. I am not Bengali. I am a citizen of Bangladesh, Bangladeshi.

A tribal delegation on 15 February 1972 led by M. N. Larma, who called on Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and placed before him a Four Point charter of demands. These were:

1. Autonomy of the CHT with its own legislature.
2. Retention of the 1900 Regulation in the Bangladesh Constitution.
3. Continuation of the tribal chief's offices.
4. No constitutional amendment on matters relating to the CHT without the consent of the people of CHT<sup>9</sup>.

The tribal delegation found no encouraging response from Sheikh Mujib. He rejected their demands straightway. Moreover, there was strong resentment among the tribals when Sheikh Mujib on a visit to Rangamati in 1973 asked the tribals to become good Bengalis like another Bengalis and to join the national mainstream<sup>10</sup>. Moreover, the government position is clear regarding the CHT with Article 36 of the Bangladesh Constitution. Article 36 stipulates: Subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by the law in the public interest, every citizen shall have the right to move freely throughout Bangladesh, to reside and settle in any place therein... (The Constitution of Bangladesh 1994: 36). In the line of the constitutional rights, eight years after the independence of Bangladesh, President Ziaur Rahman presided secret meeting in mid

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., vol. 2, No. 13 (October 31, 1972), p. 452.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., vol. 2, No. 9 (October 25, 1972), p. 294.

<sup>9</sup> Sree Uttaran, 'A Genesis of the movement for Self-Determination of the Jumma people of Chittagong Hill Tracts and its Future, in 10-e November '83 Smarane, p. 38.

<sup>10</sup> Bangladesh Observer, February 17, 1973.

1979 and decided to settle 30,000 Bangladeshi families during the following year. A sum of BDT 60 million was allocated to the scheme. Each family was to be given five acres of land, BDT 3600 in cash and provision to support them for the first few months. During 1980, some 25,000 Bengali families were migrated to the CHT. The second phase was initiated in August 1980. Under the second phase of the plan each family received five acres of hill land or four acres of plain and bumpy mixed land or 2.5 acres of wet rice land.<sup>11</sup> They also received two initial grants of BDT 700 altogether, followed by BDT 200 per month for five months and 11 kg of wheat per family for six months to build their own houses, and reclaiming their lands. According to USAID in July 1980, the government decided to resettle 100,000 Bengalis from the plains in the CHT in the first phase of this scheme. In July 1982 third phase of settlement was authorized under which a further 250,000 Bengalis were transferred to the area.

There are around 400,000 Bengalis were said to have been settled in the CHT by 1984<sup>12</sup>. An estimation of the Parbartya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS), a total of 507200 Muslim Bengalis had been settled in the CHT since 1950. Among them 60,000 were taken there during the Pakistan period, 50,000 were settled during the Awami League (AL) reign, 150,000 during the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) regime, and 241,000 had been settled by the Ershad government. However, in 1947 the Phahari peoples constituted 98 per cent of the total population of CHT whereas the Bengalis were less than 2 per cent. By 1951 the Bengalis had risen to 9 per cent of the total population. This increased to 31 per cent in 1961, 41 per cent in 1981 and 49 per cent in 1991. On the other hand, the Phahari gradually declined from 91 per cent in 1951, 49 per cent in 1981 and to 51 per cent in 1991. As a result, the Phahari and Bengalis became nearly equal as of now<sup>13</sup>. Whatever the total population of the Bengali settler in CHT it is true that the settlement plan was a lucrative offer to the

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<sup>11</sup> There are three categories lands existed in CHT. Category 1: Plain land or wet rice land, Category 2: Plain and bumpy mixed land, Category 3: Hilly land. The government was offered to the landless Bengali households who would like to settle in CHT that they will get different categories land according to their choice. If a selected household was given choice for first category land than the household will get 2.5 acres of land, if choice was for category 2 than it is for 4.00 acres of land and given choice for Category 3 it ultimately means for 5.00 acres of land, that was the distribution system of land for the Bengali settlers.

<sup>12</sup> Mohsin, Amena. (1997) *The Politics of Nationalism: The case of the Chittagong Hill Tracts*, Bangladesh. Dhaka: The University Press Limited.

<sup>13</sup> Barua, B.P. 2001, *Ethnicity and National Integration in Bangladesh: A Study of the Chittagong Hill Tracts*. New Delhi: HAR-ANAND Publications Pvt. Ltd.



Bengalis because they were suffering personal economic hardships in the plain, moreover they desire to start a new and better life in a new location. However, by the government settlement processes most of the Bengali settlers came to CHT from the Chittagong district (see table 1.1). According to the present study, out of 120 only 40 are Bengali settlers. Those are migrated from different districts since independence of Bangladesh among them; settler households reported above 7.5 percent of the total settlers from Chittagong District. Another big amount of households were from Noakhali district which was about 6.67 percent of the total Bengali settlers' households.

Table- 1.1: Status of Previous Districts of the Bengali Settlers

Districts	Households	Percent
Chittagong	9	7.5
Noakhali	8	6.67
Comilla	7	5.83
Sylhet	4	3.33
Mymensing	7	6.67
Other districts	5	4.17
Phahari	60	50.00
Bengali	20	16.67
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Fieldwork data 20017

There were about 5.83 percent came to the CHT from Comilla and Mymensingh districts respectively. Only 3.33 percent of households were from Sylhet district and 4.17 percent households were from other districts to settle in the CHT. It is important to be noted here that, though the present study has observed 60 Phahari households, nevertheless among them 32 households (53.33 percent) were mentioned that they are not migrated people. As they mentioned they were living in the CHT from generation to generations, moreover they are the first settler of the CHT.

## 1.2 Statement of the Study Problems

The inhabitants of the CHT composed of Bengalis and other ethnic groups (*Phahari*). Each ethnic group has own dialect, social organization and cultural distinctiveness and under pressure of change by internal and external forces. Though the Phahari-Bengali population percentages are nearly same, but social position, understanding and acceptability to each other is not equal. Nevertheless, the real conditions and situations of Bengali settlers in CHT are also uncovered and unknown. A few studies

and different reports have critically been analyzed regarding Bengali settlers. They have become isolated from the whole process of development in CHT, particularly settlers in the 'Bengali Cluster Villages'<sup>14</sup>. Many would happily return to the plains if there was a place for them to go back. But they have no better alternatives. They had come from worse circumstances. Being citizens of the country, they too have equal rights, whereas they are being treated as second class citizen in the CHT. In recent years the government pampers the Phaharis and most of the development projects of the International Donor Agencies & NGOs in CHT are also based on Phahari communities whereas turns a blind eye towards settlers' plight. However, the Bengali settlers have been going through various forms of struggles ranging from economic hardship to the politics of existence in the CHT due to ethnic tensions and armed conflict between Shanti Bahini<sup>15</sup> (SB) and state troops. The problem of the study was to determine the development dynamics in CHT, at the same time what are the development initiatives that Bengali settlers are going through in the CHT in comparison to others. The research was attempted to find evidences that what kinds of development initiatives were taken by the development agencies and who are the more beneficiary through these processes. It is evidently proven that, after the CHT Peace Accord, lots of money was spent by the International Donor Agencies for the upliftment of Phaharis in the name of CHT development. The Government also concerned about these matters, hence the government itself has raised a question regarding one-sided development process. From the Government side, Syeda Sajeda Choudhury, MP, Deputy Leader of the Bangladesh Parliament and Chairman of Peace

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<sup>14</sup> By the term 'Cluster Village' I have referred the place where Bengali settlers were living. The Cluster Villages were formulated by the military during the insurgency period. Most of the cluster villages were constructed during 1979-1983 when conflicts between military and Shanti Bahini (SB) was peak in position. When the military saw that, there are many Bengalis were killing by the blood shading sudden attacks by SB than there has no alternatives without return them in a safe zone. The military were created Cluster Village as a safe zone for the Bengalis. All the Bengali settlers were gathered in to these Cluster Villages with many other Bengalis. The military were increased their forces around the Cluster Villages. In that process the cluster villages were formulate for the Bengali settlers.

<sup>15</sup> Shanti Bahini an armed unit of the Parbatya Chattagram Jana-Samhati Samiti. Shanti Bahini was declared to have been formed on 7 January 1973. At the initial stage of the establishment of British colonial rule the Chakmas were engaged in a resistance movement for nearly ten years. The movement was aimed at getting recognition of the hill tracts as an autonomous region within the British kingdom. At the end of the nineteenth century, the people of Chittagong Hill Tracts again started armed struggle when their autonomy was interfered with. In pacifying the hill people the Chittagong Hill Tract Ordinance was promulgated in 1900 in which the Chittagong Hill Tracts was declared as a special administrative area. Finally, the following elected government (1996-2001) signed a peace accord with the Shanti Bahini on 2 December 1997. The Shanti Bahini was formally abolished by a declaration in the sixth convention of Jana-Samhati Samiti held in 1999. For see more (PCJSS website and Banglapedia).

Treaty Implementation Monitoring Committee, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, said that the CHT is a great concern for Bangladesh since 1970s. At present, the situation of this area is very much politicized. She expressed her concern in that the foreigners, although are investing huge amount of money for the hilly people (*Phaharis*), are making the situation more unstable. She further informed that in the name of development, the foreigners establish school with certain groups of Chakma depriving others and therefore, it brings a negative impact in the CHT<sup>16</sup>.

Furthermore, the present research also intends to address the recurrent state of Bengali settlers in the wider canvas of socio-economic, political and livelihood dynamics among the other ethnic groups in the CHT. Considering all these issues an attempt has been made to address and explore further in a more sensible way and at the same time to understand the positioning of Bengali settlers in terms of development dynamics of the CHT.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The present study has mentioned that there are three categories of people living in the CHT, the Phaharis, Adi Bengalis and Bengali settlers. The study tried to focus only on those people who have shifted from their own villages and are now settled in the CHT known as settlers. The broad objective of this study is to understand the actual positioning of Bengali settlers within the development dynamics of CHT. However, there are some specific objectives of this study as follows:

1. To know the socio-economic conditions of Bengali settlers compared to other ethnic groups of the CHT.
2. To Identify the Bengali settler's position in the context of land-disputes and Ethnic conflict in the CHT.
3. To explore the role of NGOs and international donor agencies to the CHT and the participation of Bengali settlers in the development of local and national level policies.
4. To analyze the *Phaharis* perception about Bengali settlers and settlers' perception towards other ethnic groups.
5. To Know about the development dynamics of the CHT.

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<sup>16</sup> For more see Seminar proceedings on "*CHT - Revisiting the Peace Accord*" was organized by Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS) at the institute's Auditorium in Dhaka on 2 October 2012.

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

Anthropological perspective ethnographic research and investigations about the positioning of Bengali settlers in the context of development of the CHT is almost an unfocused issue. However, there is a serious knowledge gap among the people about the state of relations between the Bengali settlers and other ethnic groups in the CHT. Unfortunately there is a dearth of information about Bengali settlers in the CHT. There has been no specific research work found on the Bengali settlers. Moreover, shortage of attention trained in this regard, lack of resources for conducting research, and similar other reasons might have been responsible for an inadequate number of studies on the Bengali settlers of the CHT. Researchers and development practitioners' attention has not been received a lot in this regard. At the same time it is believed that with a proper anthropological investigation into the different dimensions of Bengalis migration and development dynamics, certain facts will come out that will understand the actual scenarios of Bengali settlers' positioning in the CHT. Therefore, the present study would be a more objective and significant one in the discipline of social sciences especially in anthropology. Moreover, this research finding will encourage respective agencies, policy makers, GOs and NGOs professionals and local government to seek assistance to establish and improve existing communication levels for better understanding of Bengali settlers of the CHT.

#### **1.5 Theoretical Framework of the Study**

Without a clear theoretical framework and conceptual understanding it is not possible to describe and explain how settlers and majority group members living together. In this regard, the Bengali settlement and ethnic groups' integration in CHT has been intensively studied, and in recent years the results of these studies have been thoroughly reviewed. However in the last decade, a substantial literature on the integration, internal migration or settlement, and development discourse in the context of CHT has appeared, and on this the present review focuses. This literature encompasses theoretical contributions. Study of internal migration and new settlement is a key importance in social sciences as well as economics and it emerges not only the movement of people from one locality to another for new settlement inside the country but also leaves influences on livelihoods and betterment of life. Internal migration depends on the socio-economic, demographic and cultural factors.

The present study has been made based on combination of theoretical frameworks. There are some perspectives on integration of different groups confronting themselves in the social sciences such as assimilation theory, multiculturalism, and structuralism theory. Not only is each framework useful in its own right in addressing the study problem, the all complements one another, giving rise to a more dialogical and interdisciplinary tool in understanding oppression in the context of the Bengali settlement and minority groups integration. More importantly, these frameworks help to contextualize the development paradigm in the context of CHT. **Assimilation theory:**<sup>17</sup> In the literature on the cultural integration of ethnic groups, the perspective of assimilation theory has dominated much of the anthropological thinking for most of the twentieths century. This approach is built upon three central features. First, diverse ethnic groups come to share a common culture through a natural process along which they have the same access to socio-economic opportunities as natives of the own country. Second, this process consists of the gradual disappearance of original cultural and behavioral patterns in favor of new ones. Third, once set in motion, the process moves inevitably and irreversibly toward complete assimilation. This view is exemplified by Gordon (1964),<sup>18</sup> who provides a typology of assimilation patterns to capture this process. In Gordon's view, settlers begin their adaptation to their new place through cultural assimilation, or acculturation. Though cultural assimilation is a necessary first step, ethnic groups may remain distinguished from one another because of spatial isolation and lack of contact. Their full assimilation depends ultimately on the degree to which these groups gain the acceptance of the dominant population. Socio-economic assimilation inevitably leads to other stages of assimilation through which ethnic groups eventually lose their distinctive characteristics. This approach turned out to lead to the development of

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<sup>17</sup> Cultural assimilation is the process by which person's or group's cultures come to resemble those of another group. Cultural assimilation may involve either a quick or gradual change depending on circumstances of the group. Full assimilation occurs when new members of a society become indistinguishable from members of the other group. Whether it is desirable for an immigrant group to assimilate is often disputed by both members of the group and those of the dominant society.

<sup>18</sup> Milton Myron Gordon (born October 3, 1918) is an American sociologist. He is most noted for having devised a theory on the Seven Stages of Assimilation. For Milton A. Gordon, see "The Nature of Assimilation" (Ch3, pp. 60-83) in *Assimilation in American Life*. New York: Oxford University Press.

alternative approaches to the study of cultural integration. **Multiculturalism**<sup>19</sup>: One such alternative approach is multiculturalism, which rejects the simple integration process proposed by assimilation theory. Scholars from this perspective view multicultural societies as composed of a heterogeneous collection of ethnic and racial minority groups, as well as of a dominant majority group. This view has been illustrated by Glazer and Moynihan (1970)<sup>20</sup>. They argue that immigrants actively shape their own identities rather than posing as passive subjects in front of the forces of assimilation. These authors also emphasize that some aspects of the cultural characteristics of immigrants may be preserved in a state of un-easy co-existence with the attitudes of the host society. The multicultural perspective offers then an alternative way of considering the host society, presenting members of ethnic minority groups as active integral segments of the whole society rather than just outsiders. **Structuralism**:<sup>21</sup> As the structuralist approach in social science, the economic analysis of cultural integration emphasizes the role of economic incentives and opportunities. Incentives and opportunities are in particular affected by the size of the minority group. Indeed, assimilation to the dominant culture is likely to provide scale benefits in terms of economic interactions. The structuralist approach emphasizes how differences in socio-economic opportunities relate to differences in integration of ethnic groups. Unequal access to wealth, jobs, housing, education, power, and privilege are seen as structural constraints that affect the ability of immigrants and ethnic minorities socially integrated. This leads to persistent ethnic disparities in levels of income, educational attainment, and occupational achievement of immigrants (Blau and Duncan, 1967 and Portes and Borocz, 1989). Consequently, the benefits of integration depend largely on what stratum of society absorbs the new migrants. To summarize, assimilation theory, multiculturalism, and structuralism provide different views of the same phenomenon. The focus of assimilation theorists

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<sup>19</sup> The theory of multiculturalism is view that cultures, races, and ethnicities, particularly those of minority groups, deserve special acknowledgement of their differences within a dominant political culture.

<sup>20</sup> Nathan Glazer (born February 25, 1923) is an American sociologist who taught at the University of California, Berkeley and for several decades at Harvard University. He was a co-editor of the now-defunct policy journal *The Public Interest*. For see more: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nathan\\_Glaze](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nathan_Glaze).

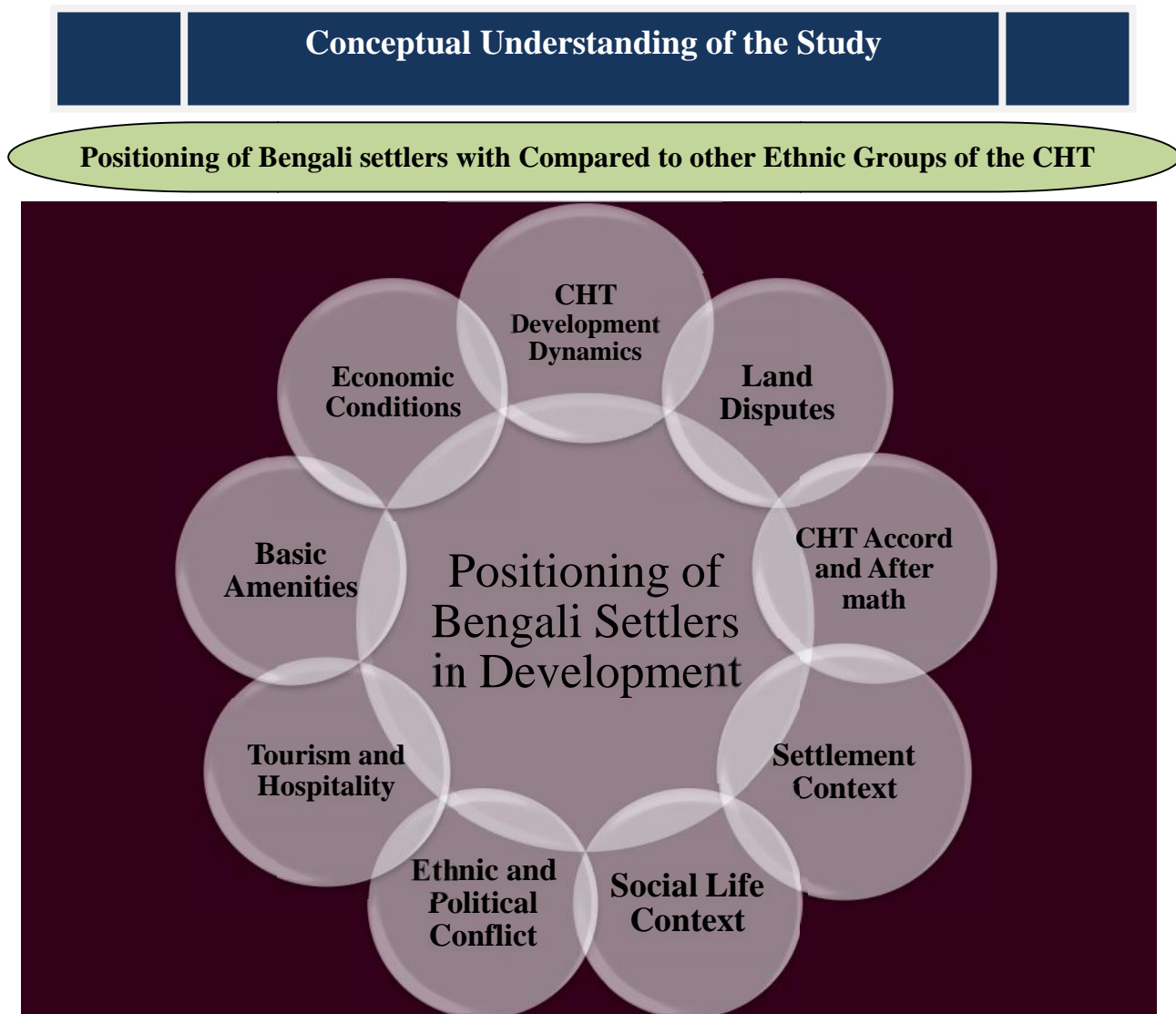
<sup>21</sup> In anthropology, sociology and linguistics, structuralism is the methodology that elements of human culture must be understood by way of their relationship to a larger, overarching system or structure. It works to uncover the structures that underlie all the things that humans do, think, perceive, and feel. For read more see: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Structuralism>.

is on immigrants' succeeding generations gradually moving away from their original culture. Multiculturalists acknowledge that the cultural characteristics of immigrants are constantly reshaped along the integration process and therefore may never completely disappear. Structuralists emphasize the effects of the social and economic structure of the host country on the ability of immigrants to integrate into its cultural attitudes and to share its economic benefits.

### 1.6 Conceptual Understanding of the Study

The present study has tried to explore and determine the positioning of Bengali settlers within some dynamics which are the impacting factors for belonging to the CHT. There are some important dynamics mentioned in the conceptual framework that the present research was going through considering these issues.

Figure- 1: Conceptual Framework



## **CHAPTER- 2: Methods and Materials**

- 2.1 Introduction**
- 2.2 Methodology**
- 2.3 Methods of the Study**
- 2.4 Applied Techniques and Tools**
- 2.5 Selection of the Study Area**
- 2.6 Sampling and Sample size**
- 2.7 Data Processing and Analysis**
- 2.8 Literature Review**



## 2.1 Introduction

This anthropological study has been conducted using different types of anthropological research methods and techniques followed by the objectives of the study. An integrated approach (qualitative and quantitative) has been taken for the purpose of the study. The data has been collected, analyzed and presented at different levels like- individual, household, and community. This chapter is going to deal with some important aspects such as- methodology, methods and techniques, research design, literature reviews and other relevant issues as well as very important part of the any kind of research.

## 2.2 Methodology

A method is a way of conducting and implementing research, while methodology is the science and philosophy behind all research. In this study the information has been gathered through micro-scale empirical study and intensive fieldwork. In this anthropological research on the proposed theme and for a comprehensive understanding, different methods have been applied for collecting and interpreting data. All an integrated methodological approach (combining both the qualitative and quantitative methods) used in collecting and analyzing the data. Both primary and secondary data was collected from several sources using both qualitative and quantitative techniques. Data was also obtained through participant and non-participant observation method. Primary data has been collected from different individuals as well as from key informants who have knowledge about Bengali settlers and other ethnic groups of the CHT. Specific information gathered through case studies to supplement the data obtained from other sources. Therefore, the methodological tools and techniques of this study was primarily based focused on qualitative one, on the other hand, quantitative methods have been used wherever needed and this has brought strength and comprehensive to this study.

However, as an anthropologist and a researcher the long term training in this field has helped to develop an understanding for applying anthropological methods. Which appears to be most important is that there are few things that helped generating the base of the methodological understanding and these are settlement processes, cultural assimilation, development dynamics, behavioral understanding, cultural diversity and

ethical consideration during the field study. Before going to the field it was very important for me to learn the application of anthropological research methods and techniques in order to that the present study have been successfully overcome and contributed this stage by the getting knowledge of experiences in academic and fieldwork since last eleven years.

### 2.3 Methods of the Study

In the present anthropological research on the proposed theme with a comprehensive understanding and assessment of the different issues, many anthropological methods and techniques are required to collecting, interpreting and analyzing the data. Different types of methods are used for collecting information from the different communities during the fieldwork. The methods are mentioned here which was applied to the respondents in the field, these are: intensive fieldwork and Observation, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), life history, Case studies, Key informants use and Genealogical method.

Figure-2: Methods of the Study (at a glance)

This study has included different types of methods and some of which are:					
<b>Observation and Participation</b>	<b>Focus Group Discussion (FGD)</b>	<b>Life History</b>	<b>Case Studies</b>	<b>Key Informants use</b>	<b>Genealogical method</b>

Before going to the field and also in many stages of the study various documents related to the CHT issues have been reviewed to understand the idea on the local politics and blame gaming, necessity of the settlement, policies of international donor agencies, ethnic group's perception to each other and development dynamics in the CHT. There are different types of written materials which the study have been reviewed that these are included books, journals, articles, newspapers, government gazettes, secret memorandum and official documents.

One of the most important and extensively used methods is observation. As a field researcher the study observed the day-to-day life of the different ethnic groups under study of their participating in it. In the present study the participant observation

method has been applied whereby needed to observe the subjects according to the objectives of this study with my knowledge and taking an active part in the situation under scrutiny and close contact with the study people. This method helps me to understand local people and very fact of their being observed may lead people to behave differently. To overcome this, the study observed a number of similar situations, over a period of time. Some audio and video-recordings regarding the ethnic conflict in the CHT has been listened and watched which was recorded by the Bengali settlers as a record for the future generation that the Shanti Bhahini (SB) committed, these too may alter the behavior of this research subjects.

In anthropological research one of the most popular and widely used research methods is participant observation and this method has enabled me in the activities of the people in these societies, so instead of just observing the people, the study was able to get a more opportunities on experience of how these people live their lives. The main advantage of the study have gained by this method that it allows me to obtain a deeper and more experienced insight on the activities that the individuals of a society perform and the ways in which they think and that it also allows to gain a good overview of how and why these societies functions. On the other hand, during the field study one of the disadvantage the study has faced of this method that it is sometimes unwelcome by the society being studied, as they often feel disturbed it was also often difficult for me to go native, this problem was overcome by the selected research assistants (one assistant from each community- Chakma, Marma, and Tripura) those who were involved with this study. However, overall this method made to confident as well as understands and unfolds the study people's activities and also GOs-NGOs and International Donor Agencies' activities in the field level.

The present study has been done considering five key informants from five different groups (Bengali, Chakma, Marma, Tripura and Bengali settler) of the CHT that the informants those who were therefore particularly valuable sources of information to this research. Notwithstanding, the key informants has been used as valuable sources of information, by carrying out frequent conversations with them and that is commonly known as key informant interview. During the period of fieldwork the key informants also serve as a check on the information obtained from other informants. To identify the key informants for this study, many factors have been considered that

who actually ends up serving as a key informant. The key informants were selected by those who have had merit of playing an important role in the social setting and indepth knowledge about other people and more extensive, detailed or privileged than ordinary people in the study areas.

In order to understand the development dynamics in CHT and local people's perceptions regarding social relations between Phahari's and Bengali settlers, local political patterns and political dilemmas, land disputes, CHT Peace Accord and preferential development activities of NGOs that considering these issues five (5) Focus Group Discussion (FGD) has been conducted with five different community people followed by FGD checklist. These focused groups have provided trustworthy naturalistic data that also lead to important insights about respective community people's behaviors by allowing all participants to say anything they would like in front of the whole group. Meanwhile, as a facilitator I listened not only for the content of discussions but observed something beyond talking, such as tone and emotions which helped me to learn or confirm not just the facts but the meaning behind the facts.

As a method of qualitative research the life history method has enabled to understand an individual's current attitudes and behaviors and how Bengali settlers have been influenced by the government settlement initiatives and another time what they feel about their decisions. Apart from voice, the matter of marginality was also given importance in this research. The process of collecting information and capturing a living picture of Bengali settlers with others and way of life, the life history approach has underlined the importance of listening to the story of his or her life, in his or her own words, especially who belong to marginal groups.

To understand the personal as well as the hidden dimensions of individual's life the present research has conducted five (05) case studies about different issues related to the CHT land disputes, ethnic conflicts, political discourse, development process and transmigration issue. Each case has taken as evidence of the stages in the unfolding process of social relations between specific persons and groups. The cases brought more prevalent and the latter providing analytical and exploring support for qualitative findings of this research. This method has helped me to understand

complete and detailed account of the social phenomenon and social unit, which was person, family, and event. This method also helped me to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events and occurrence that has been taken from individual life cycles.

Genealogical method was applied to the study people in order to know their ancestral history thus this method provided ethnic group's ancestors - parents, grandparents, great grandparents and so on. The genealogical method was originally developed by W.H.R. Rivers during the Torres Straits expedition in 1898-99. Later it became one of the standard procedures adopted in ethnographic studies in Social Anthropology. The primary aim of genealogical method was the analysis of social organization, i.e. the interpersonal relations and living arrangements between members of a society. By the process of this method extensive interviewing of individuals has been conducted in order to record their descent, succession and inheritance. In the present study, the genealogical method was very much helpful in studying kinship and descents, and thereby in understanding the social structure and network of relationship among the CHT groups. The method has been used through the collection of demographic and social data and mapping their residence details. In the studies of migration and to trace out early migrants of the CHT, genealogical method was very useful for this research.

#### **2.4 Applied Techniques and Tools**

This study has used some techniques and tools for data collection, such as- structured and unstructured interviewing, open ended questions in questionnaire, schedule as a tool to conduct interview and observation. During the fieldwork, emphasis has been given on collecting qualitative information in order to understand the dimensions of CHT development and actual positioning of Bengali Settlers. Special attention has also been paid to the neutrality and ethical issues. However, the tools and techniques have been used in under study as shown in figure no 4. Before going to the field the study prepared a questionnaire including one hundred and twenty-nine (129) different questions. Open ended questionnaire has been followed considering the nature of the study; moreover the questionnaire was divided into eight (08) segments that in all aspect of communities' issues were included, such as- basic household information, Bengali settlement in CHT, socio-economic condition, ethno-political conflict, land

disputes and CHT developments related questions following the line of the research objectives. The questionnaire was considered as the heart of this research because it was the main technique of data collection which was employed during the fieldwork. The questionnaire has helped this research as a better instrument for obtaining information about personal life, feelings, expectations and CHT related others issues.

Figure-3: Applied Tools and Technique

Present study has been Applied some technique and tools for data collection such as:				
<b>Structured and Unstructured interviewing</b>	<b>Open ended questions in questionnaire</b>	<b>Schedule as a tool to conduct interview and observation</b>	<b>Emphasis has been given on collecting qualitative information</b>	<b>Special attention has also been paid to the neutrality and ethical issues.</b>

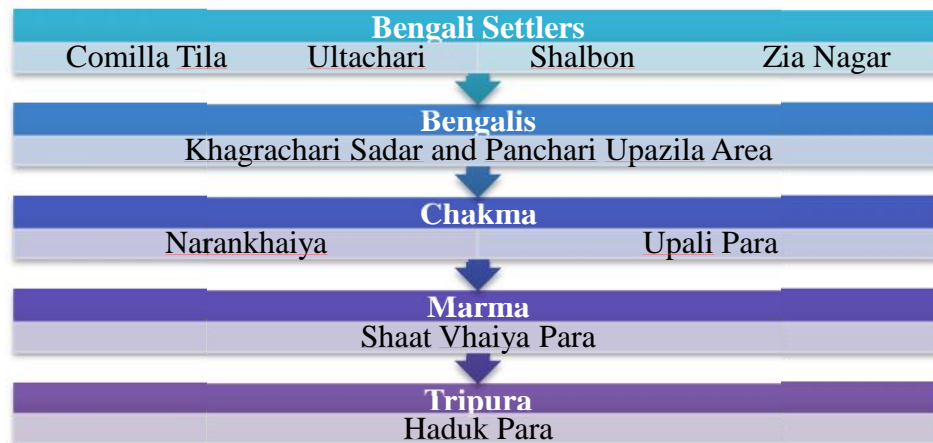
During the fieldwork interviews have been taken from different people of the five communities at all the places like- at home, in the tea stall, in the business centre, in the field, at market place and also at offices and any where whatever the respondent like. In simple terms, interview means ‘conversation with a purpose’. It was a procedure used for collecting data through a person to person contact between present researcher and respondents. In interview, data collection was done mainly through the verbal interaction between the respondents and interviewer. Moreover, many inside views and ideas of the respondents have been elicited through these interviews.

However, according to nature and minimizing the objectives, the present research has been taken one hundred twenty (120) interviews from different categories of respondents. The respondents were selected by the randomly purposive selection process. The interviews have been taken purposively as 40 (forty) from Bengalis settlers and 20 (twenty) from Bengalis and another 60 (sixty) from other ethnic communities (*Phahari*) that the 21 interviews from Chakma community, 19 from Marma community, and rest 20 of the interviews has been taken from the Tripura community respectively.

## 2.5 Selection of the Study area

The present study has been conducted in the Khagrachari sadar and Panchhari upazilla area of Khagrachori districts in the CHT. The geo position of the district is between 22°38' to 23°44' North latitudes and between 91°42' to 92°11' east longitude. The area of Khagrachari is 2749.16 Sq Km. It is under Chittagong Division. The number of Upazilla (sub district) in Khagrachari district is 09, named- Khagrachari Sadar, Mahalchori, Manikchori, Panchori, Luxmichori, Dighinala, Matiranga, Ramgor and Guimara containing 38 Unions. The total population of Khagrachari district is 613917 (Male- 313793 and Female- 300124), sex ratio is 105:100, Phahari and Bengali ratio is 52:48, population density 223 per Sq Km (B.B.S June, 2012).

Figure 4: Areas of the Study at a glance



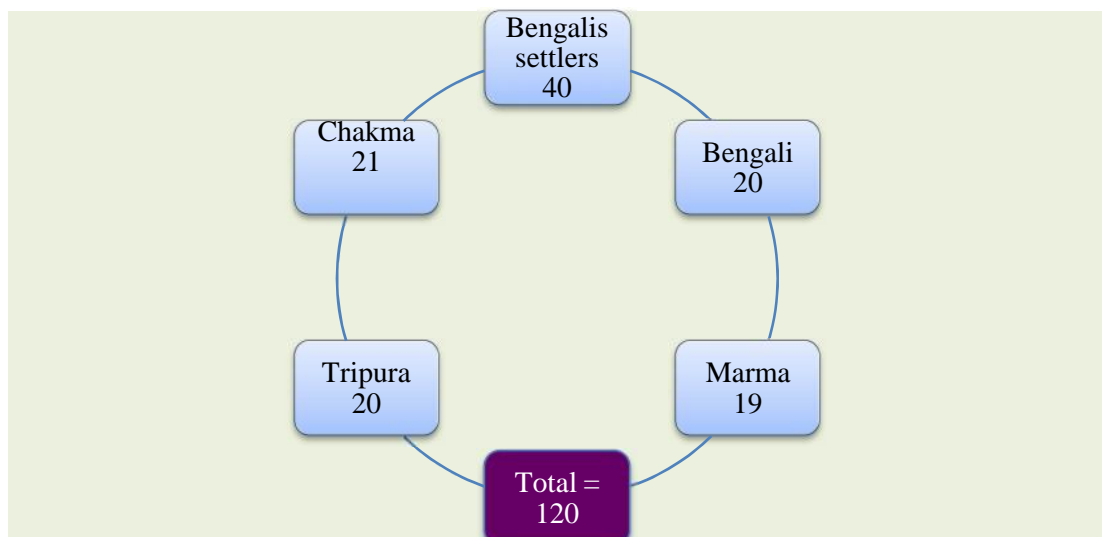
There are eight important places (in terms of respondents) for conducting fieldwork, namely– Shalbon Gucha Gram, Comilla Tila Gucha Gram, Shaht Vaiya Para (Marma), Haduk Para (Tripura), Narayn Khaiya and Upali Para (Chakma), of Khagrachori sadar area and Ultha Chari, Zia Nagar of Panchari Upazila areas.

The weightage of the selected paras/villages for conducting fieldwork this study has considered some factors such as these areas are inhabited by the study people (Chakma, Marma, Tripura, Adi Bengali and Bengali settlers) and most of the Bengali settlers and their residential area 'Cluster Villages' situated in the Khagrachari sadar and Panchari Upazilla area. Nevertheless, Chakma, Marma, and Tripura the leading ethnic communities of the CHT are living in Khagrachari, the areas are almost adjacent to one other, and not far from the Khagrachari Sadar Upazila head quarter that's why it was convenient to communicate and easy access to entire in the field for collecting information as in-depth participation and observation.

## 2.6 Sampling and Sample Size

As the unit of the study has taken the Chakma, Marma, Tripura, Bengali and Bengali settlers those are residing to the Khagrachari district in CHT. In order to understand the actual petitioning of the Bengali settlers compared to the other groups. Therefore, the sample size of the study has been 120 of the eight *Paras/Villages* under study. There are above 1600 households are living in the Shalban Gucha Gram including Bengali and Bengali settlers, almost 600 households living in the Comilla Tila Gucha Gram, 417 and 400 households are living in the Zia Nagar and Ultachari Gucha Gram, 45 and 60 Chakma households are living in the Upali Para and Narankhaia Para, 84 Tripura households are living in the Haduk Para, and about 320 Marma households are living in the Shaat Vaiya Para accordingly. After determining of the sample size, the study has selected the respondents according to the sampling procedure. The units of the respondents were selected by randomly purposive. The total sample is 120 which as shown in figure no 6. The respondents have taken purposively as below: 40 (forty) from Bengalis settlers and 20 (twenty) from Bengali and 60 (sixty) from Phahari communities. Among the Phahari 21 of Chakma, 19 of Marma, and 20 of Tripura respondents has been selected for this study. The respondents were including students, teachers, mass people, house wife, GOs and NGOs professionals, and political activists.

Figure 5: Sampling from different Ethnic Groups



The respondents were divided in terms of Age, Sex, Educational attainment, marital status and Ethnicity. The table 2.1 has describes the respondents in terms of their age



variations. Out of 120 most of the respondents was belonging to in-between 40-49 age grade. There are 50-59 years old respondents were 20 percent and 30-39 years 18.3 percent of the total respondents respectively. Above 15 percent of them were 60 and more than years old and only 20-29 years old respondents were 15 percent. The lowest aged respondent was 20 years whereas highest aged was 90 years old found in the respondents of this study.

Table-2.1: Age Variations of the Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percent
20-29	18	15.0
30-39	22	18.3
40-49	37	30.8
50-59	24	20.0
60 and above	19	15.8
Total	120	100.0

Source: Fieldwork data 2016-17

## 2.7 Data Processing and Analysis

The collected information has been compiled, tabulated and analyzed purposefully. Data has also gone through a comparative processing strategy with other published data. Both the primary and secondary have been processed for statistical inferences including quantitative and qualitative analysis with careful observation. In this regard the statistical method of SPSS has been utilized in coding-decoding and analyzing the primary data. After collecting, editing and processing the data these have put together for pre-designed one-way or two-way tables and further statistical analysis using other instruments. Most of the primary data has presented on the tables and graphs than the tables, graphs and figures were explained on the basis of data. Moreover, in case of using SPSS programme the statistical analysis has been preceded in five separate stages that the stages were 1) data coding, variable naming and data classification 2) statistical programme writing 3) data entry 4) error checking and 5) data analysis. By reducing errors and lending more credibility to reports, plans, and presentations thereby increased productivity and better information for decision making this SPSS programme was immensely helped within the study. However, much information has gathered through interviews, FGD and from the Key Informants that these information ultimately presented in relevant chapters.

## 2.8 Literature Review

In any research the role of literature review is important because it's helpful for gathering knowledge, ideas, presentation as well as theoretical and conceptual framework of the study. However, for the purpose of the study some literary works have been reviewed circumstantially which are relevant to this study. The comprehensive reviewing of the literatures was an important segment for this study. Because it was provided an up-to-date data for understanding of the subject and identifies the methods used in previous research on the topic. Moreover the literary works provided information compared to the present research findings. The reviewed literatures act as a stepping-stone towards achievement of the study objectives. Nevertheless, the literature reviews provided a solid background to back one's investigation and helped to understand the nature of Bengali settlement and development dynamics in the CHT. Brief reviews of the related literary works are given below.

*Ethnicity and National Integration in Bangladesh: A Study of the Chittagong Hill Tracts* is a renowned research book of B. P. Barua (2001). In this book the author tried to explore real scenarios of the ethnic groups as well as Bengali settlement and internal colonization procedure in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. In his book, he has addressed the CHT problem that is primarily a legacy of the British imperial and colonial rule (from the late eighteenth century to 1947), internal colonialism and exploitation pursued by the central government of Pakistan (1947-71) and later by the different regimes in Bangladesh. The insurgency is the outcome of the process of politicization and ethnicisation of the hill tribes, stemming primarily from the socio-economic problems since the commissioning of the Kaptai Dam in the early 1960s. In his survey among a cross-section of ethnic minorities- students, teachers, intellectuals, professionals and political activists- reveals the following major obstacles in the way of national integration in the CHT: non tribal settlement, deployment of army and its atrocities, denial of political rights and economic interests, threat to their religion, culture and language, and splitting of CHT into three districts. He also focused on the Ethnicity and National Integration where he mentioned that 'how are to integrate the ethnic minorities peacefully into the mainstream of national life without resorting to further violence' his work has attempted to make answers to this vital question. B.P

Barua also explained the socio-economic conditions of ethnic groups and their population, their practices and rituals, political system, and the actual conditions of both Settlers and minority groups. The origins and growth of modern political consciousness among the ethnic minorities and The Emergence of the Parbattya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samiti/ Santi Bahini issues have also been presented in his book. However, the findings of the survey of B.P. Barua which are elaborately explained in his book- *Ethnicity and National Integration in Bangladesh: A Study of the Chittagong Hill Tracts* has given much information to the present study.

'Towards an Alternative Idea of Nation' Amena Mohsin has tried to explain this idea in her very famous and recited book- *The Politics of Nationalism: The Case of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh*. She mentioned, at the outset it has to be recognized that there is no single or commonly accepted definition of nation. This is an idea whose connotations have changed over the period of time, as such in order to make it functional in its particular setting it has to be recognized and redefined. However, Amena Mohsin's book (1997) is a pioneer book for understanding the Chittagong Hill Tracts and its people, politics and nationalism. The author has given a clear conclusion of politics of nationhood both in British and Pakistan period. She also focused on Politics of Bengali Nationalism and the CHT during the 1971-1975 and 1975-1996. As an outgrowth of this book Politics of development, Politics of security issues also presented in a neutral way. Thus the understanding of this book has been from a socio-political perspective to politics of a nation-state towards the other cultural groups. Moreover, one of the major analyses of Mohsin in this book is that the politics of development and Bengali settlement in the CHT where she explained the pattern, process and the historical background of the Bengali settlement. 'Understanding of human rights violations in the CHT' is one of the important aspects of Mohsin's writings. She has analyzed that, apart from the militarization of and total control of CHT, the military has also committed gross violations of human rights in the region. The military has divided the entire area of CHT into three zones: white, green and red. The white zones cover an area of two miles adjacent to Army Head Quarter and are jointly populated by Bengali settlers and Hill people. These are considered as natural zones. Bengali settlement areas are identified as green zones. Areas in the interiors of jungles and those populated by the hill people alone constitute the red zones and it is hear that the military carries out its counter-

insurgency operations. In order to understand the government's position regarding the Bengali settlement in the CHT, land distribution among the settlers and the notion of *Khash* land and estimation of total CHT land the book was found very much helpful to the present study.

*Counting the Hills: Assessing Development in Chittagong Hill Tracts*. This book is edited by Mohammad Rafi and A. Mushtaque R. Chowdhury (2001). One of the authors Mohammad Rafi has given an introduction about Chittagong Hill Tracts with much information such as geographical location, topography, climate, administration system, religion, literacy, and socio-cultural activities of selected Phahari groups. In this book the authors have focused on Immigration and Politico-Development history, Land ownership and Cultivation, Water and sanitation, Health Seeking Behavior and other related issues of CHT. In the first chapter of this book the authors mentioned that the studies conducted on CHT till now can be divided into three broad groups in terms of the period when they were conducted. The first studies carried out were anthropological descriptions of ethnic groups based on the first hand observations of officers working for the British Raj in the region. Such work started in late 18<sup>th</sup> century. The second phases of the studies were conducted after 1930: these were mainly anthropological and philosophical in nature. Of course, some studies on the economic problems and changing trends in the region were also done at this time. Finally after the liberation of Bangladesh, studies on the politics and culture of the region have been carried out. Mohammad Rafi has mentioned that, their study in hand was thought to be different from first ones in two different ways. First, it adopted a survey method covering the extent required to provide a representative picture of the societies in the region. Second, the study compared the ethnic groups in terms of social, demographic, educational, economic, health, and environmental variables thus estimated the relative status of different ethnic groups in the region. Nevertheless, this book has also revealed the development dynamics and the process of development in the CHT, where the authors mentioned that, the development effort should take account of the resources available at the village, household & individual levels and the unique characteristics of each of these levels. Such strategy is essential in formulating an effective development policy for the region. In the first section of this book discuss elaborately some issues which are related to the socio-demography such

as villages and its inhabitants, characteristics of households, educational status of different ethnic groups, land ownership and cultivation, productivity and marketing, income generating activities with savings, assets, loans, and food security issues. In another section of this book has presented an important issue where it describes the health and health related matters like health care facilities, contraception and antenatal care services for the ethnic groups. The most important term of this book is that the determination of ethnic groups in the CHT where it has mentioned the term “Phahari” to refer to the minor ethnic groups of the CHT which has given an opportunity to the present study to understand Phaharis instead of minority groups, *Jummas* and indigenous people as a whole.

Zobaida Nasreen (2017) has presented some important issues on her Ph.D thesis, entitled: *the Indigeneity question: State Violence, Forced Displacement and Women's Narratives in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh*. In this research Nasreen has discussed how indigeneity is conceived and shaped by academics and scholars in different countries and by international agencies. In Bangladesh, this discourse has been a part of a colonial legacy and semantic politics. The indigenous leaders of the PCJSS have been fighting to achieve the identity of ‘*adibasi*’ according to ILO convention. She mentioned that most of her female respondents did not know about the ILO convention and it was not clear to them why their leaders were demanding to establish their identity as ‘*adibasi*’. However, she has examined the experiences of forced displacement arising out of decades of militarization and land grabbing perpetrated by the Bangladesh Army and Bengali settlers on the indigenous communities in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. She also focused on ordinary (non-activist) indigenous hill women’s narratives of violence and forced displacement in the pre and post peace accord (signed in 1997) periods. Ordinary indigenous people were drawn into the armed conflict between the Bangladesh army and the Shanti Bahini (SB), the armed wing of Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samiti (PCJSS). Women’s participation was in the form of direct and organized resistance as well as unorganized, everyday resistance and negotiation, yet none of it is acknowledged in the peace process.

Nasreen has argued in her thesis that the various kinds of non-activist women’s everyday experience of terror as a result of Forced Displacement in the CHT is not a

singular experience. Their experience can only be understood through the confluence of their encounter with state and army violence; as well as through interactions with activists, infra-politics in the local community and at the conjuncture of their own various locations. She has pointed out that the ‘paradoxes of women’s agency’ where she mentioned, the bond between community members, including women, usually becomes ever stronger in the event of outside intervention and perceived threats to their culture. This is equally true for indigenous women. They are expected to uphold tradition more: for instance, they are expected to marry within communities, serve the families, and sacrifice their non-familial activities and so on. The indigenous community’s cultural identities thus are centered on certain images of women. Activist women are found to conform to that expectation. These factors have circumscribed the indigenous women’s capacity to address gender issues to a greater extent in the context of the indigenous identity-based struggle. Moreover, her study was found regarding the ‘Indigenous Women’s Violations in the CHT’ that women’s contribution in handling violence and their involvement in the movement for self-determination were not recognized during the process of signing the treaty, in which there was no discussion of the security of indigenous women. Women are often stripped of the benefits achieved during struggle when the necessity for mobilization is over. Consequently, the concept of ‘aftermath’ is especially problematic for women as in many cases the struggle is not yet over for them. This research findings has given an opportunity to the present study to determine the notion of violence against the hill women and state violence and forced displacement due to violence.

Mahfuzul Haque (1998) has done one of the most significant works on the crises of national identity and integrity of selected ethnic groups of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and India. In *‘Ethnic Insurgency and National Integration: A Study of Selected Ethnic Problems in South Asia’* Mahfuzul has described that the organizational structure of the groups and their struggle for self-determination and other relevant issues.

Willem van Schendal, Wolfgang Mey and Aditya Kumar Dewan (2001) have described the Chittagong Hill Tracts as an out-of-the-way, unusual and little known district of Bangladesh. The idea behind this book was to take a serious look at its photographic record and to demonstrate how useful photographs can be in

constructing long-term historical accounts of the area. The stories suggested by the material in this book are, however, of much wider than local interest. They show us that there is more to the history of the people living in the Bangladesh than the two state-cantered, nationalist narratives which have dominated the scene for so long. These narratives, which we have dubbed ‘the struggle for Bengali nationhood’ and ‘the emancipation of the Muslim’, have covered up a multitude of alternative histories. Moreover, they have discussed the ethnic traditional administration as well as colonial aristocracy in CHT. Pictographic presentation was an additional dimension of their book “*The Chittagong Hill Tracts: Living in a Borderland*”. They presented many interesting aspects such as, religions of the hill, nature destruction, and the implementation of development on the hill people and the overview of the state regarding hill people through the picture from the British periods to present time. They argued that when the state started thinking of the area, it thought of timber, bamboo, hydroelectric power, rubber and oil of the area. As the local ethnic people of the uncivilized for whom the development was necessary, ‘development’ was a bundle of activities carried out in the hills and legitimized rhetorically as beneficial to the hills, but largely without participation, let alone leadership, by the hill people. Notwithstanding, one of the most important matter that Willem van Schendal has illustrated in this book that is the hidden images and realities of the CHT. He has described that, first of all, this material is of obvious relevance to the inhabitants of the Chittagong Hill Tracts themselves; it provides them with an anchor in time, points of identification and self esteem, and an antidote to the political and historiographical marginalization to which they have been subjected for over a century. To the extent that photographic images were made by hill people themselves, or under their instructions, they can be taken to reflect their historical imaginations and presentations of self. Over all these findings of the authors have been some impute to the present study.

Amena Mohsin (2003) has tried to inquiry into the processes and politics of conflict and peace building in the CHTs, Bangladesh taking the politics of identity into question. Taking a historical look into the formation of different local political parties and their practice she has explained the first scenarios of the conflicting situations in the CHT and attempts taken by the then Bangladesh government. In her book *The*

*Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh: On the Difficult Road to Peace* has mentioned the politics of identity formation of ethnic communities. Mohsin has pointed out the event took place after the liberation war of Bangladesh through highlighting the conversation between Mujib and Larma over the issue of autonomy for the CHT, identity based on the language and culture. Moreover, she has discussed about the politics of development and economic politics that the British colonial state had alienated the hill people of CHT from their means of production i.e. their land and forest. The colonial state has also sought to change their mode of production from *Jhum* to plough, as it was economically less profitable for the state. The economic plight of the hill people never occupied any space in the East-West disputes over economic issues. Development thus remained a prerogative and reserved of the 'nation'. Consequently, the some Bengali people who had struggled for political and economic autonomy within the state of Pakistan did not hesitate to exploit the hill people in the name of nation and national development in the independent nation-state of Bangladesh. One of the important aspects of her findings that has been to criticize the lackings of the CHT Peace Accord where she has termed these problematic of the Peace Accord. Accordingly, Mohsin has critically discussed the establishment of Kaptai Dam which caused damages to the indigenous resources and where almost 100000 people both Phahari and Bengali were displaced from their home steeds and lost their most valuable cultivated lands.

Thomas Hylland Eriksen (1993) in his book *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives* tried to develop a clear conception about ethnicity. An attempt has been made to draw connections and interrelations in between ethnicity, race, nation-state, nationalism and class concept. He has clarified that ethnicity refers to aspects of gain and loss in interaction and in the creation of identity. Thus in dealing with this issue it is understandable that ethnicity has a political, organizational and symbolic aspect. Eriksen has reduced this concept to the application of systematic distinctions between insider and outsiders, but again constituted through social contact. Another significant issue is ethnic stigma where it is a fact that many interethnic relations are highly asymmetrical regarding access to political power and economic resources. However, by implication and according to Eriksen, ethnicity entails both commonalities and differences between categories of people as well as both complementarization and



dichotomization. He also explained the ethnic relation and ethnic identities that the ideas were much helpful to understand the Phahari-Bengali relationship and their identity in the CHT.

Philip Gain, (2000) has edited some scholars' writings in his edited book *The Chittagong Hill Tracts: Life and Nature at Risk*. In this book Gain gives an overview of the geography, people, land, economy, forest and human rights condition in the CHT. He describes how incidents throughout the past half-century have changed the CHT to such a great extent that it no longer remains in its original shape. Most of the hills, once covered with thick forests, life denuded or covered with bushes and small trees. To many it is no more than a hill park. It is man who has caused enormous damage to this beautiful region. The Kaptai Lake and the polluted waters therein, the exotic species in the hills, the artificial villages of Bengalis, the shaved mountains and the military camps on them all tell the story of human interference which has broken the chain of nature and put life at risk. One can still be charmed by the spectacular scenic beauty of the Kaptai Lake and the mountain landscapes but this beauty cannot hide the catastrophe caused to the hill people. Raja Devasish Roy has presented a precise description of the unique legal and administrative system that has no parallel in other part of Bangladesh. In his writings many laws that apply to the rest of the country have no manner of application in the region, and conversely, there are many laws that apply only to the CHT. His article has helped the present study to understand clearly how the CHT is administered.

Amena Mohsin, a long time researcher on the CHT and has given a great contribution to this book, where she told how in the nation-state of Pakistan, the hill people were marginalized and remained alienated from the mainstream politics. In Bangladesh their efforts to establish constitutional safeguards- both peacefully and through arms struggle-have also failed. This is a reality full of agony and anger of the hill people. Hill Women of the CHT are frank, humorous and publicly visible in contrast to their Bengali counterparts. They contribute enormously to the building of their families and communities. Meghna Guhathakurta, a careful monitor of the CHT, tells the story of women's vulnerability and suffering. She mentioned that the ethnic women, despite their contribution to building communities, are much less fortunate in possessing

property. They are defenseless against various kinds of human rights abuse including rape. Proshanta Tripura makes his point that ‘development’ in the CHT has always meant dislocation, disruption and destruction of life and nature. It is time for the development against to understand the dynamics of culture and identity of the CHT people. His advise that attention to ‘indigenous knowledge systems’ is imperative for development of the hill people is worth heeding by the development agents.

One special feature of this book is use of photographs. There are not many books on the Chittagong Hill Tracts which contain images of the people and nature. Fascinating photographs of people and landscapes of the CHT that exist have been taken mostly by the foreign photographers. However, this book has provided basic information on the Chittagong Hill Tracts and stimulates discussion around article issues. The peace accord is a step forward for resolution of the situation, which had resulted in destruction and dislocation of life and nature. However, it will be a through struggle to reconstruct the CHT and the faith of the hill indigenous people. Besides, new threats to land and life are in the making due to internal and external factors. Overall is book has helped the present study to understand the life and nature of the CHT.

Prashanta Tripura (1992) raised some important issues. In his article entitled "The Colonial Foundation of Pahari Ethnicity" published from ‘*The Journal of Social Studies*’, University of Dhaka, he explained the notion of development of the hill people. In this regard, he raised some questions, such as the meaning of development to different individuals , groups, or institutions, the appropriate development approach needed for the people of the CHT and how and by whom these development projects to be planned and implemented. In the study he suggested the need of the ‘local’ people to involve in all steps of the development process undertaken by government, local NGOs to international funding agencies etc. Although this was important his study demands importance to know the notion of development, he did not give concentration on displacement as an affect of development.

Sadika Halim and Khairul Chowdhury (2016) have presented the land problem and human rights anatomy of the CHT in their article which was published from Jamkon Year Book 2015, by national human rights commission, Bangladesh. In this article

they built their approach to the land problem and the land conflicts on national and international human rights perspectives, in particular the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and the constitution of Bangladesh. Notwithstanding, they have followed the national and international human rights propositions and define the land problem in CHT as a problem of security of private ownership and tenancy rights of the hill peoples to their land within the territorial jurisdiction of Bangladesh. The authors has discussed the land problems in terms of the problem of ownership, land crisis, and land conflicts and organized their discussion around the political regimes of British, Pakistan and Bangladesh to help explain chronological history of the problem. They also argued that the land problem in CHT is primarily rooted in British colonial forest policies and the policies of control of the land by the state, shaped by the ecologies and economies of the region. They have pointed out that the British rule denied the hill peoples not only private property in land but also access to one fourth of land area of CHT as they were made reserved forests. Thus, the rights of the hill peoples over land in CHT were only to extend a land area known as USF which was in most part common property of the hill peoples for *Jhum* cultivation, and were formalized through the Regulation of 1900. However, as they said that the contemporary land conflicts are the direct results of counterinsurgency programs in CHT that went from 1976 to up until 1999, alienating both common land as well as individual land of the hill peoples for Bengali immigrants, business and the Forest Department. They have demonstrated that given the extent and the nature of land rights and ownership in CHT, the Land Dispute Settlement Commission can only partially address the land conflict. Thus, they strongly recommended a land reform commission in CHT to suggest policy on land ownership, land distribution, and land ceiling. Though their study was primarily based on archival and secondary sources but they were able to address the nature of land disputes and the customary land rights and practices of the hill peoples properly. Their arguments and logics on the CHT land problems have enormously helped to the present research to understand the land owner systems and causes of land disputes in the CHT.

S.M. Arif Mahmud (2015) has explored the dynamics of interrelationship among the different ethnic communities of the CHT in his Ph.D dissertation (unpublished) on *The Dynamics of interrelations among the Bengali, Chakma, Marma, and Tripura ethnic*

*communities of Chittagong Hill Tracts: Understanding the nature of ethnicity and identity.* The major concern of this research was to address the nature of ethnicity and identity of CHT people and this has been displayed through their three aspects: i) religious, ritual and cultural festivals, ii) political relations and, iii) economy and market sphere. Arif Mahmud has properly pointed out that the history of the settlement of the Bangalees in the study villages as well as in the CHT where he mentioned that the Bengalis are classified into two categories depending on their settlement pattern- naturally migrated (during British period) and settler Bengalis (after the independence of Bangladesh and brought by the Government through the armed forces agencies). Altogether, they have come mostly from the district of Feni, Noakhali, Comilla and Chittagong of Bangladesh. Historically, two factors that he has been identified for their settlement in the villages/paras (and also in the CHTs) – exchange of commercial materials, and development of Chittagong port and expansion of the city to facilitate the exchange of those commercial materials.

Nevertheless, Arif Mahmud has explained an important dimension that the religion and culture are the two most important aspects in understanding the ethnicity and identity of these communities where they consider religion to be an integral part of their lives and believe that for every option of their livelihood strategies religion offers them a suitable solution. All of them further consider religion as a way of peace, happiness, and a place for common interaction and the basis for social relations, interaction and building social solidarity. He also mentioned the Bengalis are also divided into two groups on the basis of religion that are Muslim and Hindus. Further he has defined the Muslim and Hindus of the CHT. Also he mentioned that the Muslim Bengalis have identified their religious beliefs, rituals and cultures responsible for several things while getting in continuous interactions with the Chakmas and Tripuras. The Hindu Bengalis indicate that in maintain social relations with the people of different ethnic communities they give preference to religious activities and these are related to their emotional attachment and cultural atmosphere. The analysis of globalization for culture and identity has been found significant for this study where he has mentioned that ‘globalization’ is an umbrella term for a complex series of economic, social, technological, cultural and political changes seen as increasing interdependency, integration and interaction among the people and

companies in disparate locations. Overall these findings of Arif Mahmud have given much input to the present study, especially to understand the ethnicity and identity of the CHT people.

By the literatures reviewed it is evidently clear that the recent developments dynamics in the CHT that the region is about to become a wide range of development activities. However, in the aftermath of the CHT Peace Accord, it is now seems to be the order of the day for the CHT people. Moreover, many discussions and analysis have been presented in different stages regarding land disputes, CHT Peace Accord, ethnic conflicts and conflict between military vs. Shanti Bahini and other relevant issues, where the present study has tried to understand the Bengali settlers within development dynamics of the CHT.

*State of Development in Chittagong Hill Tracts: a survey report prepared by Abul Barkat and others (2014).* The report has been submitted to the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility (CHTDF) UNDP, Bangladesh. As part of the initiatives, motivated towards assessing and tracking progress, attained through various interventions of CHTDF, Human Development Research Centre (HDRC) was commissioned to carry out the present household survey in the CHT. The survey has been designed as an operations research with pre and post test with control. For sampling purpose this study was divided the CHT into implementation area (20 Upazilas) and non-implementation area (5 Upazilas). In implementation area all unions were covered by CHTDF. However, within unions, there were number of paras/villages which were not covered by CHTDF. Thus, in implementation area, Paras/villages covered by CHTDF were treated as intervention Paras/villages, and non-covered (no direct intervention) Paras as control Paras. Households located in intervention, control and non-implementation paras/villages are respectively considered as intervention, control and non-implementation households. Since 2003, in partnership with the Government of Bangladesh including the Local Government as well as CHT communities and NGOs, UNDP through Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility (CHTDF) has supported the Promotion of Development and Confidence Building in CHT. The Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility (CHTDF) operates in all 3 districts of CHT, 20 upazilas (out of 25) and 3,257 paras/

villages (out of 6,087), prioritizing remote and underserved areas. CHTDF supports the CHT institutions to effectively manage and deliver services, and communities to take charge of their own development based on the principles of local participation and decentralized development.

The report's focuses includes: Policy Advocacy and Confidence Building, Capacity Development of CHT institutions, Community Empowerment, Economic Development, Natural Resource Management, Agriculture Extension and Food Security, Education, Health, Gender and Local Peace Building, and Knowledge Management. The CHTDF engages directly with 104,711 households out of 343,500 under 20 Upazilas of CHT through 3,257 Para/village Development Committees (PDC); 1,685 Para/village Nari/women Development Groups (PNDG), 300 CHTDF supported schools, 886 Community Health Service Workers (CHSW), 81 Community Skill Birth Attendants (CSBA): 80 Satellite Clinics, 1,750 Rice Banks, 690 Farmer Field School (FFS), 9 Market infrastructure facilities, and 25 Multi-purpose Community Centers.

The report has mentioned that the household size is around 5 across the study locations (intervention, control and non-implementation). The mean age of household members across the study locations is around 25 years. Around 22% of household members across the locations are involved in cultivation. About 46% population in intervention and control, and 43% in non-implementation areas are married. About 50% households in the intervention area have access to electricity (23% grid and 27% solar), 32% in the control (20% grid and 12% solar) and 34% non-implementation (8% grid and 26% solar) areas. About 85% of the households in intervention area have received benefits from the Para/ village Development Committees (PDC) supported by CHTDF, and 43% of the households reported that at least one female member of their family have engagement with Para/village Nari/women Development Group (PNDG) – women community-based organizations supported by CHTDF.

For the understanding of household's Income, Expenditure, Savings the report has mentioned that the indigenous/Phahari people depend more on agriculture is the major source of income and Bengalees depend more on business as major source of income. Annual net income of a household in intervention area is Tk. 101, 426, and Tk. 88,365

in control and Tk. 93,107 in non-implementation areas. The same for all households surveyed in 2008 was Tk. 85,050 (in constant price 2012). Annual household expenditure in intervention, control and non-implementation areas constitutes Tk. 89,742 and Tk. 80,459 and Tk. 91,088 respectively. In 2008, it was Tk. 80,434 (in constant price 2012). Irrespective of study location the share of food expenditure is substantially large against overall expenditure. In intervention area about 89% of all expenditure is made for food, in control and non-implementation it is 87% and 86%. An average household in intervention, control and non-implementation areas has spent yearly Tk. 2,608, Tk. 2,280 and Tk. 2,065 for meeting health expenses. The same in 2008 was Tk. 781 only (in constant price 2012). In intervention, control and non-implementation areas yearly expenditure on education per household has constituted Tk. 1,511, Tk. 1,338 and Tk. 1,256 respectively which was only Tk. 514 (in constant price 2012) in 2008. An average amount household savings in intervention, control and non-implementation areas reportedly are Tk. 22,549, Tk. 8,755 and Tk. 9,706 respectively. The same in 2008 was Tk. 4,575 (in constant price 2012). Large increase in saving in intervention area is attributable to CHTDF interventions. At present an average household in intervention areas outstanding credit amounting Tk. 28,189. In control and non-implementation areas the amount are Tk. 42,423 and Tk. 27,103 respectively. During survey 2008, the same was Tk. 8,597. The increase in outstanding credit amount is a plausible reflection of increased business activities especially among the Bangalees.

This report has also illustrated that there about 56% households in intervention area reportedly have access to food round the year in 2012, while in control the same is 50% and in non-implementation 54%. In 2008, about 36% of all households had reported having access to food round the year. The access to food in CHT has increased in general. Number of food deficiency months and days in intervention areas decreased substantially. In intervention area, average number of food deficit months in 2012 is 1.2, while the same in control and non-implementation areas respectively are 1.3 and 2.7 months. The same during 2008 was 2.7 months. In intervention area, overall literacy rate among the age group of 7 years and above is 58%. The same in control and non-implementation area is 50% and 53% respectively. In intervention area, the literacy rate among 15 years and above population is 57% while the same in control and non-implementation area is 49% and 52%. A 95%

household in intervention, 90% in control and 97% in non-implementation live within 1hour travel to their children's school. The survey findings revealed that during 2010-2012, thereafter refers to as contemporary period, households were exposed to some sort of violence even after the signing of the CHT Accord. Post-conflict society is suffering from risk of resumption of conflict where this region is not an exception. In comparison with pre-CHT accord period, it is noticed that the incidence of violence in CHT has reduced significantly during the contemporary period. To get an overall picture of CHT in terms of various selected indicators this baseline survey report is an unprecedented study.



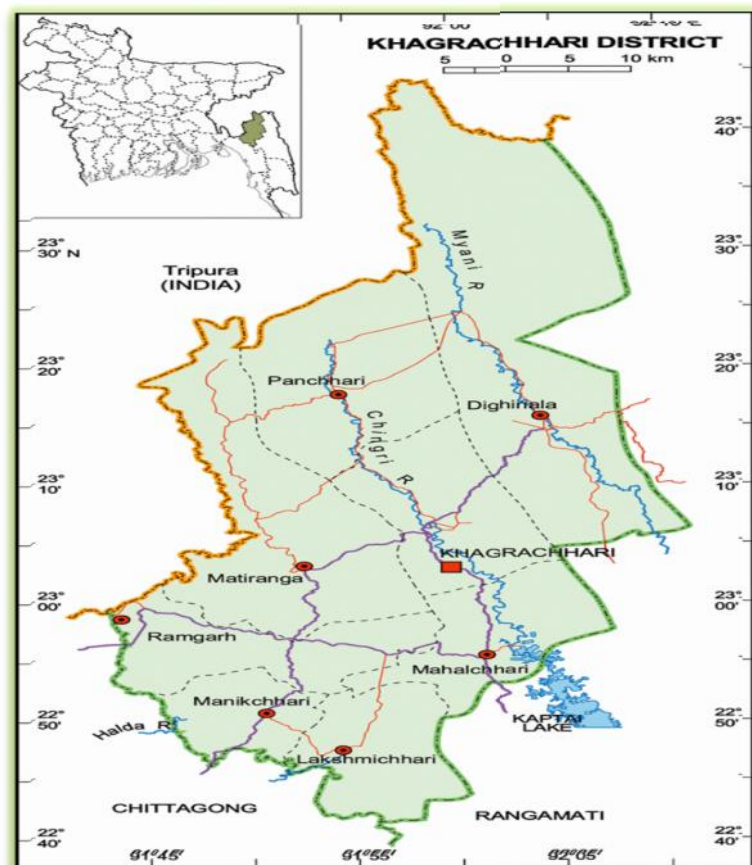
## **CHAPTER- 3: Bengalis Settlement and Aftermath**

- 3.1 Profiling of the Study Area**
- 3.2 The Bengali Settlement in the CHT and Aftermath**
- 3.3 Why CHT Settlements were Popular to the Bengalis**
- 3.4 State of Government given Facilities for Bengali settlers**
- 3.5 Bengali settler's Perceptions about Returning their Previous District**
- 3.6 Status of Overall Condition of Bengal settlers in CHT**
- 3.7 Phaharis Settlement in the CHT**
- 3.8 Bengalis Settlement in the CHT**
- 3.9 Bengali Settlement and Minority Groups Reaction**
- 3.10 Bengali Settlers' Perception towards Minority Groups**
- 3.11 The Government Efforts to Integrate the Ethnic communities of the CHT**

### 3.1 Profiling of the Study Areas

The present study has been conducted in Khagrachari Sadar and Panchhari Upazila of Khagrachari District. Before discussing the study people and study areas it is needed to discuss the district details for better understanding of CHT people and other relevant issues. Khagrachari was formerly a sub-division of Chittagong Hill Tracts Zila. It was previously the headquarters of Ramgarh sub-division and became a sub-division in 1970 and was upgraded to a zila in 1983. Nothing is definitely known about the origin of the

zila name. It is said that the existing zila headquarters is situated on the bank of the *Chengi* stream (chhara) which was full of Catkin plants means ‘Khagra’ in local languages. This might be the origin of the zila name as Khagrachari. It is bounded on the north by India, on the east by Rangamati zila, on the south by Chittagong and Rangamati zilas and on the west by India and Chittagong zila.



**Map-1: Khagrachari District Map**

It lies between 22°38 and 23°44 north latitudes and between 91°44 and 92°11 east longitudes. The total area of the zila is 2,749.16 sq. km (1061.00 sq. miles) of which 2242.44 sq. km is under forest. It is a hilly zila (BBS 2011; KHDC, Khagrachari, July, 2011).

#### Khagrachari: Temperature and Rainfall

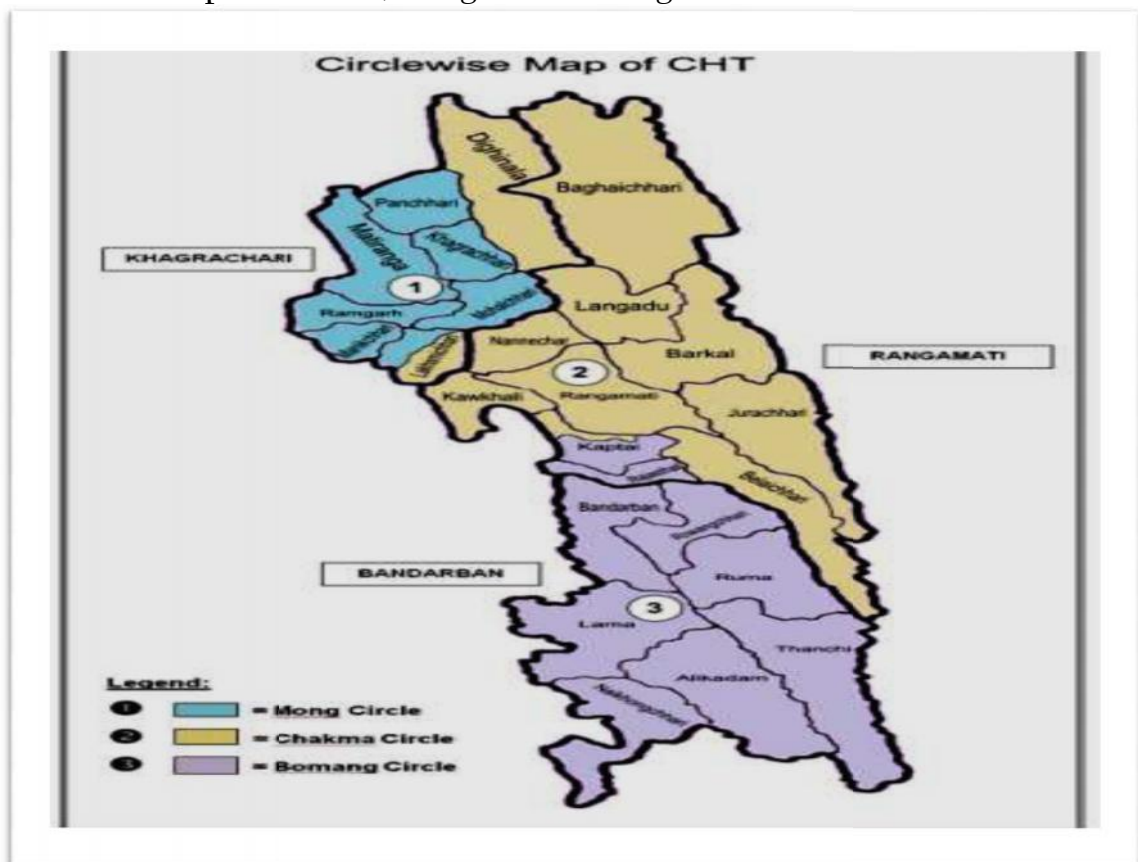
Annual average temperature- maximum 34.6°C, minimum 13°C and rainfall is 3031 mm. The hills of this region are composed of folded sedimentary rocks. Notable hill

ranges Alu Tila, Bhanga Mura (416.66 m), Matai Pukhri (213.36m), Matai Lakho (274.32 m). The main rivers of the Khagrachari district are Chingri, Maini, Feni and Halda; lake Mataipukhri (Debotar pukur). Khagrachhari (Town) was established in 1860 by Remrochai Chowdhury (BBS 2011; KHDC, Khagrachari, July, 2011).

### The Circle, Heritage and Relics

The present study has been conducted in the Khagrachari under the Mong Circle (see the map 2). The Chittagong Hill Tracts was under the reign of the Tripura State, the Arakans and the Sultans in different times before it came under the control of the British East India Company in 1760. Although the British got the authority of the Chittagong Hill Tracts in 1760, they had no authority besides collecting nominal taxes. Until 1860, two kings or chiefs governed the internal administration of this region. In 1860, another 'circle' was formed in present Khagrachhari zila, inhabited by the Tripura population. The chief or the Raja of this circle was selected from the minority Marma population.

Map-2: Chakma, Mong and Bohmong Circles of the CHT



Source: Barua, B.P. 2001.

The 'circle' was named after the Tripura dialect the 'Mun Circle', but later, the 'Mun dialect', was changed and renamed as 'Mong Circle'. In 1900 the British offered independent status to Chittagong Hill Tracts recognizing the culture and language of the hill tracts population. But during the Pakistan period this status was abolished, which created anger among the hill population. Moreover, due to the construction of the Kaptai dam in 1960, thousands of people became homeless and refugee.

Table-3.1: Khagrachari Zila Information at a Glance

<b>Broad classification of area 2011</b>					
	Total area	Land area	Reserve forest	River area	
	2749.11	2056.73	651.85	40.53	
<b>Number of municipality, union, mauza, mahalla and village 2011</b>					
Municipality	Ward (PSA)	Mahalla	Union	Mauza	Village/P ara
3	27	155	38	120	1706
<b>Number of household, population density and Literacy rate 2011</b>					
Household	Sex ratio (M/F)	Average size of household	Density per sq. km.	Literacy (%) 2011	Literacy (%) 2001
133792	105:95	4.54	223	46.1	41.8
<b>Population by religion 2011</b>					
Muslim	Hindu	Buddhist	Christian	Other	Total
274258	103195	231309	4070	1085	613917
<b>Tribal population 2011 (main ethnic group)</b>					
Total Population	Total Household	Chakma	Marma	Tripura	Other
316987	70460	161960	67011	86196	1820
<b>Number of religious institution 2011</b>					
Mosque	Eid-Gah	Temple (Mandir)	Church (Girza)	Pagoda	Others
415	46	178	29	347	30

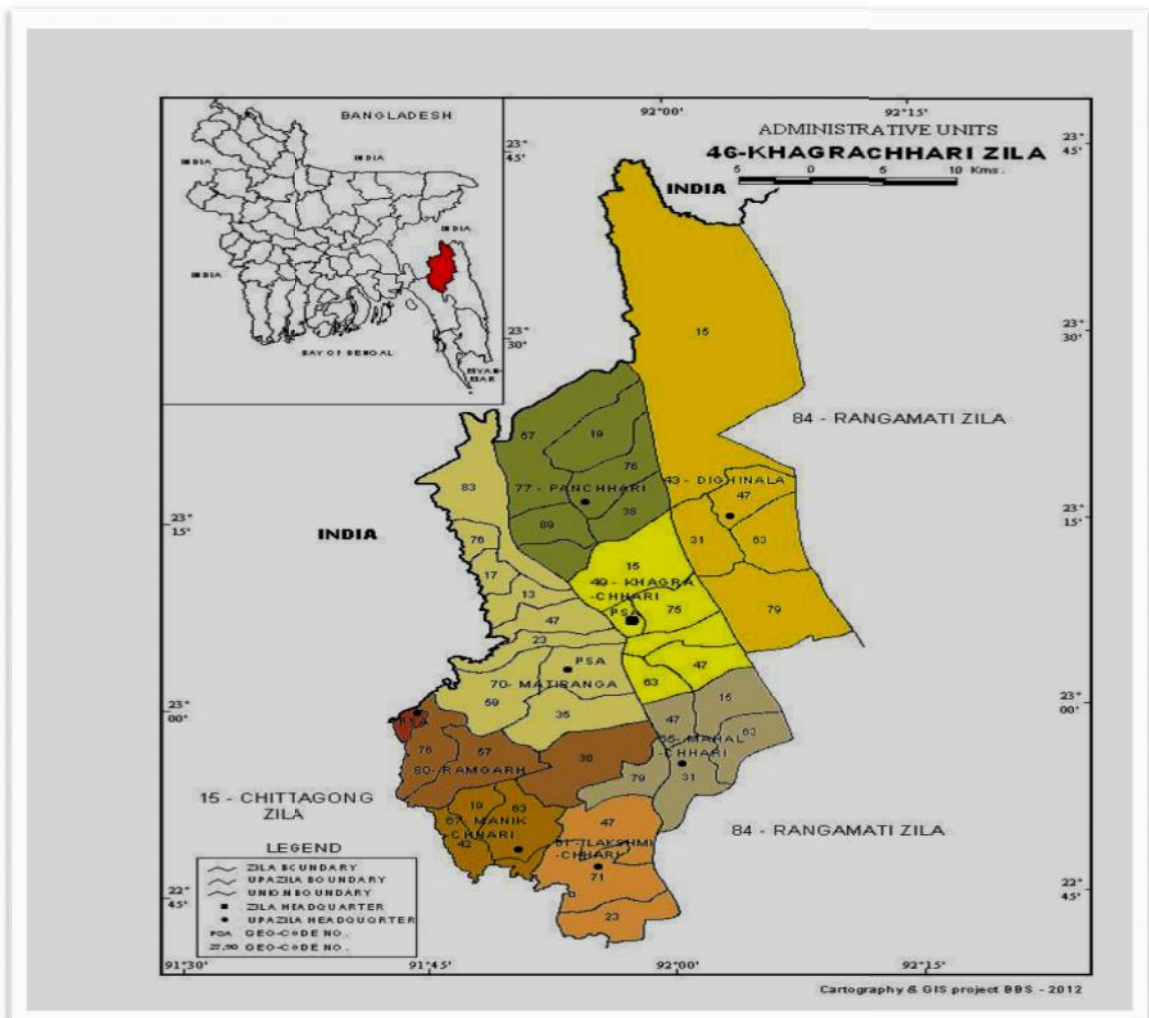
Source: District Statistics 2011; Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS); Statistics and Informatics Division (SID); Ministry of Planning, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

Main Crops of the Khagrachari are Paddy, corn, ginger, turmeric, pineapple. Extinct or nearly extinct crops Maiguru, maibidi, sanki, manoful, chikon kuichari and maime. *Main Fruits:* Papaya, pineapple, jackfruit, banana, mango, batabi labu (shaddock), litchi, coconut, lemon. There are some traditional transports in the Khagrachari like elephant (extinct), horse carriage (nearly extinct) and boat. Manufactories Rubber processing plant, rice mill, flour mill, sawmill, etc.

### Administrative Units of Khagrachari

Khagrachari subdivision was turned into a Zila in 1983. The Zila of Chittagong Hill Tracts was established in 1860 under the 'Frontier Tribes Act 22 of 1860'. Following the Zila of Chittagong Hill Tract Regulation Act the Chittagong Hill Tract was divided into three subdivisions (included Khagrachari) in 1900.

Map-3: Administrative Units of the Khagrachari



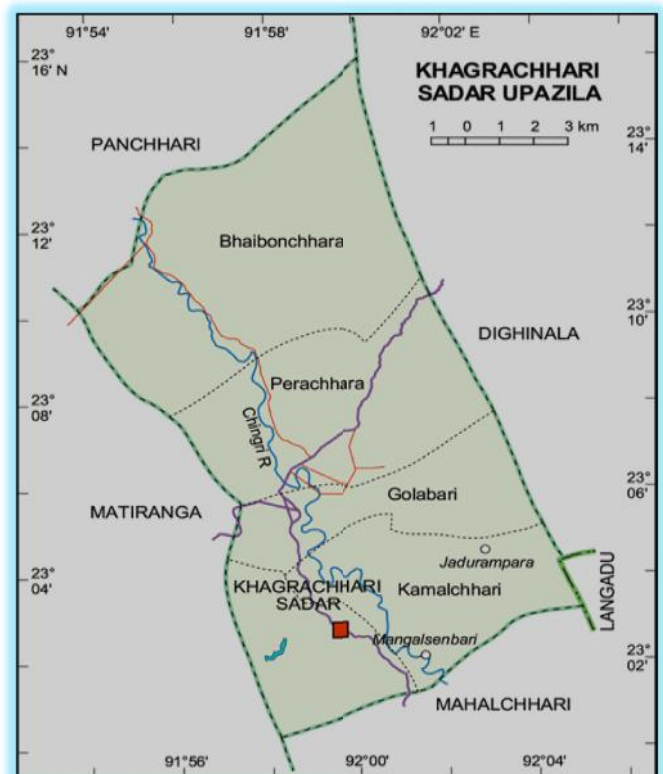
The Khagrachari Local Government Legislative Council was formed in 1989 (in accordance with the Khagrachari Hill Zilas Council, Act 20), which, on the basis of the historic 'Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord', was turned into Khagrachari Hill Zila Council on 2 December, 1997. Khagrachari Hill District consists of 8 Upazilas, 36 unions, 121 Mouzas and three Pourashavas (municipalities). The Upazillas are Khagrachari Sadar, Panchari, Dighinala, Mahalchari, Matiranga, Ramgrh, Manikchari and Laxmichari. Every Upazila has one police station. There are 121 Headmans (Head of Mouza) to look after 121 mouzas. Out of 121 mouzas 88 mouzas under the Mong circle and rest of mouzas are under the Chakma circle.

### Language, Culture and Religion of Khagrachari

Phahari and Bengali people are living here harmoniously together with their own life style. The Phahari people are quite separate from the Bengali people in respect of race, religion, culture & language. Most of the Phahari people are Buddhist by religion and the Bengali people are mostly Muslim and some other are Hindus, Buddhist and Christian also. Chakma & Marma communities have their own alphabet. Chakma language is widely used in this district for conversation among the Phahari people. Chittagonian local dialect is most useful dimension in day-to-day life in case of tribal people living here. Most of the Phahari people are also habituated in speaking Bengali. Each of the Phahari has their own culture & characteristics, which reflects their dress, customs & day-to-day Works. The people of Khagrachari are mostly depends on agriculture. A large portion of Phahari people are practicing traditional “Jhum Cultivation”. The rests are engaged in normal agriculture, business, fishing, cattle rearing, poultry, farming and other activities related with timber collection, transportation & processing. At present, a significant number of people are engaged to different services of GOB & NGOs. (Sources: Banglapedia; BBS 2011; KHDC, Khagrachari, July, 2011)

### Brief Overview of Khagrachari Sadar Upazial

Khagrachari Sadar Upazila came into existence in 1968 as Thana. Nothing is definitely known about the origin of the Upazila name. There is a stream meaning chhari flowing through the outskirts of the Khagrachari town. It is said that in the past a huge quantity of Catkin meaning Khagra used to grow in both the sides of the stream. In consequence of that the area became known as Khagrachari. The Zila headquarters is located here. The Upazila occupies an area of 297.91





sq. km. including 277.86 sq.km forest areas. It is located between 23°00' and 23°21' north latitudes and between 91°55' and 92°00' east longitudes. The Upazila is bounded on the north by Panchari Upazila, on the east by Dighinala and Langadu Upazilas of Rangamati Zila, on the south by Mahalchhari Upazila and on the west by Matiranga Upazila.

### **Descriptions of the Study People and Paras (Villages)**

The present study has been conducted in two Upazilas namely, Khagrachari sadar and Panchari under the Khagrachari district. There are eight Paras were observed during the fieldwork that the 4 (four) Paras for the Phaharis like- Upali Para and Narankhaia for Chakma community, Shaat Vaiya Para for Marma, and Haduk Para for the Tripura community under the sadar Upazil. At the same time, another 4 (Four) Paras for the both types of Bengalis that was Shalbon Gucha Gram, & Comilla Tila Gucha Gram in sadar Upazila area and Ultha Chari & Zia Nagar of Panchari upazila areas. It has to be mentioned here that, some Bengali's interview has taken from outside of the above mentioned Paras but not outside of the Khagrachari Sadar and Panchari upazila areas. The study people and Para description are mentioned below.

### **Shalban Gucha Gram (Cluster Village)**

The Shalban is situated a short distance from Sadar Upazila center point. It is only 10 to 15 minutes journey by rickshaw or easy bike from Upazila Sadar to Shalban. There are above 1600 (one thousand and six hundred) households are living within the small area. More than six thousand Bengalis (both Adi Bengali and Bengali settler) are living with minimal basic amenities. Shalban is a composite residential area that there are living both Bengalis and Bengali settler. It was constructed by the military during 1987-1997 for the Bengali settlers. Initially only 427 families were settled there all of them are ration card holder and they also known as *Hazi Camp Cardholders*<sup>22</sup>. Later then Shalban would be as a safe guarder place for the terrified thousands of Bengali settler households and now it's increased to sixteen hundred households. All the Bengalis were not *Ration Card* holder, those who were settled from different troubled areas afterwards they will not get ration card and only 427 ration cards holders are

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<sup>22</sup> The Haji camp is a reception centre where the Bengali settlers were gathered for being settled in the CHT. In the Government Secret Memos the Haji camp referred as a pilgrimage camp which was situated in the Chittagong District. For more see the Annexure-V of this thesis.

living there with others. There are no high raised building were observed inside Para even though it is situated beside the city centre. Most of the Bengali settler houses are made with mud or thatched and some of them are made with bricks and tin shed. Inside environment of the Para were very suffocating's with unhygienic like slum area. There has three mosques, one primary school inside the Para but no high school or club was available observed during the fieldwork. One of the informants Forid Uddin (48), who has been living there since 1983 informed that, once Shalban was declared as slum for getting a 'UNDP project for slum development' by this process one bricks road was constructed, notwithstanding there has no development project was taken for the Bengali settlers.

### **Comilla Tila Gucha Gram (Cluster Village)**

Comilla Tila is situated under the Sadar Upazila of Khagrachari district. The Para is also near the city area. There are about 600 (Six hundred) households living in the village/Para. More or less 3-4 thousand people were living there. More than 57 Bengali settler households came to settle from the *Aambagan*<sup>23</sup> area during the insurgency period. There are 157 ration card holder households living with 35 kg of rice and 49 kg of wheat per month basis. Some of them informed that they were living in the *Aambagan* area but on 24<sup>th</sup> April of 1988 at 10pm some Shanti Bhahini (SB) armed cadres attacked their Para and set fire on their houses. Many people were killed by the SB, and then they left the Para and came to settled in Comilla Tila. Bengali settler Abdul Motalib (65) informed that he had lost his 4 family members including wife and children and he was also bulleted at that night. Now he lives in the Comilla Tila (for details see the Motalib's 'Case Study' in this thesis). There are one Govt. primary school beside the Para and one high school which is 3 KM far from the Para. Comilla Tila is comparatively better position than other settlers Para.

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<sup>23</sup> Aambagan is a Para which is situated beside the Comilla tila Gucha Gram where the Bengali settlers were settled by the Government initiative but during the insurgency period almost all the households left from that Para and resettled in the Comilla tila Gucha Gram.

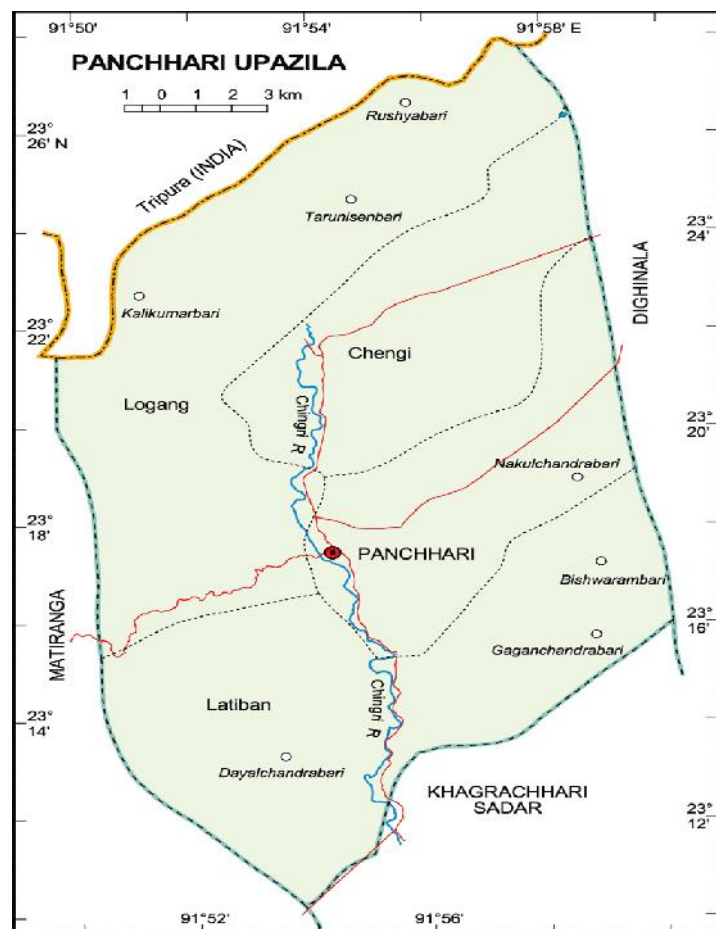


### Ultachari and ZIA Nagar Gucha Gram (Panchari Upazila)

Ultachari and ZIA Naga Gucha Gram are located in the Panchari Upazila of Khagrachari District. These two Paras are situated 5 to 6 kilometers far from the Panchari Upazila. There are 417 (four hundred seventeen) Bengali settler households were living in the Zia Nagar Gucha Gram and 400 (four hundred) households living in the Ultachari Gucha Gram (Cluster Village). Overall situation of the Paras were dilapidated and most of the households were unprivileged within the Paras. Road communication system was not good enough. No metal road were observed inside the Paras and only one bricks road going through from one to another side of the Para. Their housing conditions were very poor, 60-70 percent of the total houses were made with mud, rest of these made with thatched and tin shed. Most of the people were unemployed and fully dependent on Government provided ration. Maximum households owned only 23 decimal lands however they had 3 and 5 hundred decimal land's paper which they have got from the Government. All the households came to resettle from different areas of Panchari Upazila during the insurgency period.

### Brief Overview of Panchari Sadar Upazila:

Panchhari upazila came into existence on the 1st October, 1976 as Thana. Nothing is definitely known about the origin of the upazila name. There is a general belief that in the past a huge quantity of betel-leaf meaning pan was grown by the side of a canal meaning chhari in this locality.



Map-5: Panchari Upazila

The upazila name might have been originated from these two wards pan and chhari. The upazila occupies an area of 334.10 sq. km. including 305.77 sq. km. forest area. It is located between 23°12' and 23°28' north latitudes and between 91°50' and 92°00' east longitudes. The upazila is bounded on the north by India, on the east by Dighinala and Khagrachhari upazilas, on the south by Matiranga upazila on the west. Chingri River, Golakpratima Khal and Bhagaban Tila are also notable.

Table-3.2: Panchari Upazila: Census Results of 2001 and 2011 (at a Glance)

Items	Khagrachari Zila		Panchari Upazila	
	2011	2001	2011	2001
<b>Population (Enumerated)</b>				
Both Sex	6,13,917	5,25,664	62,198	64,510
Male	3,13,793	2,77,614	31,352	33,863
Female	3,00,124	2,48,050	30,846	30,647
Annual growth rate	1.54	4.38	-0.36	9.38
<b>Sex Ratio</b>				
Total	105	112	102	111
<b>Households (HH)</b>				
Total	1,33,792	1,09,190	14,154	13,489
<b>Average HH Size</b>				
Total	4.53	4.78	4.36	4.75
Area sq. km	2749.16	2699.55	334.10	334.11
Area sq. mile	1061.45	1042.3	129.00	129.00
Density per sq. km	223	195	186	193
Density per sq. mile	578	504	482	500
<b>Literacy (%)</b>				
Both Sex	46.1	41.8	42.3	34.6
Male	51.9	49.9	48.7	42.8
Female	40.1	32.7	35.7	25.4
<b>Population (Adjusted)</b>				
Both Sex	6,38,967	5,48,953	64,623	67,244
Male	3,26,621	2,89,930	32,575	35,294
Female	3,12,346	2,59,023	32,048	31,950
<b>Geographic Unit</b>				
Upazila/Thana	8	8	-	-
Union	38	34	5	4
Mauza	120	120	7	7
Village	1,702	1581	220	219
Paurashava	3	1	0	0
Paura Ward	27	9	0	0
Paura Mahalla	154	61	0	0

Source: District Statistics 2011; Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS); Statistics and Informatics Division (SID); Ministry of Planning, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

### Upali Para and Narankhaia for Chakma Community

The present study has observed the Chakma community in the *Upali Para* and *Narankhaia Para* that are situated under the *Sadar Upazila* of *Khagrachari District*. These Paras were mostly Chakma inhabited area. The *Upali Pare* is under the *Ward no: 1* and *Narankhaia Ward no: 2* of *Khagrachari Pourashaba*. There are 45 households in *Upali Para* and 60-65 households in *Narankhaia Para* living for long periods of time. The *Upali Para* and *Narankhaia Para* are the well organized Paras where most of the basic amenities were present. People of these Paras are also comparatively educated. More than that Chakma community is advanced in all aspects than other ethnic communities in the CHT. All the roads including sub roads were metal inside the Paras. Most of the houses were building and electricity connected. Moreover, local administrative powers in the CHT were mostly under the controlling of Chakma community.

However, Chakma is the largest Phahari group among the ethnic groups in the CHT. The Chakmas are living in streams or valley side tribe, engaging in plough culture besides *jhum* and occasional fruit gardening. According to the census report of 2011 the total Chakma population is 444,748 in the CHT. The Chakma have an ancient alphabet and written literature of songs, folk tales etc. The religion of Chakmas is Buddhism. At the top of the hierarchy, a *raja* (king) was created in the 17th century, achieving ascendancy of traditional kinship groups. During the Mughal period the posts of *debaing* and *cheg* were abolished and in their place the post of *dewan* was created. The *dewan* used to perform many civil and administrative duties in addition to collection of revenue. Petty cases and disputes among their own people were also settled by them.

Figure6: Social Structure among the Chakma Tribe

Seventeenth century	Mughal period (1737-58)	Rani Khalindi's reign (1838-73)	From 1900
Raja	Raja	Raja	Raja
Debaing	Dewan	Talukder	Headman
Khiza	Khiza	Khiza	Karbari

Source: Saguta Chakma 1993, *Bangladesher Upajati*, p. 36.

During her reign Rani Khalindi created the post of *talukder*<sup>24</sup> in place of *dewan*. In 1990 headman become the chief of mouza (revenue village) and new post of *karbari*

<sup>24</sup> The post refers to the proprietor of the taluk.

was created as the chief of Para/village. The post of *khiza* was abolished<sup>25</sup>. Despite their adherence to the Theravada form of Buddhism practiced in Arakan and other parts of Myanmar, the Chakma observe many tribal rites and rituals, especially during birth, marriage and creation. They worship as many as 14 gods and goddesses. They have 28 religious books, mostly written in Pali language. But one of the most important religious books of Pali and Burmese languages known as *Agartari* is written in Chakma alphabet<sup>26</sup>. Although the Chakmas have been influenced by the culture of relativity advanced Bengali society more than any other tribal groups, they retain a distinct identity which is reflected in their dress, custom and language. It may be mentioned that Chakmas and Tanchangyas have Bengali Hindu and Buddhist personal names. Despite the agrarian and self-reliant society of the Chakmas, they began to take modern education when it was first introduced in the hills due mainly to the breakdown of economic system based on Jhum cultivation. They are now more educated and culturally advanced. There are a good number of graduates and postgraduates both in general and technical education with some foreign degree holders among the people of this tribe. The majority are living in the Chakma Circle, roughly corresponding to Rangamati District. In female education too, this ethnic community is fast advancing and there are many graduates and post graduates among women<sup>27</sup>. The majority are living in the Chakma Circle, roughly corresponding to Rangamati District. During the field study it was observed that the emergence of middle class containing different professional groups like doctors, engineers, teachers, and civil servants. Some of them are holding responsible positions in the government service and in the public agencies also. Moreover, after the CHT Peace Accord most of the higher post positions went to the Phaharis, especially under the control of Chakma community. As a result, it makes again a stratified society compared to the other ethnic groups as well a distinct socio-economic condition in CHT.

### **Shaat Vaiya Para for Marma Community**

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<sup>25</sup> For more see Saguta Chakma, *bangladesher Upajati [Tribals of Bangladesh]*, Dhaka: Bangla Academy, 1985, p. 35

<sup>26</sup> M.R. Shelley, ed., *The Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh: The Untold Story* (Dhaka: Centre for Development Research, 1992)

<sup>27</sup> For more see B.P. Barua, 2001, *Ethnicity and National Integration in Bangladesh: A Study of the Chittagong Hill Tracts*. New Delhi: HAR-ANAND Publications Pvt. Ltd.

The Marma community was observed in the Shaat Vhaiya Para under the sadar upazila of Khagrachari District. The Para is situated near the sadar centre point and it would be 3 kilometers away from zila sadar. During the fieldwork, I started journey by auto rickshaw with my local guide Suya Ching Ow Marma. Approximately after 15 munities we reached the Para. The Para was below standard compared to Upali Para (Chakma Para) and Haduk Para (Tripura Para) but not less standard than Bengali settler's Paras. There are about 320 households with mostly 15 to 16 hundred people living in the Para. The Marma comprises the second largest tribal group in the CHT. According to National Census, 2011, there are about 210,000 Marma people living in the CHT. Religiously they believed in Buddhism influenced by animism. They were living in streamside, or valley tribe engaging in plough culture besides *jhum* and occasional fruit gardening. They are found in all districts of the CHT, but the majority live in the Mong and Bohmong Circles, roughly corresponding to Khagrachari and Bandarban Districts. There are two major Marma groups, those under the Mong Circle under the Mong raja residing in the northern portion of Khagrachari District whose residence is in Manikchari. The southern group's Bohmong chief resides in Bandarban. These rajas were established as tax collectors for the Mughal, East India Company and British administrations. Originating from Myanmar, the Marmas continue to regard Myanmar as the center of their cultural life, with children often learning the Arakanese language<sup>28</sup>. However, there is an emerging middle class also observed.

The Marmas popularly known as *Meghas*, are the second major Phahari group of CHT. They are of the Tibeto-Burman descent belonging to the Mongoloid group. The origin of the word 'Magh' is controversial. However, the Marmas migrated to CHT in two waves. First group included about 33,000 Marmas who settled in the eastern side of the river Sangu in 1620 from Hanthawadee via Arakan in Myanmar. Bessaignet (1958) casts doubts on the validity of this theory because the language of the Hanthawadee is not known to these Marmas. The second group included refugees who were driven out of Arakan by the Burmese invasion in 1782-1784. They entered the region by following and crossing the Matamuhuri valley and settled on the plains around Cox's Bazar and during 1787-1800 moved northward to Sitakund. Finally in

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<sup>28</sup> For more see B.P. Barua, 2001, p. 34-36; HDRC 2009.

1826, they left the plain for their present homes in CHT (Ishaq, 1971; Rafi and Chowdhury, 2001)<sup>29</sup>.

#### Haduk Para for Tripura Community

The study has observed the Tripura community in the Haduk Para situated near the upazila sadar of Khagrachari. Bengali settler's Para '*Shalban Gucha Gram*' and *Haduk Para* are much close to each other Paras. There are 84 households with almost 400 Tripura people living in the Haduk Para. The Haduk Para is more organized than Shaat Vaiya Para where the Tripura people are living. Tripura is the third major tribal group in the CHT. Religiously they are the believers of Hindu Christianity. They were also living in the streamside or valley tribe engaging in plough culture besides *jhum* and occasional fruit gardening.

The name Tripura or Tipra has been originated from the compound word Tui means 'Water' and pra means 'junction' or 'confluence.' Together Tripura means the people who use to live in the confluence of rivers. In ancient times, the mountainous areas of Hill Tripuras were surrounded with water and the people who ruled over the area were called *Tuipara* or ruler of water, including their place of residence. This word *Tuipara* gradually changed into *Tipra* (later Tripura)<sup>30</sup>. The people of Tripura living in the CHT seem to have lineage with the people of the some tribe in the Tripura state of India. It is said that at various times the areas of the ancient state of Tripura gained from the conquest and possession reaching in highest during the sixteenth century which carried armies from *Sundarban* in the west to Myanmar in the east and *Kampur* in the north to the Bay of Bengal in the south. For a pretty long time (1512-87) Chittagong including the CHT was under the occupation of the Tripura kings. Later, however, the Tripura kings were defeated by the more powerful Arakanese. Their territory shrank to the present Tripura state. Though the Tripura kings had to leave this area, the Tripura populace did not leave this place due to the availability of plenty jhumming area here and present Tripuras of the CHT are the descendents of those people<sup>31</sup>. Tripuras profess a form of Hinduism and observe many Hindu rites and

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<sup>29</sup> Ishaq, Mohammad, ed. 1971, Bangladesh District Gazetteers: Chittagong Hill Tracts. Dhaka: Bangladesh Government Press; Rafi, M., Chowdhury, A. Mushtaque R 2001, Counting the Hill: Assessing development in Chittagong Hill Tracts, p. 22, Dhaka: The University Press Limited.

<sup>30</sup> For more see B. P. Barua, 2001, p. 43

<sup>31</sup> For more see *ibid.*, pp. 36-37; B. P. Barua 2001, p. 44

ceremonies as well as animistic rites. They claim caste Hindu status and have personal names of Bengali Hindu origin. The study has observed that, there is an emerging middle class of the Tripura. Three Tripura sub tribes are the Murung, Uchai and Riang, who are sometimes classified as separate tribes. Tripuras have mostly settled in the northern region of the Mong circle (Khagrachhari District) but have scattered settlements in the Chakma and Bohmong Circles. Murungs live mainly in the hills along the Sangu and Matamuhuri Valleys in the Bandarban District. Uchais live in Bandarban District and some have converted to Christianity or Buddhism. Rings are found in the Barkal thana of Rangamati District<sup>32</sup>. However, the Tripura men wear dhutis, shirt and turbans called khroksha. The women wear rinais (home-woven shirts), rishas (breast clothes), blouses and head dress almost like the Chakma women. The Tripuras speak a language of the *Bodo* group of the Tibeto-Burman family. It has no written character. Some of them also speak and write in Bengali. The Tripuras have a treasure of various legends, rhymes, fairy tales, folk tales and ballads<sup>33</sup>.

In the light of the above statements, it can be said that the CHT had been inhabited by the Phaharis since the remote past. It is claimed that they are 'sons of the soil' as nobody lived in the region before them<sup>34</sup>. Physical illusion over centuries and socio-cultural exclusiveness of the Phaharis developed a mindset in them which militates against any flow of non-Phaharis into the region.

### **3.2 The Bengalis (Settler) Settlement in the CHT and Aftermath**

Inadequacy of resources and predominantly agrarian country ownership of land is associated with the power structure of the community.

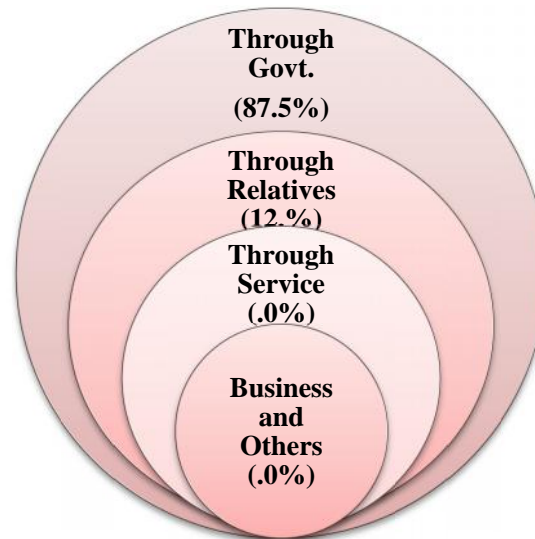
Figure-7: Process of Bengali Settlers Migration to the Chittagong Hill Tracts

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<sup>32</sup> For more read see B. P. Barua 2001, p. 45

<sup>33</sup> For more read see B. P. Barua 2001, p. 46

<sup>34</sup> Tanchanga, Sree Birkumar 1997, Parbatya Chattogram Sharbopratham Janabashati Kakhan Whoechilo. Shangu: Upojatio Gobeshona Patrica; Rafi and Chowdhury, 2001, p. 24



Source: Fieldwork data 2017

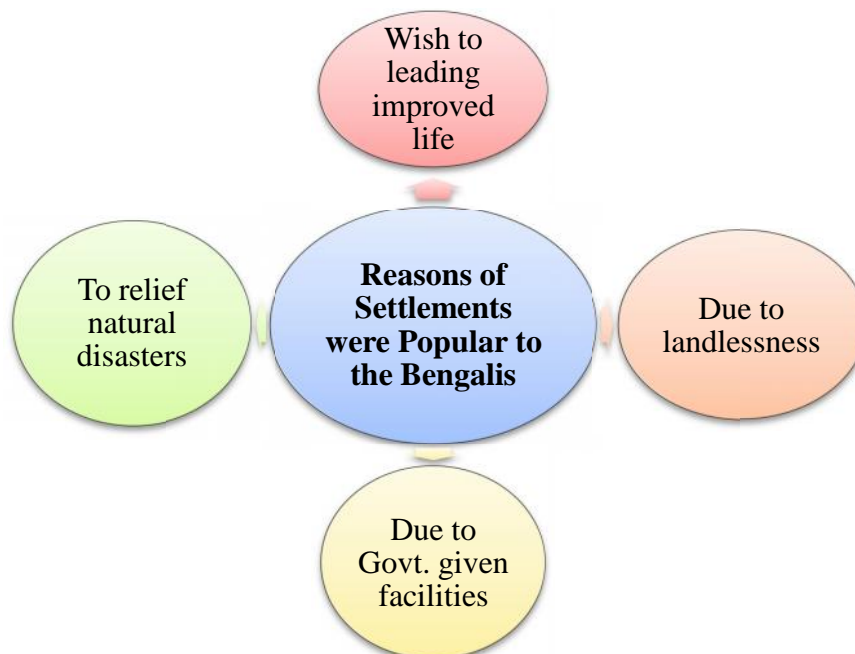
It is seemed in the CHT that the Minority Groups have been alienated from their land through a state sponsored project of settlement of Bengalis into the hills. The Bengalis are the people who had internally migrated to the hills in a natural way in search of jobs, or as farmers and traders. This migration, initiated from the pre colonial period continued after the independence in 1947. There is no record of ethnic violence between the *Phahari* and the other hill people. The figure no. 7 illustrates the process of Bengali settlers settled in the Chittagong hill tracts. The figure veidently shows almost all the Bengali settlers were settled in the CHT by the Government policy and sponsorship. More then 87 percent Bengali settler households were settled by governments in different years. Among them twelve percent households informed that, they were settled in the CHT by the relatives whom were previously settled by the government in 1979. No settlers were found who settled in the CHT through service or business. Some Bengali settler households who came to the CHT by relatives said, when they were informed by their relatives that, there had been vast vacant *Khas* land (Government own land) in the CHT and it was a huge opportunities for living there. They said, then we did not delay for Government second scheme settlement, we came to CHT and started living with our relatives. But in that time we did not know fire pits are wating for us in the CHT. They mentioned, after some peaceful years ethnic insurgency between military and SB (*Shanti Bhahini*) started and we were in between their conflict. Then the military shifted them to Cluster Villages in order to rearrange Bengalis. They had to leave their houses and land which were allocated by the government.



### 3.3 Why CHT Settlements were Popular to the Bengalis?

The settlement was well-liked to the Bengalis. The Bengali settlers mentioned many reasons for why they agreed to be settled in the CHT. The settlements proved popular to Bengalis for obvious reasons. In Bangladesh out of its total population of eleven million people, 6.18 million rural land-poor households belong to the category of functionally landless (0.5-0.49 acre) and marginal (0.5-0.99 acre) farmers<sup>35</sup>. There is hardly any scope for poverty alleviation even though radical land reforms. The per-capita land today is 0.29 acres (Islam 1992: 47). In such a 'land hungry' situation the settlements were bound to be popular with the Bengalis.

Figure-8: Reasons of CHT Settlements were Popular to the Bengalis



It is posited here that the real motive of the government in making this move is to colonize the CHT by bringing about a demographic shift in the region (Ali 1993: 189). In terms of settlement the government point of views were different. The government arguments mentioned as below:

- a) Bangladesh is an over populated land. The population density in the plain in 1980 was 1400 persons per sq. mile. On the other hand vast tracts of the land in the CHT were lying empty;

<sup>35</sup> For more see Sobhan, Rahman ed, 1991, Report of the Task Force on Bangladesh Development Strategies for the 1990s. Dhaka: University Press Limited

- b) The people of the hills are averse to developmental activities, therefore it is important to settle the area with Bengalis for the sake of its development (Parliament Debates 1980: 2194-2196);
- c) Rule 34 of the CHT Manual is inconsistent with the constitution of Bangladesh. It violates Article 36 of the constitution which guarantees freedom of movement of citizen;
- d) Bengalis have been settle on *Khas* land i.e. government own land, so there has been no encroachment of private property.

The government claims that Bengalis have been settled on *Khas* lands (i.e. government owned land) are also subject to interpretation. Differences exist in the conception of *Khas* land between the hill people and the Bengali elite. What the government regards as *Khas* land is essentially the hill people traditional *jhum* land<sup>36</sup> and forest land<sup>37</sup>. For the hill people this land is common property, belonging to the community, kinship groups and even members of the spiritual world. The roots of the conflict between these contradictory notions lie in the British colonial period. The colonial state had declared all land in the CHT government property; the indigenous people were given tenancy rights. This, however, did not create any conflict as according to the hill people's notion of land ownership, individuals and individual families cannot own land; they only have the right to use it<sup>38</sup>. The government ignores this Phaharis view of *Khas* land, which is regarded by the hill people as a gross violation of their inalienable rights. However, Bengalis considered that settlement initiatives as a lucrative offer for them. During the fieldwork Bengali settlers mentioned several reasons why they agreed to be settled in the CHT. As they mentioned first, there was a serious land crisis where they lived in and at the same time they were landless poor in the plain land whereas huge vacant land set in place in the CHT. On the other hand, these Bengalis were the frequent victims of natural disasters (like- river erosions, flooding, droughty, and others) and they thought it lucrative to be rehabilitated in the CHT to lead a better life. Moreover, the government announced settlement programme for the poor and landless Bengalis to

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<sup>36</sup> What the government regards as *Khas* land, Phaharis claimed that land as traditional *Jhum* land or community land where they were practicing *jhum* cultivation from decades to decade with the permission of respective Headman.

<sup>37</sup> Forest land: it indicates the land which also the government owned reserved forest land.

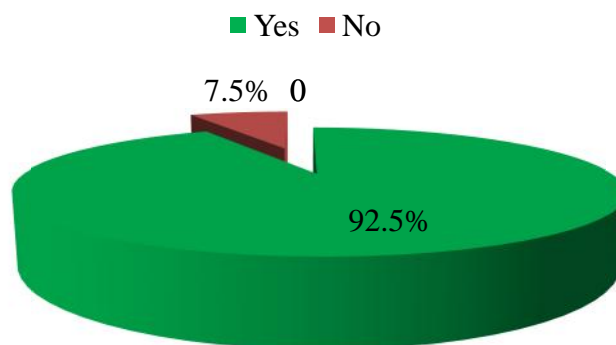
<sup>38</sup> For more see Amena Mohsin 1997. *The Politics of Nationalism: the case of the CHT, Bangladesh*. The University Press Limited, Dhaka, p 113.

the CHT. Then most of the Bengali settlers wished to lead improved life whereas had been going through economic hardship in the plain land.

### 3.4 State of Government given Facilities for the Bengali settlers

Most of the Bengali settlers informed that, when they were being settled in the CHT the government gave them land, cash money, help for house building, and rice & wheat as a ration. Almost about 93 percent Bengali settler households got land facilities and the same percent got cash money from the government. Respectively, almost half of the settler households reported that they have been entitled to help house building facilities and it was not more than 45 percent. The chart no 1 illustrates that the presence of getting allowance like rations from the government. Around all Bengali households are getting rations from the government. From the beginning of settlement (1983) Bengali settlers were enjoying this facilities. Now 92.5% Bengali settler households are getting ration and only 7.5% households are not getting.

Chart-1: Presence of Bengali settlers Getting Rations from the Government



Source: Fieldwork data 2017

Those who are not getting ration they mentioned, some ration cards are withheld by the administration because there had been some complain against the card holders; until complain not to be resolve their ration card must be suspended and not to getting any facilities. In Khagrachari district alone, where the majority of settler transit camps are located, there are 80 Bengali villages holding 26,262 family lies, all of whom continue to receive free rations<sup>39</sup>. There has been no card increase or decrease from the begening. Bengali settlers were getting 35 Kg. of rice and 49 Kg. of wheat every

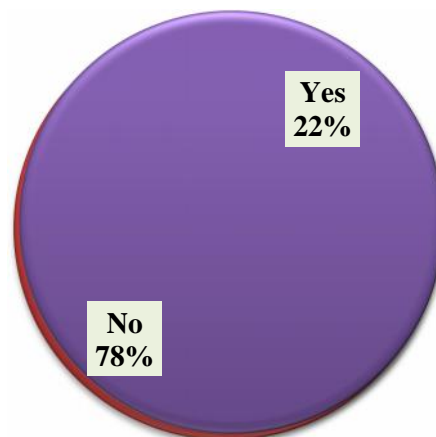
<sup>39</sup> For more see Thomas Feeny 2001. The fragility of peace in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Bangladesh. Pp 25-27.

month against a card. Nevertheless, many Bengali settler households were not ration cardholder because settler households are excessive than ration cards. The settlers who were settled in the first scheme all of them had all sorts of facilities, but who were settled in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> scheme most of them did not get other facilities except land. Some households who came to the CHT by their relatives they did not get any land or cash money facilities from the government but getting ration facilities. In summary, first to third scheme of Bengali people those were migrated or shifted from different parts of the country like to term them as Bengali settler. In this context, the present study has been pursuing in-depth dynamics and development assessment of Bengali settler and Phaharis comprehensive positioning of livelihood.

### 3.5 Bengali settler's Perceptions about Returning their Previous District

Though it is obviously true that Bengali settlers are facing with economic hardship in the CHT, nevertheless most of them are not interested to return their previous districts. Almost 78 percent Bengali settler households are not interested to return their previous district (see chart 2). Only 22 percent households are interested to return if the government will arrange houses and agricultural land for them.

Chart-2: Perceptions of Bengali settlers about returning their Previous District



Source: Fieldwork data 2017

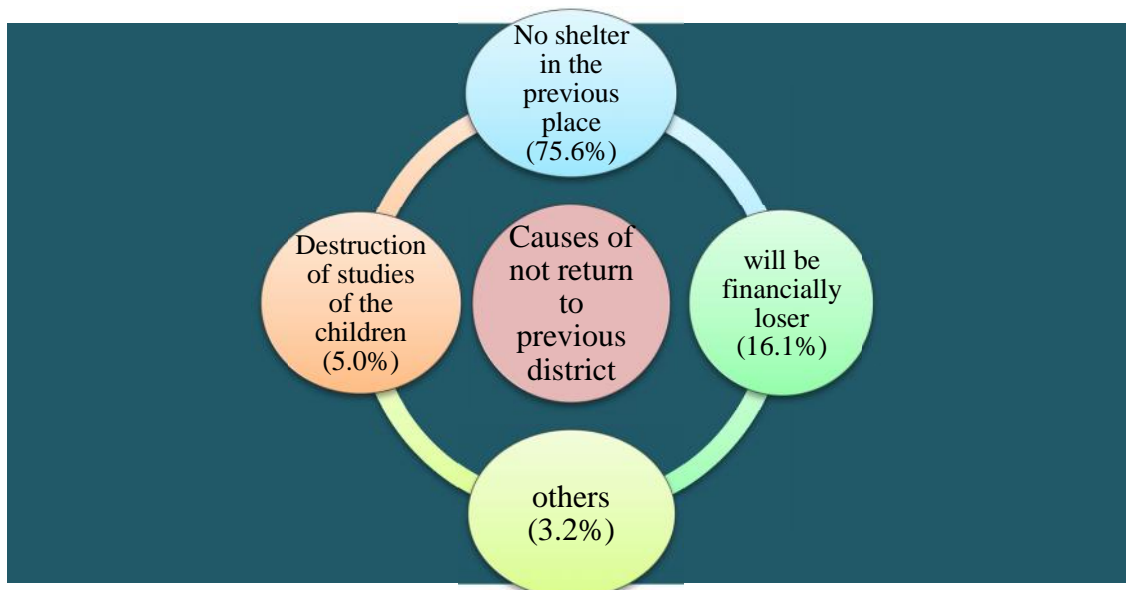
They mentioned that, there has no better alternative without living in CHT because there has no houses in their previous district. Nevertheless, there has huge work opportunities in their previous districts but in CHT has no mentionable working opportunity for them. In addition they have lost their dwelling house and graving land. However, without any better opportunity they are not interested to leave CHT.

### Causes of not interested to return their previous district

Most of the Bengali settler households mentioned that, after living for long periods of time in the CHT, if they wish to return to their previous district it will be possible for them to find shelter there. On the contrary, they have some assets like- land, houses and business, etc. remain in the CHT.

The figure no. 9 clearly illustrates that above 75 percent of the total households reported that they don't have shelter remain in their previous districts and almost 16 percent said they are being financially loser. Only 5 percent mentioned that their children's education might be obstacle if they return in their previous districts and 3.2 percent household mentioned other causes. So, as they mentioned that it is not possible to quite CHT before better arrangement for them in plain land by the government.

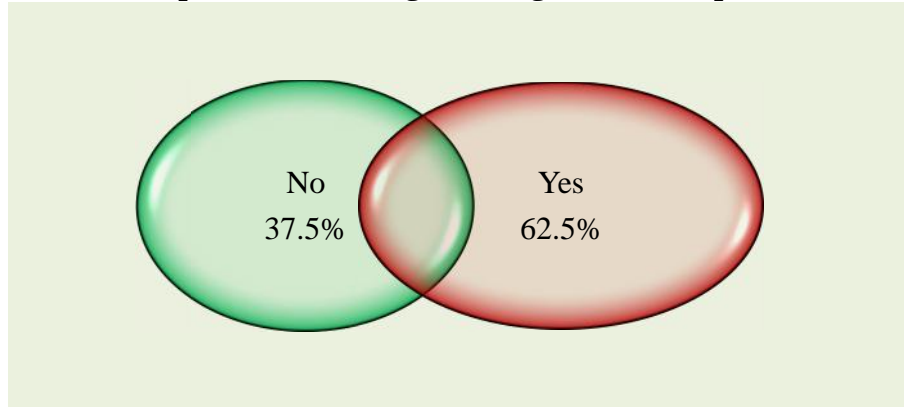
Fig-9: Causes of not interested to return their previous district



Source: Fieldwork data 2017

As mention above most of the Bengali settlers households are not interested to return to their previous district, even though majority of households assumed that they would remain good in their previous district. The chart 3 presents that more than 62 percent households assumed they would have been in better position unless they had left their own land & tried to settled in the CHT.

Chart-3: Perception of assuming remain good in their previous district



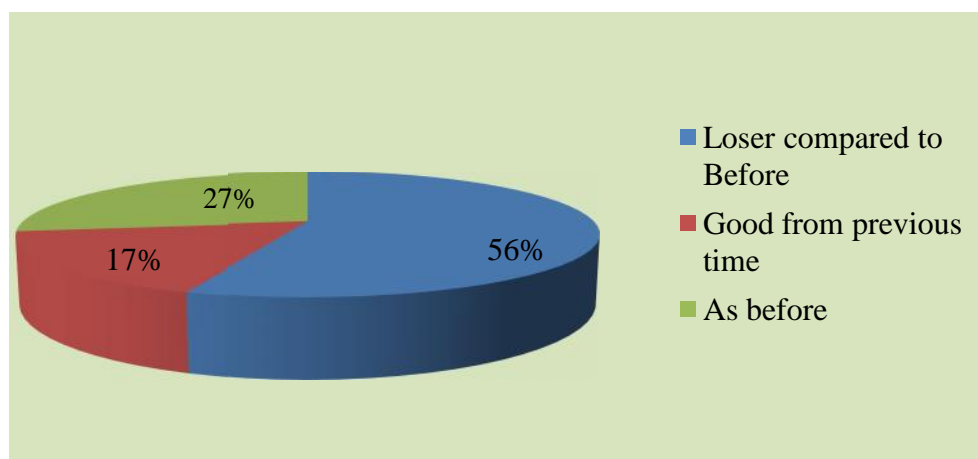
Source: Fieldwork data 2017

But overall 37.5 percent Bengali settlers are still determined that it was a better decision to be settled in the CHT. Many Bengali settler respondents informed that there are now huge job opportunities in their previous districts on the contrary there are very limited working scope for the Bengali settlers in the CHT. Moreover, political crisis have made them marginalized. So they assume it would have been better not to leave their own district.

### 3.6 Status of Overall Condition of Bengali settlers in the CHT

Belonging to unavoidable circumstances Bengali settlers informed that, overall most of the households were loser for getting settlement opportunity in CHT.

Chart-4: Status of Overall Condition of Bengal settlers in the CHT



Source: Fieldwork data 2017

The chart no. 4 clearly illustrates that highest portion of households think that they are not better compared to beginning of the settlement. Almost 56 percent Bengali settler

households informed that when they settled in CHT their overall conditions were good as of now and at the same time they had lost many things which constitutes their lives, thereby they seemed to be loser for being settled in CHT. On the other hand, about 27 percent Bengali settler households also informed that their conditions are not changed in comparison to before settlement. Only 17 percent households were mentioned their living standard were better than previous time. Therefore, it is clear that overall condition of the Bengali settlers in the CHT is still not improved although they are a part of settlement project.

### **3.7 Phaharis Settlement in the CHT**

Anthropologists believe that the ‘tribes’ of the Indian subcontinent including those living in the CHT migrated from outside (Sattar 1997)<sup>40</sup>. The investigation of the linguistic origins of the languages spoken by the ethnic groups living in the CHT added credence to such a belief. The Phaharis themselves are as well said to be of the opinion that they had left their ancestral home lands and settled in the CHT (Hutchinson 1906)<sup>41</sup>. An obvious question that arises is when did the Phaharis settle in the CHT? The CHT was known to Phaharis speaking the Kuki-Chin language (Lushei, Pangkhua, Bawm, Mro, Khayang, and Khuki) in the remote past as they used to visit the origin for hunting regularly (Tanchanga, 1997)<sup>42</sup>. It is believed that those Phaharis were the first settlers of the region. Over time, a section of the hunters settled in the region. These settlers later joined by their group mates who immigrated to the region (Rafi and Chowdhury, 2001). Most of the Phaharis moved into the region between the 15<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century. Around 1780, internal migration, consolidation of power by overlords of the region, formation of alliances, and empowerment of some of the ethnic groups in Tripura and Mizoram of India made the provinces politically unstable. Consequently, some or a part of the groups living in those provinces of India were forced to move out and settle in the northern part of CHT (Goswami 1989).

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<sup>40</sup> For more see Sattar, Abdus 1997. Chakma: Adibashi Noy Bohiragata. In Aha Probat! Aha Chattogram! Parbatya Chattogram, de. Masud Majumdar et al., 9-16. Dhaka: Atondar Janota Bangladesh.

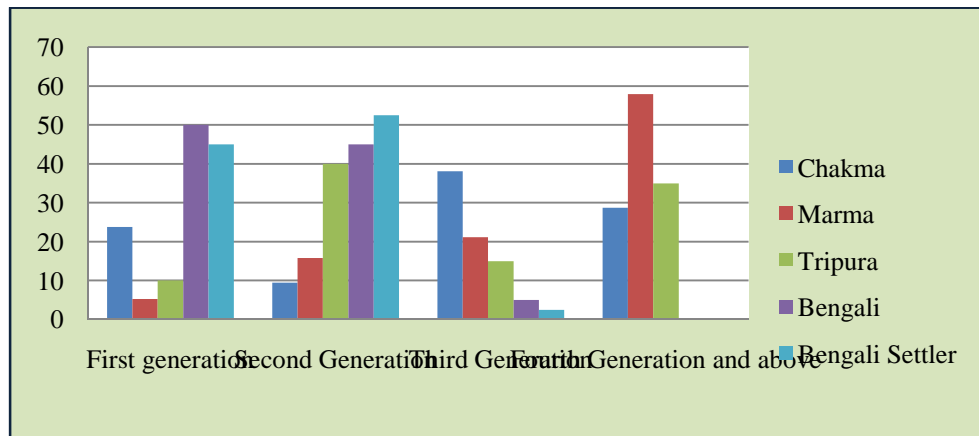
<sup>41</sup> For more see Hutchinson, R. H. Sneyd 1909. ‘Gazetteer of the Chittagong Hill Tracts’, Delhi: Vivek Publishing Company. [Reprint, 1978].

<sup>42</sup> For more see Tanchanga, Sree Birkumar, 1997. Parbatya Chattogram Sharbopratham Janabashati Kakhan Whoechilo. Shangu: Upojatio Gobeshona Patrica 5 (1): 22-28

Although there was a mass exodus of *Phaharis* to CHT in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the experience each *Phahari* group encountered was unique. Various factors influenced the inter *Phahari* relationships in the CHT for days to come after their migration (Rafi and Chowdhury, 2001).

The chart no. 5 illustrates the generational status of individual members of the ethnic groups. The generation of household first was considered as the current generation in the table. The inter-ethnic group comparisons for different generations indicate that Bengalis had most of their population in the current generation (50.0 percent) against Marma who had least number of their population in the same generation (5.3 percent). But the trend was reversed in the case of second generation where Bengali settlers had the highest proportion (52.5 percent) against Chakma who had the least (9.5 percent). Most of Chakma households belonging to the third generation whereas Bengali and Bengali settler households least they had only 5 and 2.5 percent in the same generation.

Chart-5: Generational Status of Household Members in the CHT by Ethnicity



Source: Fieldwork data 2017

In the case of fourth generation and above the Marma had the maximum proportion (57.9 percent) but in the case of first generation they had fewer people (5.3 percent) compared to the other ethnic groups. As a result, no household was found in the fourth and above generation among the Bengali and Bengali settlers. Most of the *Phahari* communities belonging to the third and fourth generation on the other hand Bengali and Bengali settlers are in the first and second generations.



### 3.8 Bengalis Settlement in the CHT

Documentary evidence indicates that the Bengalis from Chittagong made their appearance in the CHT officially as early as 1715, on being invited by the Chakma chief to supply some of their daily necessities not produced by the *Phaharis* (Serajuddin, 1971)<sup>43</sup>. During 1812-1832, Bengali farmers were brought from Rangunia in Chittagong district to help introduced plough cultivation in the plainlands of CHT. While describing the nature of migration of Bengalis in CHT (Khan, 1995)<sup>44</sup>. In the wake of the division of British India in 1947 on religious lines, the refugees from India were settled in higher proportion in the CHT. In addition, the Government of Pakistan pursued a heavy-handed policy of mainstreaming the region with economic and development programs pursued for the country at large (Shelley 1992)<sup>45</sup>. The government set up a number of industrial plants (e.g. Karnaphuli Paper Mill) in the region without considering their downsides. Many non Phaharis from outside region were hired to run the plants. As a result of these policies the period experienced a substantial increase in Bengali migration to the CHT (Rafi and Chowdhury, 2001)<sup>46</sup>. All migrated Bengalis were not muslim in the CHT some of them are Hindus. Hindu Bengalis are small in size in terms of Bengali Muslim population. Most of the Hindus were settled in the CHT before the partition of India. In the religious perspective there is a similarity between Hindu Bengali and Tripura community. In the process of human development, geo-political and other factors have been push and pull to migrate in the CHT.

### Process of Bengalis Migration to the CHT

The relationship graph demonstrates the ways of Bengali settlement in the Chittagong hill tracts. Graph clearly shows that Bengalis were settled in the CHT by different ways. Some of them are service holders, defence officer and general armies personal, and some of them are defferent types of business man. Therefore, it is evidently true

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<sup>43</sup> For more see Serajuddin, A. M. 1971. The Origin of the Rajas of the Chittagong Hill Tracts and their relation with the Moughls and the East India Company in the eighteenth century. *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society* 19 (1): 51-60. Karachi: Pakistan Historical Society.

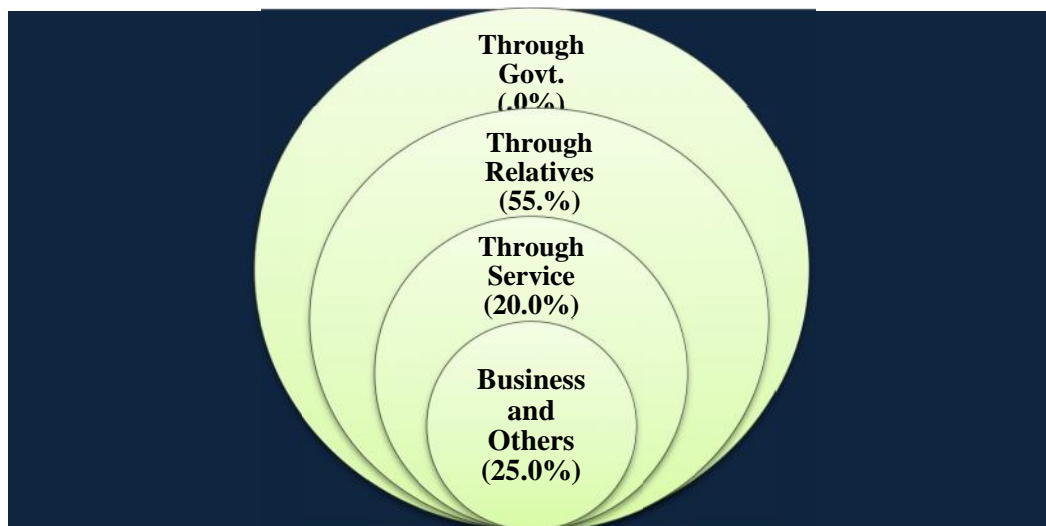
<sup>44</sup> For more see M. R. Khan 1995. Chittagong Hill Tracts: A Socio-economic Profile. Dhaka: Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies.

<sup>45</sup> For more see Mizanur Rahman Shelly 1992. The Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh: the Untold Story.

<sup>46</sup> For more see Mohammad Rafi, A. Mushtaque R. Chowdhury, 2001. Counting the Hill: Assessing development in Chittagong Hill Tracts, Dhaka: The University Press Limited.

that there remains a clear-cut difference between Bengali and Bengali settler in terms of their settlement process in the CHT. There were no Bengali settlers who came to the CHT for the purpose of business and services. On the contrary, about half of the Bengali were settled through service and business purpose. Almost 25 percent of Bengalis were settled in the CHT by the different types of business and other purpose. About 20 percent were settled through all kinds of service purpose. The majority (55%) of Bengalis said that they were settled in the CHT by their relatives and well-wishers who were settled earlier. Bengali households also informed that they were settling in the CHT wish to leading better life.

Figure-10: Process of Bengalis Migration to the Chittagong Hill Tracts



Source: Fieldwork data 2017

Some of them said due to lack of opportunities and economic hardship in the plain land they were looking for a place for living like CHT. Service holders mentioned that, when they came to CHT they have didn't any plan to settle there but living after one or two years alone they thought it could be a better place to live in than the plain land. A few Bengali households mentioned that the CHT is their second home their main home district is in the plain land like Chittagong. But when they found business and education facilities available, they had decided to live permanently in the CHT.

### 3.9 Bengali Settlement and Phahari Groups Reaction

The settlement plans offered an opportunity for landless or poor Bengali families. Landlessness is on the increase in the country in general. Land ownership has become increasingly concentrated and 10 per cent of the population owns half of the whole

country land. There has been no attempt on the part of any Bangladesh government to assist landless laborers or marginal farmers anywhere in the country. So it is no surprise that the poor Bengalis will seize any opportunity for survival they are presented with. The Bengali peasants who moved to the CHT during the Zia and Ershad regimes came from the plain districts and have no experience of *Jhum* cultivation. Consequently, they encroached on *Phahari* owned wet-rice land when they could not make a living from the land they had been given.

The crux of the CHT problem is the Bengali settlement along with the land dispossession of the *Phahari*. There have been dramatic changes since the partition of India and particularly after the creation of Kaptai Dam<sup>47</sup> and the artificial lake. The act of planned Bengali settlement associated with other development activities has complicated the land problem. The plough lands at Kaukhali, Dighinala, Panchari, Rangamati etc. have been taken over by the Bengali settlers. Some hill people demanded that their grabbed land be returned to them. But generally they did not get back their land. Bengali settlement including mosques have been built in and around what used to be *Phahari* land. Sometimes they lose their land due to their lack of understanding of its commercial value and ignorance of the concept of private property, but for the most part it is a result of trickery by Bengali entrepreneurs and government officials. As a result, many *Phahari* have moved up in the hills to practice *jhum* cultivation. They have become much poorer and have to face starvation. Some have used their land as security for loans from Bengali money lenders. Being unable to pay the high rates of interest, they have lost their land. Both the Ziaur Rahman and Ershad regimes followed a conscious policy of encouraging people from the plains to settle in the hill areas with the obvious objective of outnumbering *Phahari* in their homeland. Many *Phahari* took refuge in India after their lands were usurped by settlers from the plains. The *Phahari* saw the officially sponsored influx as a

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<sup>47</sup> Greatest among these is the Kaptai dam flooded an area of 655 square km, inundating 22 000 hectares of cultivable land which was 40 percent of all such land in the CHT. The reservoir submerged 18,000 houses and displaced 100,000 indigenous people, 70 percent of which were Chakma. The dam also submerged the Rangamati town and the palace of the Chakma Raja (king). Kibria, Zakir. 2004. *The Dam at Kaptaimukh in Bangladesh: Proposed Extension Plan and Issues of (Non-) Compliance*. Paper Presented to the Dams and Development Project (DDP) Workshop "Addressing Existing Dams," United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Nairobi, Kenya. June 14-16.

deliberate attempt to destroy their distinct culture and heritage and turn them into a minority in a place where they enjoyed majority status for centuries<sup>48</sup>.

The Chakma chief Raja Devashish Roy echoed the views of the tribals in 1981:

*I do not want settlers from outside the CHT. The headmen are also against it. I have asked the government not to settle Bengalis in the CHT. Those who settle here are creating conflict with the Phahari people. Many are compelled to leave their ancestral homelands, some even going to India*<sup>49</sup>.

Goutam Dewan, former elected chairman of the Rangamati LGC, said that our main problems pertain to land. Because our culture, life, livelihood, customs, economy, everything is related to land (Gain 1994)<sup>50</sup>.

The Bangladesh government argues that settlement in the CHT is necessary because much of the land there is uncultivated and therefore in its view wasted. It has officially claimed that most of the Bengalis who came to the CHT between 1978 and 1985 have been settled on *khas* land (government-owned fallow land) under government programmes. What the government regards as *khas* land is essentially hill people's traditional Jum land and forest land. The concept of *khas* land is anathema to *Jumma* notions of landownership. For the *Jumma* people this land is common property, belonging to the community and kinship groups. The *Phaharis* further argue that under the 1990 Regulation, which is still in force, settlement of outsiders in the CHT is highly restricted and transfer of land needs the approval of the DC, in consultation with the local headmen. These rules have been grossly violated by the government<sup>51</sup>. The government maintains that it would be against the Bangladesh Constitution to prevent any citizen of Bangladesh from residing and settling in any

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<sup>48</sup> For more see B. P. Barua 2001. Ethnicity and National Integration in Bangladesh. Pp 94-95

<sup>49</sup> Quoted in The Chittagong Hill Tracts: Militarization, Oppression and the Hill Tribes, p26.

<sup>50</sup> For more see Philip Gain and Shishir Moral. 1994. Vanishing Forests, Dying People. *Courier*. April, 29. Dhaka

<sup>51</sup> CHT report, Update 2, April 1994, p. 26; Raja Devashish Roy, 'The Population Transfer Programme of 1980s and the Land Rights of the Indigenous People of the Chittagong Hill Tracts'; in Subir Bhaumik et al., eds., *Living on the Edge: Essays on the Chittagong Hill Tracts* (Calcutta: South Asia Forum for Human Rights Calcutta Research Groups, 1997), pp. 192-3.

part of the country (Article 36)<sup>52</sup>. This argument, however, ignores the economic or political realities of the CHT where little of the land is suitable for farming and where the traditional owners are coerced into giving up their property. Later, the Ershad regime realized the gravity of the situation and gave up the policy of Bengali settlement in the CHT region in 1985.

### **The Phaharis Perception towards Bengali Settlers**

Relations between Hill Tract ethnic groups and increasing Bengali plainsmen have always been strained. Bengalis have long controlled the bazaar and forest products trade. Early British accounts attest to the economic havoc wrought upon the hill people by Bengali money-lenders and to the increasing encroachment in the district by Bengali peasants from the heavily populated plains<sup>53</sup>. Additionally, some 91 percent of Phahari households felt that their group relations were good, implying the presence of trust within the eleven different tribes which comprise the community. It has to be borne in mind that the Phahari peoples' antagonists (Bengali settlers) are ethnically homogenous, and we would expect a high level of trust within that group. Only about 11% of the respondents pointed to good relations between the Bengali settler and Phahari communities<sup>54</sup>. On the basis of above discussion it is evidentially clear that Phahari-Bengali relationship has always been in between of mistrust and hesitation. Though they were participating together in socio-cultural ceremonies nevertheless, there grew no confidence to each others. Moreover, Phaharis perception to Bengalis were more or less functioning, however perception to the Bengalis settlers was very inflexible that they never accepted them. From the beginning of the Bengali settlement in CHT, Phahari people have been dead against the settlement. Consequently, therefore their relationship never had been a cordial one. The present study has tried to explore that the perception of Phahari ethnic groups to the Bengali and Bengali settlers.

Table3.3: Phaharis Perception towards Bengalis

<sup>52</sup> For read more see B. P. Barua, 2001. Ethnicity and National Integration in Bangladesh: A study of Chittagong Hill Tracts Pp 94-95.

<sup>53</sup> Peter J. Bertocci, 1984. *Resource Development and Ethnic Conflict*, Cultural Survival Quarterly Magazine, March 1984.

<sup>54</sup> Badiuzzaman M., Murshed S.M. (2015) Conflict and Livelihood Decisions in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh. In: Heshmati A., Maasoumi E., Wan G. (ed.) *Poverty Reduction Policies and Practices in Developing Asia*, Economic Studies in Inequality, Social Exclusion, and Well-Being. Springer, Singapore.

Perceptions	Ethnic Groups (%)		
	Chakma	Marma	Tripura
You think Bengalis are outsider	57.1	52.	60.0
You seemed to be land grabbers	33.1	31.6	35.0
Thought to be opposition	4.8	5.3	--
Seems to be cordial	5.0	10.5	5.0
Total	100	100	100

Source: Fieldwork data 2017

Most of the Phaharis informed that Bengalis are outsiders. Above 57 percent of Chakma, 52 percent of Marma, and 60 percent of Tripura think Bengalis are outsider. On the contrary, almost all the Bengalis think that Phaharis are not outsiders, nevertheless 5 percent of Bengali households and 7.5 percent of Bengali settler households mentioned that the Phaharis were also outsiders (see table 3.3). On an average, 30 percent of Phaharis opined that Bengalis were their land grabbers and along with 55 percent of Bengali settlers and 25 percent of Bengalis opined Phaharis were their land grabbers. At the same time 30 percent of Bengali settler and 20 percent of Bengalis thought Phaharis were their opposition, nevertheless only 4.8 percent of Chakma, and 5.3 percent of Marma thought Bengalis were their opposition. An interesting aspect of this issue is that, 50 percent of Bengali think Phaharis are cordial but only 7.5 percent of Bengali settler think Phaharis are cordial.

### 3.10 Bengali Settlers' Perception towards Phahari Communities

Writings about the population of the CHT in post-war Pakistan and Bangladesh perceive the economic, social and political structures and institutions in the perspective of evolutionary approaches: They give a picture of isolated and stagnant societies, hidden in the jungles, averse to changes, who hardly have contacts with the outside world. Being so “wild, crude, primitive and aboriginal” (Sanar 1971: 193), they are “in the lowest ladder of primitive tribals”<sup>55</sup>. The Shendu (Lakher) are suspected to “relish cannibalistic diets” on the ground that they “take meat of all animals”<sup>56</sup>. Their economics are regarded as crude and primitive<sup>57</sup>, wasteful,

<sup>55</sup> Husain, K. Z. (1967) Expedition of Chittagong Hill Tracts: Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Pakistan: V. X11. No. 1, p. 159.

<sup>56</sup> Sattar, Abdus (1997). Chakma: Adibashi Noy Bohiragata. In Aha Probat! Aha Chattogram! Parbatya Chattogram., Masud Majumdar et al., p. 269. Dhaka: Atondar Janota Bangladesh.

unscientific etc. In 1870, the whole bodies of the tribes are in a low stage of civilization, better described by the term “barbarous” (Hamilton 1869: 270). There are many other tribes in the Chittagong Hill Tracts which lack this culture dynamism. Consequently, they are lost in the wilderness of pre-civilized cult, belief and customs. They have not been able to get involving any kind of culture.

Those are only very few examples of how the ethnic groups of the CHT, their economy, and political organizations have been interpreted in the course of time. We easily could add many more passages. This short list, apart from being a collection of prejudices, shows something very interesting, viz. the continuity of ethnocentric concepts. It shows, too, the continuity of colonial models of thought in Bangladesh of today. There is no difference between the trouser and shirt distributing missionary or administrator of Victorian times and the progress-preaching, “scientifically”-arguing progress and development planner of today<sup>58</sup>. These ethnic groups are pushed out of the realm culture and placed into the realm of nature instead. And as they are stubborn, the right to administer the benefits of civilization belongs to those who are more developed, more progressive minded and powerful.

There are also class issues among the settler Bengalis. Not all settler Bengalis are equally powerful. Some of them have been working for wealthy indigenous families. They are being used in election campaigning but they have not been given appropriate jobs. They want to get back to their own places as they think that they are victimized more widely in the CHT than they were. They had to borrow money from the *Mahajan* but sometimes were not able to repay it on time and their remaining assets (homestead or other belongings) were taken away by the *Mahajan* or his people. Sometimes they worked for the interests of indigenous people to the extent that the *Bengali* leaders or other wealthy people did not like them and treated them as agents of indigenous<sup>59</sup>. However, considering all the above statements of different scholars

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<sup>57</sup> Ahmed, N. Rizvi, A. (1951) Need for the Development of Chittagong Hill Tracts, Pakistan: Pakistan Geographical Review p. 20.

<sup>58</sup> Qureshi, M. S. ed. (1984) Tribal Culture in Bangladesh, Rajshahi University: Institute of Bangladesh Studies. p. 84.

<sup>59</sup> Nasreen, Zobaida 2017, The Indigeneity question: State Violence, Forced Displacement and Women's Narratives in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh, Durham theses, Durham University.

than the present study has tried to unfold the Bengalis and Bengali settlers' perception toward Phahari communities. Though Bengali and Bengali settler both categories of people were main stream and plain-landed Bengali, nevertheless there lies huge differences between them in terms of perception towards Phaharis.

Table-3.4: Status of Bengalis Perception to Phaharis

Perceptions	Ethnic Groups (%)	
	Bengali	Bengali settlers
<b>You think Phaharis also outsiders</b>	5.0	7.5
<b>You seemed to be land grabbers</b>	23.0	55.0
<b>Thought to be opposition</b>	17.0	30.0
<b>Seems to be cordial</b>	55.0	7.5
Total	100	100

Source: Fieldwork data 2017

The table 3.4 transparently states the Bengalis perception toward minor ethnic communities in the CHT. It is shown that, most of the Bengalis (55 percent) thought that, Phaharis were cordial in terms of their perception to each other and only 7.5 percent of Bengali settlers thought so. At the same time most of the Bengali settlers (55 percent) thought that Phaharis were their land grabbers against 23 percent of Bengalis. Least number (5 and 7.5 percent) of Bengalis thought that, Phaharis are also outsiders. On the other hand, 17 percent of Bengali and 30 percent of Bengali settlers thought Phaharis were their opposition. So, here it is evidently proved that the Bengalis and Phaharis' perception to each other were as usual and sometimes it was cordial but Bengali settler's perception to Phaharis and also Phaharis' perception to Bengalis was absolutely unfriendly and sometimes antagonistic.

### 3.11 The Government Efforts to Integrate the Ethnic Communities in the CHT

The Government efforts to integrate the ethnic minorities in the CHT through preferential policies and other remedial measures, such as amnesty offer, package of small measures for the development of the region, increased job facilities and reservation of seats for the tribal students in the educational institutions and even the formation of LGC, by ignoring the main socio-economic and political demands, do not seem to have produced the desired result. The crisis has acquired political significance over the years and as such it requires a political solution. The socio-economic and political issues may be resolved through meaningful dialogue and



integration on the basis of national consensus. A round table conference of all concerned parties- the Bangladesh government, representative of ethnic minorities, Bengali communities and settlers, may be convened to find a mutually acceptable solution of the CHT groups integration crisis<sup>60</sup>. In general there are two policy strategies for the achievement of integration. First, the elimination of the distinctive cultural traits of minority ethnic communities into some kind of national culture usually that of the dominant cultural group- a policy generally referred to as assimilation, or melting pot. Secondly, the policy of 'unity in diversity' that the establishment of national loyalties without eliminating subordinate cultures. However, on the basis of the above discussion here it can be said that the issues of Bengali settlements and land alienation in the CHT are most critical for the Paharis. In view of constants protests by the Hill people the government has put a ban on the establishment of new Bengali settlement in the CHT area. The government however is uncompromising on the issue of withdrawal of Bengalis from the region. The major obstacles in the way of minority groups and Bengali settlers in the CHT: non Pahari settlement, deployment of army and its atrocities, denial of political rights and economic interests, threats to minority groups religion, culture and language, and the splitting of CHT into three districts. Some respondents have mentioned illiteracy, lack of communication facilities, cultural differences, social distance, hated and hostility between Bengali settlers and Pahari groups, inter ethnic differences, infiltration of Bengali culture and the communal attitude of the government as the other impediments. It is therefore evident that the state hegemony in the CHT remains unabated. In an agro based economy like Bangladesh where 51 percent of GDP comes from agriculture and 60 percent of labor forces are employed in this sector alone, the economic importance of land can hardly be overemphasized<sup>61</sup>. Apart from being the principles means of production, land is also the hallmark of social prestige and power in Bangladesh. Ownership of land largely determines power configurations and power relationships. In CHT the ownership of land today by the Bengali community is symptomatic of the dominant of this community. This position however has been acquired through a state sponsored project of settlement of Bengalis into the Hills.

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<sup>60</sup> For more see B. P. Barua, 2001. p.133

<sup>61</sup> For more see The Holiday 13<sup>th</sup> March, 1992



## **CHAPTER- 4: Basic Amenities and Social Relationship**

- 4.1 Status of Bengali Settlers in terms of getting basic Amenities of the CHT**
- 4.2 Presence of Communication (road) from the Studied Villages**
- 4.3 Status of Housing Facility among the Ethnic Groups in CHT**
- 4.4 Presences of Safe Drinking Water, Sanitation and Health in CHT**
- 4.5 Presence of Getting Energy Facility by Households and Ethnicity**
- 4.6 Educational status in the CHT and the Position of Bengali Settler**
- 4.7 Dimensions of Social Relationship between Phahari and Bengali Settlers**
- 4.8 Status of Social Relationship among the Ethnic Groups in the CHT**
- 4.9 Perception about 'Bengali Settlers Treated as Second Class Citizen' in the CHT**
- 4.10 Status of Making Friendship between Phahari and Bengali**
- 4.11 Status of Ethnic Groups regarding Trust in Socio-economic Activities**

## Chapter 4- Basic Amenities of the CHT

This chapter describes the Bengali settler and other ethnic group's households in terms of getting basic amenities of the CHT. The amenities going to be presented here inasmuch as that these information would be helpful for better understanding of the subsequent chapters.

### 4.1 Status of Bengali Settlers in terms of getting basic Amenities of the CHT

Access to basic amenities such as safe drinking water, electricity, sanitation, health care and communication is imperative for a decent quality of life. The need for these basic amenities has been universally recognized. Belongings always considered as essential to make life easier and more pleasant. The local authority has to provide the isolated people like Bengali settler with basic amenities. The basic amenities of the CHT that the Bengali settlers were getting along with *Phaharis* are explaining below:

### 4.2 Communication System of the Studied Paras/Villages

In general, communication is a means of connecting people or places. Communication is the medium of sending information and news. Communications are central to the development of any society and its economy. It is possible to know the price of the commodity prevailing at any part of the world in no time and also helps to operate their business according to that through communication system.

Table-4.1: Status of Communication Facility from the Paras by Ethnicity

Types	Ethnic Groups (%)					
	Chakma	Marma	Tripura	Bengali	Bengali settlers	Total
Mud Road	33.3	63.2	25.0	45.0	72.5	51.7 (62)
Metal Road	66.7	26.3	70.0	35.0	5.0	35.0 (42)
Narrow Little Road	--	10.5	5.0	20.0	22.5	13.3 (16)
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100 (120)

Source: Fieldwork data 2017

Nevertheless, communication system facilitates economic development by sending information. It is possible to change the outlook and style of living of the people according to changing conditions of the world and the Chittagong Hill Tracts is no exception.

It is presented in the table no 4.1 that the mud roads were relatively common in Bengali settler as well as Marma villages (72.5 & 63.2 percent), and also 33.3 percent of Chakma, 25 percent of Tripura, 45 percent of Bengali Paras had also mud road, whereas metallic road relatively common in Tripura and Chakma Paras which were 70 & 66.7 percent respectively. Only 26.3 percent of Marma Paras, 35 percent of Bengali Para had metal road. On the whole, narrow little roads are not common in the study Paras. But 20 percent of Bengali and 22.5 percent of Bengali settler's paras had narrow little road. Metal roads were not common in the Bengali settler Para, only 5 percent metal road were found in the Bengali settler's studied Paras. In general, the status of communication facilities indicates the convenience of movement within a Paras. However, these facilities are usually developed with the help of government and NGO funds. The presence of these facilities within the villages (Paras) indicates that the Chakma villages received more attention from the government and NGOs for their development compared to Phaharis belonging to other ethnic groups. One possible reason for this was that after the CHT Peace Accord of 1997 Phahari communities were received more attention from Government and NGOs, whereas Bengali settlers are not getting well communication facilities from both government and NGOs compared to other groups of the CHT. From the very beginning the Bengali settler's paras (Cluster Village) were neglected in terms of getting 'common para facilities' like good road communications.

#### **4.3 Status of Housing Facility among the Ethnic Groups in the CHT**

Good life cannot be achieved without having good living conditions. Living conditions are the most important factor in people's lives. Housing is often viewed as a barometer for the households of the economy, and this is certainly the case at the moment. The relationship between housing and economic performance, however, operates at a number of spatial levels. Housing represents the household's economy and raises some concern in family level development, also becomes a direct factor of household's social status. Without good living conditions, people's health and work will be affected. However, Bengali settlers in the CHT were living with houses that the houses are below standard compared to other counterparts. With development and growth in the CHT, the living condition has increased a lot during the recent years, although some social problems are yet to be dealt with.

Nevertheless, on an average, the quality of Bengali settler's houses is very low quality and weak in position. Housing from basic forms of shelter to modern cutting-edge type of housing suggests that the living standard in CHT is now improving. Now everyone hopes to live in a settlement that is comfortable, healthy and standard. But in some areas of the CHT especially in the 'cluster villages' there are still thousands of household who were living in less quality houses like mud houses. The table no 4.2 describe that the presence of housing conditions of household by the ethnic groups.

. Table-4.2: Status of Households in terms of Housing by Ethnicity

Ethnic Groups (%)						
Types	Chakma	Marma	Tripura	Bengali	Bengali Settlers	Total
House with mud	--	10.5	--	10.0	65.0	25.0 (30)
Machangghor	14.3	31.6	30.0	10.0	2.5	15.0 (18)
Tin shed house	38.1	52.6	35.0	50.0	30.0	39.2 (47)
Building	47.6	5.3	35.0	30.0	2.5	20.8 (25)
Total Count	21	19	20	20	40	100 (120)
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Fieldwork data 2017

The table clearly shows that houses made with mud, Bengali settlers in the CHT were mostly living in such kind of houses. Above 65 percent of the Bengali settlers were living mud houses and they are also the owner of lowest percent (2.5%) of building houses. On the contrary, no mud houses were found where Phahari people are living. The interethnic group comparisons for housing condition over all most of the Phahari households were living in the *machangghor*<sup>62</sup>, In general, Bengalis are living both tin shed house and building, and Bengali settlers are living in the mud houses. Above 14 percent of Chakma, 31 percent of Marma, 30 percent of Tripura 10 percent of Bengali and only 2.5 percent of Bengali settlers are living in the *machangghor*. Bengalis household are highest position in terms of living in the tin shed house, it about 50 percent of their total households. Only 38.1 percent of Chakma, 35 percent of Tripura, 52.6 percent of Marma, 30 percent of Bengali settlers are living in the tin shed house. Chakma stood first position (47.6 percent) in terms of living in the building houses. Above 5.3 percent of Marma, 35 percent of Tripura, 30 percent of Bengali and only 2.5 percent of Bengali settlers are living in the building houses. The Bengali settler houses are largely substandard condition, than their other counterparts in the CHT.

<sup>62</sup> In this study it is referred to the houses which built on raised platform.

However, the housing in the CHT can be grouped into two broad categories – 1) Houses built on reside on the ground, literature knows as *Machangghor*. 2) Those built in the ground. In general, *Phaharis* living in higher land had a tendency to live on their traditional *Machangghor*. On the other hand, *Phaharis* who are living on the river valley had a tendency to make houses on the ground. The higher price or no availability of wood/bamboo and the low maintenance cost of mud houses were some of the reasons why *Phaharis* opted for houses on the ground. The houses built on the ground by the *Phaharis* having several rooms were always under the same roof and room had common walls. The houses of Bengalis, which was always on the ground, had rooms for different purpose separated from each another around a small courtyard in most cases (Rafi and Chowdhury, 2001). But the houses of Bengali settlers, which was also always on the ground and made the houses by mud, jute fiber, wood, bamboo, and leafs or tin on the roof. The houses constructed on the ground in most cases had floors and walls made of clay. There had no separate rooms inside the house but had some partition with leafs or old clothes. It is shown that inadequate housing conditions have a significant impact on household outcomes, and that there is a social gradient for both the housing quality and the housing-related exposure. Within the ethnic category groups, increased exposure to environmental risks was often but not always associated with an increased safety outcome. Housing conditions must be considered as one of the mechanisms through which social inequality translates into ethnic group inequality. As different financial capacities or social determinants in general - may lead to different housing conditions, they can be a potential source of inequalities. In all aspects, it is clear that the Bengali settlers are living in substandard houses and it supposes to expose that their social and household financial conditions are weaker than other counterparts.

#### **4.4 Presences of Safe Drinking Water, Sanitation and Health in the studied paras**

Water is very much necessary for our existence in this earth. This basic need is at risk in the CHT area. Many households have to face serious troubles due to inadequate supply of safe drinking water. Women are the worst sufferers because in many causes women are in the charge of water collection. Collecting from remote area and bearing the collected water to residence consumes both time & energy that ultimately affect the normal life course.

In the CHT, time spent fetching water represents a cost to human health, productivity, and in many cases, educational opportunities—a burden that is borne disproportionately by women and girls. The major sources of drinking and cooking water in CHT are not safe. Nevertheless people have to travel long distances to collect drinking water and spend substantial amount of time for the same. According to the World Health Organization (WHO 2015), distribution systems should make drinking water available so that people do not need to travel more than one kilometer from the place where they will use the water. For all people, there is a cost involved in having water distributed to their home or community. Some costs are monetary; while others are measured in the time it takes to travel to and from a safe drinking water source.

Table-4.3: Status of Households Safe Drinking Water Facility by Ethnicity

Sources	Ethnic Groups (%)					Total
	Chakma	Marma	Tripura	Bengali	Bengali Settlers	
Tape/tube well	85.8	73.7	80.0	95.0	75.0	81.7 (98)
Chhara	9.5	15.8	15.0	--	12.5	10.0 (12)
Rain water	4.8	--	--	--	2.5	1.7 (2)
Pond, River, Canal water	--	10.5	5.0	5.0	10.0	6.7 (8)
Total	100	100	100	100.0	100	100 (120)

Source: Fieldwork data 2017

The study households reported to have used water from a number of sources for different purpose. Water sources may be categorized as reliable (Safe) and unreliable (Unsafe). Water reliability may vary by season, by year, and by location. Reliable water included tape, tube well and boiled water: unreliable water included rivers, ponds, fountains, *chharas*<sup>63</sup>, canals and lakes, etc. The table 4.3 presents the facilities of safe drinking water among the household of different ethnic groups in the CHT. Overall majority of the households were getting safe drinking water (i.e. tape and tube well water seems to be safe). Most of them used tap/tube well water for drinking. Bengalis were highest position in terms of getting safe drinking water. Almost 95 percent of Bengalis households, 85.8 percent of Chakma households, 73.7 percent of Marma households, 80 percent of Tripura households and 77.5 percent of Bengali settler households had safe drinking water facilities. Other sources of drinking water were *chharas*, almost 10 to 20 percent of all ethnic groups except Bengalis collected

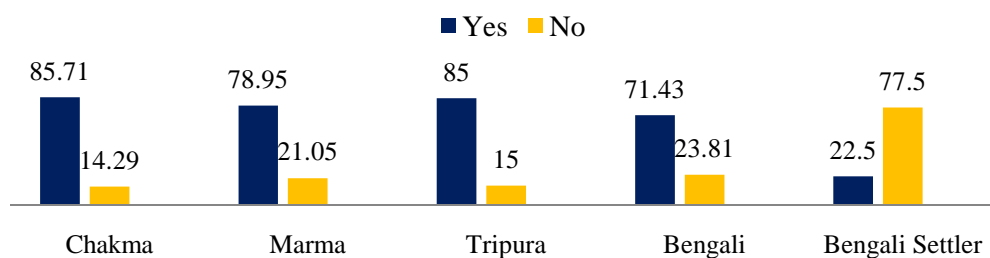
<sup>63</sup> By the term *chhara* it means streams originating from the mountain.



their unsafe drinking from *chharas*. Only few households are (4.8 percent of Chakma and 2.5 percent of Bengali settler households) getting drinking water from rain. Ponds are very rare and rivers & canals water are also polluted, that's why overall least amount of households depend on from these sources of water, causes of no better alternative.

In Bangladesh, about 20 million people still lack access to safe drinking water<sup>64</sup>. Globally, in 2015, 91% of people had access to water suitable for drinking. Nearly 4.2 billion had access to tap water while another 2.4 billion had access to wells or public taps. 1.8 billion People still use an unsafe drinking water source which may be contaminated by feces. This can result in infectious diarrhea such as cholera and typhoid among others<sup>65</sup>. In the CHT, each person requires 6-8 litter safe water per day for drinking<sup>66</sup>. The United Nations and other organizations estimate that each person requires access to a minimum of 20 to 50 liters of water per day for drinking, food preparation, and simply keeping themselves clean.

Chart-6: Status of Getting Health care Facilities by Ethnicity (%)



Source: Fieldwork data 2017

Three crucial concerns are present in the relationship among water, sanitation and health: the direct link between health and water as pertains to diseases. Most of the diseases that contaminate water come from animal or human waste. These diseases have health effects that are heavily concentrated in the CHT. The Chart 6 illustrates that the presence of getting healthcare facilities among the ethnic groups in the CHT. The chart clearly shows that all the ethnic groups were getting almost same health facilities except Bengali settlers. On an average *Phaharis* were getting more health

<sup>64</sup> For more see The World Bank Report, March 15, 2016

<sup>65</sup> For more read see: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Encyclopedia>

<sup>66</sup> The estimate has given by the Khagrachari Public Health and Engineering Department, 2015

benefits against both Bengalis and Bengali settlers. Chakma ethnic group reported that, above 85 percent of them are easily getting treatment facilities. On the contrary, among the ethnic groups least number (22.5%) of Bengali settlers is getting health facilities. In terms of easily getting health and treatment facilities the Tripura are second highest position in the CHT. On an average 85 percent of Tripura, 78.95 percent of Marma, 71.43 percent of Bengalis are easily getting these facilities. However, there are many organizations in the CHT that they continuously provided health and medical services to the rural communities of the CHT. The health system of the CHT is a pluralistic system with some key actors that they are playing vital role for functioning of the system, such as the government, private sector, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and International Agencies (IOs). International Donor Agencies are the first key actor who constantly providing comprehensive health services, including financing and employment of health staff. The UNDP<sup>67</sup> has provided basic health services enabled and improved for over half a million CHT people especially in remote areas following creation of a network of 1,000 skilled local health workers. There are 16 mobile medical teams and 80 weekly satellite clinics have been established throughout CHT. Moreover, due to early detection, proper treatment and preventive measures in the past ten years a number of malaria cases dropped to 1.1% from 12.8% and number of households affected by malaria dropped to 4.2% from 24.5% by the UNDP initiatives. Though the UNDP's health services programmes were appreciated by the Phahari communities, whereas Bengali settlers' informed that they are not benefited from any of the UNDP projects, even not from above mentioned programmes. Bengali settlers claim that the Phaharis who are the most beneficiary groups in terms of getting health and medical treatment services from UNDP and other international development agencies against their Bengali settlers counterpart. However, majority of the Bengali settlers' households are depending on 'self treatment' while they are feeling sick at their home. The table 4.4 presents that the health-seeking behavior of the study population by ethnic groups. Overall most of the Tripura and Bengali settlers treated as 'self treatment'. But on an average majority of the people (49.2%) have seeking treatment facility from their near hospitals. Fifty five percent each of the sick persons from the Bengali settlers and

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<sup>67</sup> United Nations Development Programme (UNDP 2016), Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility (CHTDF), Report on: *what did CHTDF achieve since 2003*; Programme was started 15 April, 2003, UNDP Bangladesh

Tripura, forty five percent of the sick persons from the Bengalis, more than thirty six percent of sick person from the Marma, and thirty three percent sick person from the Chakma are seeking treatment by himself inside their home.

Table-4.4: Presence of Community wise Health-seeking Behavior

Type of treatment	Ethnic Group (%)					Total
	Chakma	Marma	Tripura	Bengali	Bengali settlers	
<b>Self</b>	33.0	36.8	55.0	45	55.0	46.7 (56)
<b>Local Hospital</b>	66.7	52.6	40.0	50	42.5	49.2 (59)
<b>Others</b>	--	10.5	5.0	5.0	2.5	4.2 (5)
<b>Total</b>	100	100	100	100	100	100 (120)

Source: Fieldwork data 2017

Above 66.7 percent of Chakma, 52.6 percent of Marma, 50 percent of Bengalis, 42.5 percent of Bengali settlers, and 40 percent of Tripura are seeking care from near local hospital. Rest of the people 10.5 percent from Marma, 5 percent each from Tripura and Bengali, and 2.5 percent from Bengali settlers seeking care from other medical agencies like- community clinic or medical para professionals. On an average medical centre and hospitals distance three kilometers from the *Para* (village). Bengali settlers reported that all the *Paras* are 3-5 kilometers away from hospitals and Bengali & Phahari *Paras* almost 2-5 kilometers away from the hospital and medical centre.

The state of drinking water supplies can be defined by four important characteristics: quality, quantity, reliability, and cost. Safe drinking water shortages can be substantially overcome through further development. Khagrachari district civil administration is an example in this regard. When serious crisis of pure drinking water the district authority has taken an initiative to given safe water for all. A sum of 44 safe drinking water projects was completed and 45 projects are under process. Each project cost BDT 2.5 to 4.5 hundred thousand. After completing, the projects are usually handover to the maintenance committee which formulated from beneficiaries. All ethnic groups including Bengali settlers are equally getting safe drinking water from these projects. Providing access to safe drinking water has been difficult in the CHT due to the topography of the area. Only 65% of people have access to safe drinking water in the CHT, compared to 75% of rural people in Bangladesh as a whole. Providing access to safe drinking water is costly and often beyond the capacity

of the local people. Furthermore, open defecation is still normal practice in many of the Paras in the CHT, which causes health and nutritional problems (MOHAFW 2011; UNICEF 2012; World Bank 2014). Water is obviously essential for hydration but sanitation is an equally important, and complementary, use of water. A lack of proper sanitation services not only breeds disease, it could loss people of their basic human dignity.

Sanitation is the means of promoting hygiene through the prevention of human contact with hazards of wastes especially faces, by proper treatment and disposal of the waste, often mixed into wastewater. Providing sanitation to people requires a systematic approach, rather than only focusing on the toilet or wastewater treatment plant itself<sup>68</sup>. Nowadays, one of the main challenges of sanitation is sustainability, especially in backward areas like CHT. Sanitation aspects are technological, institutional and social, good management is required to manage it properly.

The World Health Organization defines the term "sanitation" as follows:

*"Sanitation generally refers to the provision of facilities and services for the safe disposal of human urine and feces. The word 'sanitation' also refers to the maintenance of hygienic conditions, through services such as garbage collection and wastewater disposal".*

In September, 2010, the UN Human Rights Council<sup>69</sup> adopted a resolution recognizing that 'the human right to water and sanitation are a part of the right to an adequate standard of living'. However, the present study has observed different communities' households with their sanitation facilities; the findings are presented in the table no 4.5. That table describes the households in order to understand the facilities like sanitation, communication, housing facilities, agricultural and natural resources. Most of the Chakma household had *Pacca* latrine. About 81% household are enjoying this facility. Only 12.5% Bengali settler households are getting same facilities, but Tripura getting 65% Marma 21.5% and 35 % Bengali households are getting *Pacca* latrine facility. On the contrary, most of the (45%) Bengali settler's

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<sup>68</sup> For more read see: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Encyclopedia>

<sup>69</sup> For more read see United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). International Decade for Action "Water for Life" 2005-2015. The human right to water and sanitation. at: [http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/human\\_right\\_to\\_water.shtml](http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/human_right_to_water.shtml)

households had *Kacha latrine*<sup>70</sup>, Marma 26%, Bengali 20%, and in the Chakma and Tripura households hadn't found any (mud) *Kacha latrine*. Ring latrine mostly observed in the Marma household (52.5%) then it was found 45% within Bengali household, 42.5% in Bengali settler household, 35% in Tripura and only 19% Chakma household had ring latrine facilities.

Table-4.5: Status of Households and Getting Sanitation Facility by Ethnicity

Types	Ethnic Group (%)					
	Chakma	Marma	Tripura	Bengali	B. Settlers	Total
<b>Pacca latrine</b>	80.95	21.5	65	35	12.5	38.3 (46)
<b>Kacha (Mud) latrine</b>	--	26.0	--	20	45	22.5 (27)
<b>Ring latrine</b>	19.05	52.5	35	45	42.5	39.2 (47)
<b>Total</b>	100	100	100	100	100	100(120)

Source: Fieldwork data 2017

A widespread practice of gender discrimination in collecting of water, it is the female members who suffer most due to water scarcity and inadequate hygiene situation in the CHT. The use of latrine by all Bengali settler household members is not practiced. The Bengali settler households' practice of hygiene sanitation, including hand washing at latrine using times and disposal of household waste, were below standard than other communities. Due to lack of awareness and economic hardship in household Bengali settlers were living with substandard and unhygienic latrine. The result of lack of sanitation is usually open defecation with associated serious household health issues.

#### 4.5 Energy Facility by Households of ethnic communities

Modern energy services are important in ensuring a satisfactory quality of life for people and promoting economic development. Access to energy is central to issues such as security, climate change, food production, and strengthening economies while protecting ecosystems. It is estimated that around 1.2 billion people worldwide do not have access to electricity in their homes<sup>71</sup>. Increased access to electricity improves education, entertainment, health, comfort, protection, and productivity. In the recent past, Bangladesh has been experiencing the shortage of electricity, and about 42

<sup>70</sup> The term *Kacha Latrine* means a such kind of latrine which is made by the mud and bamboos.

<sup>71</sup> United Nations Foundations March 14, 2015. *Achieving Universal Energy Access* [Online]. Available: <http://www.unfoundation.org/what-we-do/issues/energy-and-climate/clean-energy-development.html>.

percent of the populations have no access to the electricity. The electricity consumption has rapidly increased over last decade. The demand and consumption will intensify in the near future as overall development and future growth. To set “vision 2021” of Bangladesh; the government of Bangladesh is devoted to ensuring access to affordable and reliable electricity for all by 2021. In the modern time, energy is the vital ingredient for socio-economic growth in developing country i.e., alleviating poverty. Along with electricity access, Bangladesh is striving to become a middle-income country by 2021. Furthermore, the irregular electric power supply causes load shedding. Electric energy access is the far-way dream for many families in the rural area in developing countries, about 80% of the population are living in the rural and remote areas in Bangladesh where only 25% of electricity available for people (Taheruzzaman, 2016)<sup>72</sup>. In this regard, electricity supply condition in CHT is much better than all over the country. However, it is presented in the table 4.6 that, overall most of the household have electricity facilities but solar power is not common in the household in general, 95 percent of Bengali, 85 percent each of Tripura and Bengali settler, above 89 percent of Marma and 86 percent of Chakma household have got electricity facilities. On the other hand there had no solar facilities within Chakma, Marma, Bengali household but 10 percent of Tripura and only 2.5 percent of Bengali settlers household have solar power facilities.

Table-4.6: Status of Getting Energy Facility by Households and Ethnicity

Types of power	Ethnic Groups (%)				
	Chakma	Marma	Tripura	Bengali	Bengali settlers
Electricity	86	89.5	85	95	85
Solar	--	--	10	--	2.5
Both	14	10.5	5.0	--	--
None	--	--	--	5.0	12.5
Total	21	19	20	20	40
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Fieldwork data 2017

Both types of power facility are available in the Chakma (14%), Marma (10.5%) and Tripura (5%) households. All the Chakma, Marma, and Tripura households had power facilities either electricity or solar. It may be pointed out that 5 percent of Bengali and 12.5 percent of Bengali settler households do not any of the power facilities shown in the table. Though the Bengali settlers were bound to living in the ‘Cluster Villages’

<sup>72</sup> For more read see Muhammad Taheruzzaman, 2016. Electric Energy Access in Bangladesh. Brandenburg University of Technology, Cottbus, Senftenberg.

hence they were getting equal electricity facilities due to security problem. During the insurgency period the Bengali settlers were relocated in the *Gucha Gram* (Cluster Villages), in that time the militaries organized and sheltered them with some basic amenities like electricity and it's a demand of security because without electricity it was very difficult to ensure security for the cluster villages, especially at night when Bengali settlers seems to be attacked by the Shanti Bahini, in this ground Bengali settlers were getting full pleasure electricity facilities.

#### **4.6 Educational status in the CHT and the Position of Bengali Settler**

Literacy has often been defined as those aged 15 and older who can read and write. A standard definition set by the Bangladesh Bureau of statistics (BBS 1994) a person was considered literate if s/he had ability in reading and writing was determined on the basis of verbal reports. Overall literacy rate for Bangladesh is 56.5%. This is a significant rise from 29.2% in 1981 (Bangladesh Literacy Rate, 2011). A UNICEF (2008), estimate of gender disparity indicates that the literacy rate for men is 62% and 51% for women. The Bangladesh Government and various NGOs have invested significantly in education and literacy. Free education for all children aged six to ten is technically a constitutional right. However, many children are unable to afford school supplies, uniforms, or the necessary tuition for coaching classes that will help them pass their courses and move on to the next grade.

According to a study of UNICEF (2000-2004), indicate that access to education for girls in the Chittagong Hill Tracts is significantly lower than most other regions in Bangladesh. The distance from home to school is often prohibitive for girls. Socio-economic factors as well as prevailing attitudes toward girls' education discourage girls from attending school. There is a clear relationship between household socio-economic status and literacy. Almost three out of every four heads of vulnerable households are illiterate, compared to 22 percent of non-vulnerable household heads". Low levels of female education mean a lack of female presence in community decision-making processes. This, in turn, relates to community issues involving poor health and hygiene practices, a high incidence of preventable diseases, child malnutrition, and low family income (World Food Programme, 2011). The table 4.7 presents the highest educational attainment of household members among the ethnic groups. In this present study, educational variables have been observed in terms of

highest educational attainment of household members. The table shows that only 5 percent household of Bengali and Bengali settlers are illiterate or ‘educationally in dark’, no light of education has entered into these households. Whereas, there has no households were observed within the Chakma, Marma, and Tripura ethnic groups which highest educational level are illiterate and primary education level, that means all the observed Phahari’s households highest educational level not less than secondary level.

Table-4.7: Status of Households and Highest Educational Attainment

	Chakma	Marma	Tripura	Bengali	B. Settlers	Total
<b>Illiterate</b>	--	--	--	5.0	5.0	2.5 (3)
<b>Primary</b>	--	--	--	10.0	37.5	14.2 (17)
<b>Secondary</b>	4.8	21.1	5.0	15.0	27.5	16.7 (20)
<b>H. Secondary</b>	19.0	36.8	30.0	25.0	20.0	25.0 (30)
<b>Graduate</b>	76.2	42.1	65.0	45.0	10.0	41.7 (50)
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100(120)

Source: Fieldwork data 2017

The highest education is up to primary level household observed only in Bengali and Bengali settlers’ families which are 10 & 37.5 percent. The table also presents the proportion of secondary education level households for each of the ethnic group. Nearly 5 percent of Chakma, 21.1 percent of Marma, 5 percent of Tripura, 15 percent of Bengali and 27.5 percent of Bengali settlers’ households were defined as up to secondary education level households. The higher secondary level households in Chakma were 19 percent Marma 36.8 percent, Tripura 30 percent, Bengali 25 percent and 20 percent of Bengali settlers. Highest education attainment of households were only 10 percent in Bengali settlers whereas 76.2 percent in Chakma, 42.1 percent in Marma, 65 percent in Tripura and 45 in Bengali household respectively. In whatever way, education is a key to upward social mobility; it contributes to achievements and eventually leads to overall wellbeing. The level of education of the elderly especially that of mothers, shapes the future generation of the nation. The constitution of the peoples’ republic of Bangladesh guarantees education to all sections of the population. Article 28 (1) states, ‘the state shall not discriminate against any citizen on the grounds of region, race caste, sex, or place of birth’ (Govt. 1998). But in reality there are differences in educational achievements and even opportunities to avail education among different sections of the population. The situation in the CHT is not



an exceptional. Other than the census there is little or no information available on the status of education in CHT. As CHT opens up following the signing of the peace Accord any information on the educational status of CHT is likely to be helpful in formulating development policies for the region. The CHT has formal educational institutions setup by both Government of Bangladesh & private bodies and non formal educational institutions introduced by NGOs and through local initiatives.

A base line survey of CHTDF-UNDP, entitled “State of Development in Chittagong Hill Tracts”<sup>73</sup> in 2014. This survey has explained the literacy and educational status of the CHT. Key findings of the survey as mention below for better understanding of the present study. In CHTDF supported school; primary education completion rate is 95%, while national level estimation is 80%. In intervention area, overall literacy rate among the age group of 7 years and above is 58%. In intervention area, the literacy rate among 15 years and above population is 57% while the same in control and non-implementation area is 49% and 52%. As mentioned by households, net enrollment rate in intervention, control and non-implementation is 86%, 70% and 83% respectively. The estimated net enrollment for CHTDF supported school in intervention area is 79%. The overall dropout rate in CHTDF supported primary school in 2012 is 3.4%, while the corresponding national figure is 1.2%. About 33% of households (mostly indigenous/ethnic community) think that language is a barrier for their children to understand lesson. A 95% household in intervention, 90% in control and 97% in non-implementation live within 1hour travel to their children’s school. Ethnic minority children communicate in their mother tongue in their house. But, in school, they are compelled to face Bengali text while the teachers are also from the Bengali community. The whole teaching method is in Bangla.

[Thus, in implementation area, Paras/villages covered by CHTDF were treated as intervention Paras/villages, and non-covered (no direct intervention) Paras as control Paras. Households located in intervention, control and non-implementation Paras/villages are respectively considered as intervention, control and non-implementation households.]

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<sup>73</sup> For more see CHTDF - UNDP 2014. State of Development in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHTDF), IDB Bhaban, Begum Rokeya Sharani, Dhaka-1207 Bangladesh

Based on all the educational indicators considered in the study, it can be said that in terms of education there was very little difference between the Bengali and the Chakma in the CHT. Although Bengalis ranked top in access to educational institutions and enrollment rate it was the Chakmas who ranked top in terms of literacy. The scenario implies that the Chakmas were in a better position in the past but the Bengalis are keeping up with them in recent years. According to most indicators, the Tripuras ranked fourth in position and for all the indicators the Mros ranked least. The Marmas secured the middle position in terms of all indicators<sup>74</sup>. One important matter should be mentioned here that the Chakmas are still ahead, followed by Bengalis, and other ethnic communities of the CHT.

Moreover, Prashanta Tripura (1997)<sup>75</sup> has pointed out a number of reasons for the advancement of the Chakmas in education compared to the other *Phahari* groups. The reasons are i) Rangamati became the administration head quarter of CHT after it was made a district in 1860. As a result some development, including establishment of educational institutions, took place in and around Rangamati. The development activities aroused the desire for self-development through education in the Chakmas who predominantly were living in and around Rangamati. ii) The location of Chakma leaders in Rangamati gave them the opportunity to arrange educational facilities for their own community by requesting the local administration. Also the presence educational institutions within the reach of Chakmas gave them the edge. iii) The Chakma living around Rangamati were the first to shift from *Jhum* to plain-land cultivation in river valleys. The latter mode of cultivation offered them a settled life, along with the opportunity to send their children to school. iv) The number of early-educated Chakmas working as sub inspectors of schools contributed much to the growth of education of the Chakmas in the early part of this century. V) The construction of Karnaphuli hydro-electric power plant in 1959 inundated the home and agricultural land of a large number of Chakmas. As a result, these families were forced to rehabilitate themselves elsewhere and diversify their occupations. The adversities and hardship they faced due to these events made them self-conscious and

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<sup>74</sup> For more see Mohammad Rafi, A. Mushtaque R. Chowdhury 2001. *Counting the Hills: Assessing development in Chittagong Hill Tracts*, Dhaka: The University Press Limited. P. 70-71.

<sup>75</sup> Tripura, P. (1998). *Culture, Identity and Development in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Discourse 2 (2): Pp. 61-68*

pragmatic, which in turn inclined them towards education. Consequently, from 1960 onwards there was a surge in participation of the Chakma children in education. The Chakmas rehabilitated themselves in bigger communities, making it easier for the authorities to open schools in those communities. vi) The location of the village in the Kaptai lake area made it easy for the students to attend schools by boat from a distance. Among the Phaharis, Chakmas in villages on lake were also the first to receive education from rural CHT.

On the other hand, Bengali settlers' position in terms of the educational status was very insignificant while the present study being conducted in the field level. Bengali settlers extremely suffered during the insurgency period of between Shanti Bahini and military in the CHT. Due to troubled situation in the CHT the Bengali settlers were sheltered in the cluster villages thereby for almost two decades their children couldn't go to the school; as a consequence the whole society remained deprived of education. After peace accord they were not given any compensation or helping hand from both government and development agencies for the upliftment of their educational status whereas Phaharis were getting educational facilities from both government, IOs and NGOs. In the line of the peace accord, there are 325 seats reserved in the higher educational institutions for the Phaharis as a backward and marginal community, however Bengali settlers have argued that they are also as marginal as Phaharis but Adi Bengali's subject is exceptional than Bengali settlers. So, considering these they have pointed out that they are also shareholder of these quotas because all of them are living together in a unified atmosphere and same territory of the CHT.

To be fair, Bengali settlers are on a par with *Phaharis* and also Bengalis in such fields as education, economic and even lead the latter in community amenities and other respects. The Bengalis settlement in the CHT was a displeasing settlement where basic amenities for living are not available within their residential areas. The cluster villages are such kind of the paras/villages where the basic amenities for life have not equaled to others. Residents of cluster villages lack basic amenities of life such as lack of safe drinking water, health clinics, schools, roads and other facilities. It is necessary to provide these sorts of facilities equally for all the ethnic groups including Bengali settlers in the CHT and provision of common facilities including metal roads, schools, electricity, bank, hospital, post office etc. within or near the cluster villages.

Anthropologically speaking: as marginal groups and geo-physical setting are initiatives to participate and opportunities should be given to irrespective of all seats and creeds. The situations of the CHT will improve only then if it can be assured that there's a respectful and healthy mutual relationship among the inhabitants as a whole. This type of healthy and peaceful and co-existence will ameliorate their socio-economic life in the long run.

In general, relation is an abstraction belonging to or characteristics of two entities or parts together. The sum of interactions that among people over time that this could be positive or negative relations. Social relation is a blanket term for interactions between two or more people, groups, or organizations. Individual social relationships are composed of an immense number of social, physical, and interactions that create a climate for the exchange of feelings and ideas<sup>76</sup>. According to Piotr Sztompka (1991)<sup>77</sup>, forms of relation and interaction in sociology and anthropology may be described as follows: first and most basic are animal like-behaviors, and then there are action movements with a meaning and purpose.

#### **4.7 Dimensions of Social Relationship between Phahari and Bengali Settlers**

The present study has tried to explore relationship among the ethnic groups including Bengali settlers in the CHT. Different types of dimensions were observed in terms of their relationship. During the fieldwork most of the *Phahari* people said that, 'usually we have good relationship with Adi Bengalis but relation with Bengali settlers quite different. They opined that, Bengali settlers were the creator of harmful life and destroyed their natural peaceful life in the CHT. They also occupied their ancestral land which is means of livelihood. Phaharis also think that, before Bengali settlement the CHT was a 'natural haven' of this country but the settlers destroyed the haven. Consequently, CHT became a conflicting zone of south eastern part of the country and most of them were their land graver. Adi Bengalis were peacefully living inside and beside their *Paras* (Villages) and they haven't any headache with them. Their

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<sup>76</sup> For more see Oxford Dictionary of Psychology by Andrew M. Colman (4<sup>th</sup> Edition)

<sup>77</sup> Piotr Sztompka (born 2 March 1944, in Warsaw, Poland is a Polish sociologist known for his work on the theory of social trust. He works at the Jagiellonian University in Karakow Poland, where he is professor of sociology, and he has also served frequently as visiting professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, and at Columbia University in New York City. He was president of the International Sociological Association from 2002 to 2006.

relationships with Bengali households are also as usual. Moreover, Phahari respondents mentioned that, sometime Phaharis-Bengalis were involved in conflict for some unexpected reasons but most of the time there were settlers' issue involved.

On the contrary, major portion of Bengali settlers thought that, they haven't any invisible hand to create unrest in the CHT. They said in their own words, "due to government given facilities we got settled in CHT. The government has given us lands for cultivation and making house pit. We didn't know who the actual owner of these lands is. We have legal papers which government provides us during the settlement. Nevertheless, Shanti Bahini (SB) burnt our houses, occupying our lands and also killed many of us. Very unfortunate we don't know what our fault was. We think, still now *Phaharis* regard us outsider and sometime enemy in fact. However, Due to lack of mutual trust between Bengali settler and Phaharis we haven't been able to be cordial dwellers of the CHT.

#### 4.8 Status of Social Relationship among the Ethnic Groups in the CHT

There are different types of relationship existing in the CHT. Ethnic groups state their position in terms of social relationship. Some relationships are presented below:

Table-4.8: Presence of Social Relationship among the Ethnic Groups

Relations	Ethnic Groups (%)					
	Chakma	Marma	Tripura	Bengali	Bengali Settlers	Total
<b>Good</b>	19.0	5.3	10.0	15.0	7.5	10.8 (13)
<b>Medium</b>	57.1	73.7	75.0	75.0	25.0	55.0 (66)
<b>Bad</b>	23.8	21.1	15.0	10.0	67.5	34.2 (41)
<b>Total</b>	100	100	100	100	100	100 (120)

Source: Fieldwork data 2017

It is revealed from the above table (table no 4.8) that the relationship between Bengali settlers and Phaharis were not inharmonic. Almost two third Bengali settler households informed that their relation with Phaharis is bad. Only 7.5 percent Bengali settler households mentioned their relationship were good to each other. On the contrary, least number of the Bengali households (10%) mentioned their relations with Phaharis were bad but most of them said relations were medium or as usual. Over majority of Phahari households mentioned that, the relationship between Phahari and Bengali were good or as usual but relations with Bengali settlers were not good

and even not as usual it was absolutely worsened and wicked. In an average Bengali and Bengali settler relations were good in condition, nevertheless they also treated that; Bengali settlers are second class citizens in the hill tracts. About 75 percent of Bengali and Tripura, 73.7 percent of Marma, 57.1 percent of Chakma pointed their relation with Bengalis as medium and at the same time 19 percent of Chakma, 5.3 percent of Marma, 10 percent of Tripura, and 15 percent of Bengali households marked their relation with each other were good in position. On the other hand, above 23 percent of Chakma, 21.1 percent of Marma, 15 percent of Tripura and 10 percent of Bengali households mentioned their each other relations were very poor or unsound condition.

Table-4.9: Status of Households Invitation during Social Ceremony by Ethnicity

	Ethnic Groups (%)					
	Chakma	Marma	Tripura	Bengali	Bengali Settlers	Total
Yes	61.9	63.2	65.0	65.0	17.5	48.3 (58)
No	38.1	36.8	35.0	35.0	82.5	51.7 (62)
Total	100	100	100.0	100.0	100	100 (120)

Source: Fieldwork data 2017

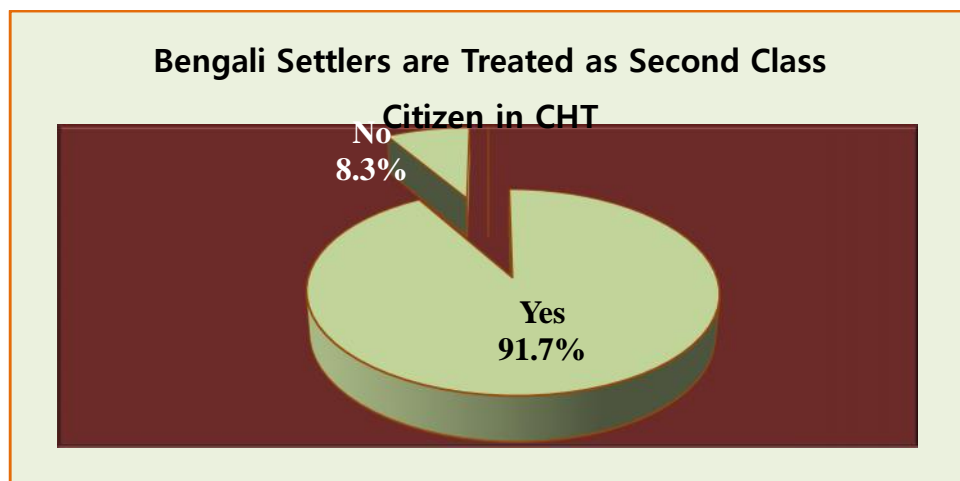
The table 4.9 shows that the status of households invitation during their social ceremony like marriage, Eid, birthday. Almost all the ethnic groups except Bengali settler households reported that, they invite each other during their social ceremony. Among the ethnic groups 61.9 percent of Chakma, 63.2 percent of Marma, 65 percent each of Bengali and Tripura households mentioned they invite each others in their social occasions. On the other hand, only 17.5 percent Bengali settler households said they invite Phaharis during their social ceremony but Bengali and Bengali settlers interact all time in all occasion. Above 82 percent Bengali settler households mentioned they don't invite Phaharis on any social functions. However, 38.1 percent of Chakma, 36.8 percent of Marma, 35 percent each of Tripura and Bengali households do not invite each others. There are different types of friendship and antagonistic relationships among the Phahari groups and Bengali groups based on political party, religion, socio-economic status and personal material interest. It challenges the perception that the identities of Bengali and Phahari people in the CHT

are homogenous<sup>78</sup>. However, considering all these opinions it is transparent that, Bengali and Bengali settlers bonding were good whereas Bengalis - Phaharis relationship also as usual nevertheless relationship between Phahari and Bengali settlers were unusable and unstable.

#### 4.9 Perception about ‘Bengali Settlers Treated as Second Class Citizen’ in CHT

To be fair, as a whole there was a negative perception constructed towards Bengali settlers. Bengali settlers think that, the negative perception was created by social media and international agencies due to their poor participation in social media. When conflict between military and Shanti Bahini (SB) occurred Bengali settlers were in between of them.

Chart-7: Perception about Bengali Settlers are treated as Second Class Citizen in the CHT



Source: Fieldwork data 2017

Many Bengali settler respondents mentioned that, they were poor landless Bengali not a conflicting group and new comer in the CHT however very unfortunately all the political condemnation goes to them. They think that their absence and lake of participation in the social & international media and agencies provided opportunity to their counterparts and thus it caused them as ‘conflicting group’. The above chart no 7 reveals that the perception about Bengali settlers treated as second class citizen in the Chittagong hill tracts. Almost all the ethnic groups in the CHT mentioned that due to

<sup>78</sup> Zobaida Nasreen, 2017. The Indigeneity question: State Violence, Forced Displacement and Women's Narratives in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh, Durham theses, Durham.

several reasons Bengalis are thought to be ‘Second Class Citizen’ in the CHT. Altogether 91.7 percent respondents were reported that, Bengali settlers were treated second class citizen in the CHT. Only 8.3% of the respondents were observed they didn’t think Bengali settlers are not in that position. The respondents who mentioned Bengali settlers are *second class citizen* they also pointed out some reasons regarding their opinion.

There are some reasons regarding ‘why Bengali settlers are treated as *second class citizen* in the CHT’. Some of the reasons are- i) Bengali settlers came to the CHT from different backward places and most of them had no shelter in the plain. For their lag-behind background they are treated as *second class citizen*. ii) It is beyond reasonable doubt that, Bengali settler’s economic and social conditions are not good compared to other ethnic groups in the CHT. iii) Socio-economic condition of Bengali settler households was not well to do in their previous district and after settling in the CHT they couldn’t change their condition. iv) However that the Bengali settlers were shifted from others districts hence the CHT people supposed them to be *Bhoingha*<sup>79</sup>. After all, as outsider Bengali settlers are treated as a *second class citizen* in the CHT.

### **The word ‘Settler’ is negatively constructed in the CHT**

The word ‘Settler’ refers to a person who settles in an area, typically one with no or few previous inhabitants. According to the Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary ‘a person who arrives, especially from another country, in a new place in order to live there and use the land. Furthermore, one who settles in a new region, especially a region that has few occupants or that is occupied by people of a different ethnic group’. In the CHT the word ‘Settler’ is negatively constructed by the Phaharis. Bengali settlers are not willing to express themselves as ‘settler’ rather than Bengali. During the fieldwork of this study it was earnestly observed in the field. One interesting aspect of this research is that - in the research questionnaire I mentioned the word ‘Bengali settler’ in Bangla but the Bengali settler respondents requested me as, ‘please do not use the word ‘settler’ in Bangla you may use ‘*Punorbashito Bengali*’ means ‘Rehabilitated Bengali’ in English language. The Phahari people were used this word when they try to underestimate them and they also use this word as a bad language (*Ghal Mond*) that to indicating them”. The Phahari respondents

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<sup>79</sup> The term *Bhoingha* is a local terms in Chittagong area, it indicates the person who is outsider, and commonly other district’s people.



mentioned that, we do not use this word alone many non settler Bengalis also use it in negative sense. One of the Chakma respondents (37) mentioned, the Bengali laborer are commonly treated as *Miskin* (poor people) in the Middle-East countries, on the contrary, Bengali settlers are treated ‘settler’ as a poor and outsider people of the CHT. Though the Bengali settlers are mainstream people in this country nevertheless they are treated not only as second class citizen moreover negatively presented in the socio-cultural functions of the CHT.

#### 4.10 Status of Making Friendship between Phahari and Bengali

It is revealed that, there remains as intervening distance in terms of making friendship with other group in the CHT. Different types of friendship were observed during the present study, such as- intra-community friendship, Phahari-Bengali friendship, and friendship with Bengali settlers. Intra-community friendship is common and as usual relationship. Phahari-Bengali friendship is such kind of friendship where there’s no social restriction and barrier. But Phahari-Bengali settler friendship is very uncommon, sometimes socially restricted and mistrusted friendship. Bengali settlers said that, due to mistrust our acceptance level to each other is very poor so, how can we make friendship with hesitation. Nevertheless, some of them had friends in the educational institutions and business arena. The table 4.10 displays that the status of friendship among the different ethnic groups. Almost half of the respondents informed that, they had friendship with each other groups albeit Bengali settler households gave different opinion. Only 15% Bengali settler respondents mentioned they had friendship with Phaharis.

Table-4.10: Status of Friendship by Ethnicity (%)

	Ethnic Group					
	Chakma	Marma	Tripura	Bengali	Bengali Settlers	Total
<b>Yes</b>	57.1	47.4	45.0	55.0	15.0	39.2 (47)
<b>No</b>	42.9	52.6	55.0	45.0	85.0	60.8 (73)
<b>Total</b>	100	100	100	100	100	100 (120)

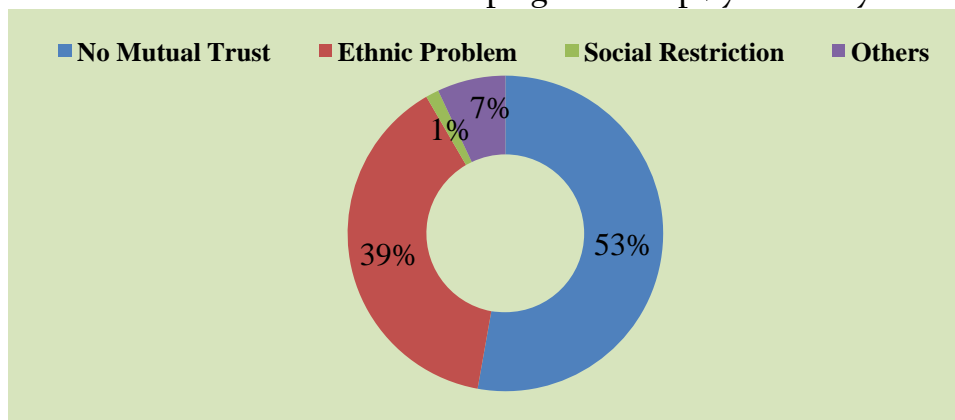
Source: Fieldwork data 2017

More than 57 percent of Chakma, 47 percent of Marma, 45 percent of Tripura and 55 percent of Bengali reported they had friendship with each other. On the contrary, near about same percent respondents said they had no friendship with other groups except

Bengali settlers. Almost 45 percent of Bengali, 55 percent of Tripura, 85 percent of Bengali settler and above 42 percent of Chakma, 52 percent of Marma respondents mentioned they had no friendship with different groups. One important information here that, those who were studied in different higher institution they had friends from any other community, whereas Bengali settlers are mostly not higher educated hence there had only limited opportunities to be made friendship with others. Nevertheless Bengalis and Phaharis had friendship as per usual.

The chart 8 illustrates the causes of not keeping friendship by the ethnic groups. In the above graph it is clear almost fifty percent respondents mentioned there had been no friendship among the groups due to absence of mutual trust. Nearly 40% respondents reported for the cause of ethnic problem they had no friendship with each other. About 7% of them said due to social restriction and only 1% mentioned other causes for not keeping friendship with other ethnic groups.

Chart-8: Causes of not keeping friendship by Ethnicity



It is now clearly revealed that most of the households of different ethnic groups were not going often to each other house. The table 4.11 demonstrates that only few of the respondents mentioned they were going to each other house frequently. Among the ethnic groups 40% of Bengali, 9.5% of Chakma, 10.5 % of Marma, 15% of Tripura, and only 7.5% of Bengali settler households were often going each other house. Most of the respondents mentioned they were going each other house very rarely. Above 66 percent of Chakma, 63 percent of Marma, 80 percent of Tripura, 55 percent of Bengali, and 45 percent of Bengali settler households very rarely going each other house.

Table-4.11: Status of Going to each other Houses

Status	Ethnic Group (%)					Total
	Chakma	Marma	Tripura	Bengali	Bengali settlers	
Often	9.5	12.0	15.0	40.0	7.5	15.0 (18)
Very rare	66.7	62.7	80.0	55.0	45.0	59.2 (71)
Never	23.8	26.3	5.0	5.0	47.50	25.8 (31)
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100 (120)

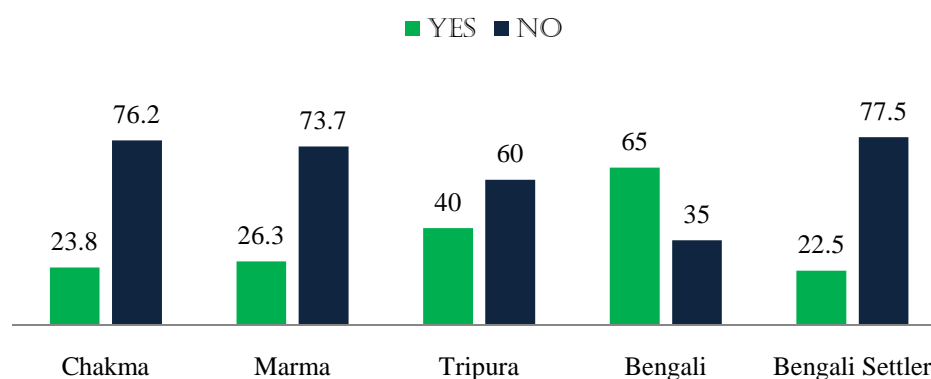
Source: Fieldwork data 2017

Nevertheless, some of the respondents said they never go to each other house. More than 23.8% of Chakma, 26% of Marma, and 5% each of Tripura and Bengali households informed they never going to each other house. On the other hand almost half of the Bengali settler households mentioned that they never go to Phaharis houses.

#### 4.11 Status of Ethnic Groups regarding Trust in Socio-economic Activities

It is elucidated in the chart 9 that the ethnic groups regarding their trust to each others in socio-economic activities. It is disclosed in the above graph that most of the Bengalis keep trust with other ethnic groups. Almost 65 percent Bengali respondents were mentioned they have interactions and keeping trust to other communities.

Chart-9: Status of Ethnic Groups regarding Trust in Socio-economic Activities



Source: Fieldwork data 2017

On the contrary, least number 22.5 percent of Bengali settlers said they were trusted to other groups in socio-economic activities along with above 23 percent of Chakma, 26 percent of Marma and 40 percent of Tripura mentioned the same information. Bengali settlers were stood first 77.5 percent regarding distrust to other groups. At the same time, 76.2 percent of Chakma, 73.7 percent of Marma and 60 percent of Tripura

were mentioned they didn't trust other groups in socio-economic activities. Therefore, it is clear that most of the Phaharis and Bengali settlers distrusted each others. It is essential to mention here that most of the Phahari respondents mentioned that Bengalis are more trusted than Bengali settlers. The settlers also informed Phahari are less trusted rather than Bengalis. Consequently, here the equation is that the relationship in socio-economic activities between Phahari and Bengali were as usual trusted but Phahari and Bengali settler's relationship were mistrusted.

As a result, considering all the opinions it is very clear that, ethnic groups are still divided for the lack of trust, previous bitter experiences which is reflected in the present study. Long after the ceasefire and the peace accord, distrust and suspicion still exist. Moreover, Bengalis and Phaharis interaction within household level were as usual but Bengali settler and Phahari household level interactions and communication to each other houses were very poor in condition.

## **CHAPTER - 5: Economic Dynamics in the CHT**

- 5.1 Introduction**
- 5.2 Occupational Diversity of Ethnic Groups in the CHT**
- 5.3 Status of Households Monthly Income, Expenditure and Savings**
- 5.4 Status of Food Security in CHT and Bengali settlers**
- 5.5 Understanding Bengali settlers within the Trades and Business in CHT**
- 5.6 Overall Economic Conditions of Bengali settlers (before and after Settlement)**
- 5.7 Positioning of Ethnic Groups in Terms of Socio-Economic Conditions**

## 5.1 Introduction

Economic conditions refer to the state of the economy in a country or region. They change over time in line with the economic and business cycles, as an economy goes through expansion and contraction. Economic conditions are considered to be sound or positive when an economy is expanding and are considered to be adverse or negative when an economy is contracting<sup>80</sup>. There are many economic indicators, which can be used to define the state of the economy or economic conditions. Some of these are the unemployment rate, levels of current account, household income and expenditure that these indicators describe likely, current economic conditions or conditions of the recent past. This section deals with economic activities of household members both Phahari and Bengalis with special attention to the Bengali settlers, reasons for that it was assumed, Bengali settlers are facing economic hardship and have very limited access to income generating activities in the CHT. The findings of the present study will help to understand the economic dynamics of CHT and actual economic conditions of Bengali settlers.

## 5.2 Occupational Diversity of Ethnic Groups in the CHT

The present study has divided the occupation into two segments: one is Bengalis occupation (both Adi Bengali and settler Bengali) and another one is Phaharis occupation (among Chakma, Marma, and Tripura). These two parties' occupational dynamics are stated below:

Table-5.1: Occupational Status of Ethnic Groups in the CHT

Ethnic Groups in Percentage						
Type	Chakma	Marma	Tripura	Bengali	B. Settlers	Total
<b>Agriculture/Jhum</b>	28.6	36.8	25.0	5.0	15.0	20.8 (25)
<b>Business</b>	9.5	21.1	20.0	45.0	17.5	21.7 (26)
<b>Service</b>	42.9	26.3	30.0	15.0	2.5	20.0 (24)
<b>Day laborer</b>	--	--	--	10.0	22.5	9.2 (11)
<b>No profession</b>	--	--	10.0	10.0	22.5	10.8 (13)
<b>Others</b>	19.0	15.8	15.0	15.0	20.0	17.5 (21)
<b>Total</b>	100	100	100	100	100	100 (120)

Source: Fieldwork data 2017

<sup>80</sup> For more see Investopedia: A comprehensive financial *dictionary* with over 13000 terms and counting. Brought to you by the web's largest investor resource. Available at: [www.investopedia.com/dictionary](http://www.investopedia.com/dictionary)

### **Diversified Occupation of Phaharis**

The status of occupation bears several categories like Business, service, day laborer, no profession and others. Among the respondents on an average 20.8 percent were involved in Agriculture, 21.7 percent were found in the business category, 20 percent were in the service category, 9.2 percent were day laborer, and 10.8 percent were no profession and 17.5 percent in other category (see table no 5.1). Most of the Phaharis were involved in agriculture especially in *jhum* cultivation. More than 36 percent of Marma, 28.6 percent of Chakma, and 25 percent of Tripura were involved in agricultural sector. Among the 21.7 percent businessmen, about 9.5 percent of Chakma, 21.1 percent of Marma, 20 percent of Tripura were involved in this particular sector. At the same time 42.9 percent of Chakma, 26.3 percent of Marma, and 30 percent of Tripura involved in the services. In the day laborer category, none is found in the Chakma, Marma and Tripura categories. In the others categories 19 percent are Chakma, 15.8 percent are Marma, 15 percent are Tripura also involved in that category.

The economy of the CHT the rural sector is predominantly agricultural although there are some commercial enterprises circulating around agricultural activities. Phaharis are mostly involved in this particular sector mainly in traditional *jhum* cultivation system. In addition to traditional mode of cultivation, i.e. shifting or swidden cultivation (*jhuming*), cultivation on plain land is in the rest of Bangladesh. *Jhum* cultivation is practiced by Phaharis only. In January/February a plot in the mountain which is gentle in slope and covered with vegetation but not by a dense forest is selected for *jhuming*. The jungle and bamboos are slashed down and the lower parts of large trees denuded. *Jhuming* is a labor intensive farming method demanding constant care and nursing<sup>81</sup>. Moreover the *jhum* plot needs to be guarded all the time from wild animal, birds and rates. At the end of the cycle the land is left to revert to scrub and the cultivator moves to a new land for *jhuming*. The CHT people are also diversified in terms of occupation like agriculture, business, service and others. J. P. Dutta (2000)<sup>82</sup> has conducted a survey on households in the CHT, after then he mentioned the Phahari households and their occupation. As he revealed that Phaharis

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<sup>81</sup> For more read see Mohammad Rafi and A. Mushtaque R. Chowdhury, 2001. P. 10.

<sup>82</sup> J. P. Dutta, (2000), Impact of Development Programmes on Environment and Demographic Phenomena of the Ethnic Minorities of Chittagong Hill Tracts, Center for Policy Dialogue, Dhaka

are involved in some sorts of occupation, i.e. agriculture, business, service, agricultural labor, tenant farmers, and fishing. According to his research almost 64 percent of the Phahari households were involved in agriculture and 12.5 percent in agricultural labor followed by 8.5 percent in business, 7.8 percent in service, 4.8 percent in fishing and only 2.5 percent involved in tenant farmer. Along with J. P. Dutta (2000) was mentioned that on an average Phaharis service holder was 7.8% in the year of 2000 but after twenty years of CHT peace accord it increased tremendously and changing livelihood by diversified impact on occupational engagement.

The status of trade and business among CHT people the Phaharis presence were very poor. Though there are many industries that are contributing to the economy of CHT, most of the businesses are under the controlling of Bengalis, nevertheless there are some traditional small industries and hand looming, bamboo and wooden craft industries run under the ownership of Phaharis. Moreover, in this regards the Asian Development Bank (2001) stated that “...indigenous people face huge barriers in entering non-agricultural trades, which are largely controlled by a few family based cartels (water transport, bamboo/timber trades, and trucks). Only in traditional textiles and bamboo crafts are there indigenous (Phahari) entrepreneurs, who are slowly entering construction industries. But all large contracts (roads) go to outsiders, including the employment generated. Public licensing for trade and transport largely favors outsiders and public servants, not local people”.

However, on the basis of above statements it can be said that, once the Phahari people specially Chakma community were leg-behind in terms of getting services in the CHT but now they are in ahead in this particular sector. The present study shows, 42.9 percent of Chakma, 26.3 percent of Marma, and 30 percent of Tripura respondents observed that those who are involved in the service category (see table no 5.1). After all, it could be positive outcomes of the CHT Peace Accord. In the CHT Peace Accord, Section: D, Provision 18, stated that “the permanent residents of Chittagong Hill Tracts with priority to the tribals shall be given appointment to all categories of officers and employees of all government, semi government, councils and autonomous bodies of Chittagong Hill Tracts. In case of non availability of eligible persons from the permanent residents of Chittagong Hill Tracts for a particular post,



the government may give contractual appointment or lien or for a definite period to such posts”. Thereby, most of the Phahari people specially Chakmas will be concentrated to the higher education. One of the Chakma respondents (22) mentioned that, “if after completing my graduation, it is sure that I will get a job, especially in the CHT because the CHT Peace Accord has created huge job opportunities for us; many posts remain vacant due to lack of eligible Phahari candidate, so it is a matter of time to reach there”. To be fair, during the fieldwork the present study observed that the Phaharis are rapidly going forward in terms of higher education due to *Quota* reservation which is elaborately explained in the chapter nine.

### **Occupational diversifications of adi Bengali and Bengali settler in CHT**

Bengalis are also involved in several kinds of occupation in the CHT and there are clear-cut differences between Adi Bengali and settler Bengalis’ occupation. The present research attempts at exploring Bengalis along with their occupation.

#### **Agriculture/ Jhum:**

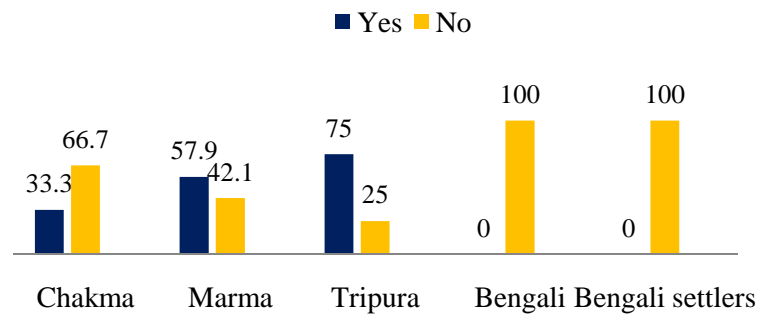
Although cultivation was the main source of income of most of the people in CHT nevertheless the livelihood of majority of adi Bengali households dependent on business along with least numbers were involved in agriculture. The proportion of Bengali settler households member in the activities of agriculture were very poor than others. Bengali settlers informed, there are very few land which are under the control of Bengalis settlers, because during the insurgency period most of them left their land and were relocated in Cluster Villages, thereby most of them lost their control over their lands; consequently they are not in good position in agriculture. Moreover, 15 percent of Bengali settlers are involved in agriculture. Conventionally, *jhuming* is not a farming system for the Bengalis. Most of the Phaharis were involved in this sector. Notwithstanding, the households survey of Dhaka Ahsania Mission (2000)<sup>83</sup>, has presented that, on an average 18% of the total population in the CHT were involved in farming through plough cultivation. Almost 14% Phahari households were involved in *Jhum* cultivation. Nearly two-thirds of rural households are farming households. Agriculture-related activities are the prime sources of household income

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<sup>83</sup> Dhaka Ahsania Mission 2000. *Development Issues and Priorities of Indigenous People in CHT*, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

across the communities. More than 9% of the population is day laborers in farm/non-farm. 47% of the Phahari and 30% Bengali earning members were females. About 9% of the households are female-headed. On an average, two-thirds people were employed as self-employed persons.

Chart-10: Presence of Getting any Facilities for the Production of Crops (%)



Source: Fieldwork data 2017

It is clearly revealed that all the Bengali settlers informed that they were not getting any sorts of facility for the production of crops, on the other hand, on an average almost half of the Phahari households informed that they were getting different kinds of facilities for producing crops from many organizations especially from NGOs (see chart no 10). During the fieldwork it was observed in the *Haduk Para*<sup>84</sup> for Tripura community, there were some experimental plots for fruits and vegetables introduced and financed by UNFPO and BSMRAU. Bengali settlers were not able to reach such kind of opportunities.

Photograph 1: Mango garden in Haduk Para



<sup>84</sup> The Haduk Para is situated beside the sadar upazila of Khagrachari district. It is one of the studied Paras where Tripura community is living.

Moreover, 1633 farmers' field schools have been established by UNDP<sup>85</sup> in CHT to teach farmers new techniques to improve agricultural production and increase their income. Nevertheless, no farmers' field school was observed in the cluster villages. Bengali settlers informed that, no development project or promoting initiative has been taken by the UNDP and other international agencies for the Bengali settlers of CHT.

### **Business**

Most of the Bengalis were involved in business and dominated this sector whereas Chakma community dominates the service sector. The table no 5.1 revealed that the, 45 percent of Bengali and 17.5 percent of Bengali settlers were involved in business. It is necessary to be noted here that 17.5 percent Bengali settlers were not truly businessman; they were doing business within very limited space like- tea stall owner, vending goods from door to door, small shopkeeper, etc. Major business sectors were under the control of both Phahari and Adi Bengalis, moreover some mega business like, tourism and hospitality were mostly controlled by the outsiders and army also involved with tourism and hospitality in the CHT (it is elaborately explained at the end of this chapter).

### **Services**

In the absence of formal sector, service did not emerge as a prominent Income Generating Activities (IGA) in CHT. However, about 12 percent Bengali settler households are involved in a variety of services. Before CHT peace accord the Phaharis had an insignificant representation in this sector. After twenty years of peace accord the present study explored that the Phaharis are now getting advanced in all kinds of service categories, especially Chakma community. It was observed that 15 percent of Bengali and only 2.5 percent of Bengali settlers were involved in services (see table no 5.1). It is also observed that Bengali settlers are very few in the service category compared to their other contemporaries. There were no Bengali settlers found who were involved in a government service sectors in CHT, however insignificant number (2.5%) of Bengali settlers were doing job in a lower level like-

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<sup>85</sup> For more see UNDP Bangladesh (2016) Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility (CHTDF), Report on: *what did CHTDF achieve since 2003*; Programme was started 15 April, 2003.

hotel and restaurant boy, house guard, auto driver, etc. most of the middle and higher level jobs in the CHT were under the positioning Phaharis, mainly Chakma and Adi Bengalis. One of the Bengali settlers Saiful Islam (39) living in the Ultachari Gucha Graam of Panchari Upazila said that, there is no 'job quota' for the Bengali settlers whereas Phaharis are enjoying all sorts of quota facilities including the job sector; moreover CHT peace accord has given them priority in the job sector. Nevertheless, IOs and NGOs are not showing their interest to the Bengali settlers in terms of providing job.

### **Day Labor**

In the day laborer category, none is found in the Chakma, Marma and Tripura categories but 10 percent were observed in Bengali category and the figure for Bengali settlers is obtained to be 22.5 percent (see table no 5.1). There were many laborers in the Phahari households but they were not day laborer. The Phahari respondents mentioned that, they are laborer as a 'self employed labor'. Sometimes they practice a '*labor sharing*' with no pay, only provide foods for that day. The '*labor sharing*' is one kind of loan system, for example if I give you labor for a day then you must return my labor when I need and if you are free for that day. On the contrary, there had been no labor sharing system within Bengalis community and usually they given labor for cash money.

### **'No Profession or no Job only Ration' Category**

There are many households observed in the cluster villages where Bengali settlers are living who have no profession. Among the all categories respondents the Bengali settlers were higher in position in terms of 'No Profession' category. Almost 22.5% Bengali settlers' households observed that they had no profession or no job only dependent on Government provided rations. Interestingly, this category people said, we have no profession, no job, without home maintenance and consuming rations, that's all.

### **Others Profession Category**

In the others profession category there are 15 percent Bengalis involved in this category and the respondents in Bengali settlers are 17.5 percent also involved in this particular category. In this 'others profession category' above 17 percent Bengali

settlers were involved in this particular category and some of them are involved in different types of work like auto drivers, furniture making helper, rickshaw puller and others small vehicle maker (mechanic), and others.

In the light of the above information here it is explicated that the Bengali settler household's conditions are very ordinary in terms of getting proper occupation. Their presence in services, agriculture, and businesses were very unmentionable, whereas some were doing work as a day labor, however, most of them were unemployed and fully dependent on government provided rations. Without providing them their economic condition would be worsened in course of time.

### 5.3 Status of Households Monthly Income, Expenditure and Savings

A socio-economic baseline survey has been conducted by UNDP in 2013<sup>86</sup>. Their findings regarding the Income, Expenditure, Savings and Credit are mentioned below, at the same time it would be helpful to understanding the present study, where economic conditions of ethnic communities are being stated at household level.

Table-5.2: Income, Expenditure, Savings and Credit of CHT people

Profiles	Intervention Households		None-implementation HH	
	Bengali	Tribal	Bengali	Tribal
Average household size	5.3	5.0	5.0	5.3
Average number of employed member per household	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.5
Annual net income per household Tk.	107747	96573	99723	87678
Amount of annual savings per household (Tk.)	29547	17156	9316	10025
Amount of annual expenditure per household (Tk.)	94266	86256	92589	89858

Source: Barkat and others, 2013; UNDP, 2013

Note: in implementation area, Paras/villages covered by CHTDF were treated as intervention Paras/villages, and out of their coverage Paras as non-implementation Paras. Households located in intervention, and non-implementation Paras/villages are respectively considered as intervention, and non-implementation households.

<sup>86</sup> For more see Abul Barakat and others, (2013) Socio-economic baseline survey of Chittagong Hill Tracts. Dhaka, Bangladesh: Human Development Research Center, Dhaka

Phahari people depend more on agriculture is the major source of income and Bengalis depend more on business as major source of income. Estimation by the UNDP (2013), annual net income of a household in their intervention areas are Tk. 101, 426, and Tk. 93,107 in non-implementation areas. The same for all households surveyed in 2008 was Tk. 85,050 (in constant price 2012). Annual household expenditure in intervention and non-implementation areas constitutes Tk. 89,742 and Tk. 91,088 respectively. In 2008, it was Tk. 80,434 (in constant price 2012). At present an average household in intervention areas outstanding credit amounting Tk. 28, 189. During survey 2008, the same was Tk. 8,597. The increase in outstanding credit amount is a plausible reflection of increased business activities especially among the Bengalis.

### **Present Status of Households Monthly Income, Expenditure and Savings**

Economic activities in CHT do not always bring direct cash income. An economic activity that brings direct cash income or produces goods and services for exchange whether in cash or barter. In some households members themselves do not earn cash money; rather than helping others in the household to do the same. Almost all households had at least one member involved in income generating activities (IGA). On average, Bengali households had the lowest number of their members involved in income generating activities. The Marmas, Chakmas, and Tripuras had more than two household members involved in income generating activities. Family members were engaged in more than one income generating activities in many households. Among those involved in multiple income generating activities, Chakma were involved in multiple IGAs in the highest number. The Bengalis had smaller number of members involved in multiple income generating activities<sup>87</sup>. Though the ordinary presence of Bengalis in multiple income generating activities, however it doesn't mean that their average income would be lower than others. Most of the Bengalis were engaged in non-farming activities like, business, trade, middleman or business agent and services. On the contrary, Bengali settlers could not become mainstream income generating activator in CHT, thus they couldn't change their position. When the CHT is rapidly changing with its inhabitants socio-economic condition, at the same time Bengali settlers are lagging behind in their standard. They had very limited space and options

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<sup>87</sup> For more read see Mohammad Rafi and A. Mushtaque R. Chowdhury, 2001. Pp. 99-100.

for doing income generating activity. One of the Bengali respondents Abdul Latif (50) living in the Comilla Tila of Sadar Upazila stated that, “Comilla Tila is a composite types of Cluster Village where Bengalis and Bengali settlers live together. Though we are all Bengali within the village notwithstanding Bengali settlers are clearly separate in terms of their socio-economic conditions. As he mentioned in his own words, “I have transport business and my household’s monthly income is more than 60,000TK, however you will not find any Bengali settler household in the whole Para/village who earn more than 20,00TK monthly. Most of them are living in under subsistence level because they have no more land for cultivation, no backup for doing business, no graduate officer who can assist their family, after all their social acceptability in wider canvas of CHT are very unfastened”. Moreover, it is needed to address properly that, how the Bengali settlers were going through with others community of the CHT. The present study has tried to explore household’s economic conditions of different ethnic communities compared to the Bengali settlers. Even the Bengali settlers don’t have much secondary resources to generate and contributed enough for their livelihood. The CHT household’s income, expenditure, savings are presented below, which can be handy to understand the actual condition of Bengali settlers as well as the economic dynamics of CHT.

### **Status of Household’s Monthly Income of Ethnic Groups**

The household’s monthly income is calculated by the data which was provided respective ethnic communities. Household’s monthly income that comes from their all aspects of income generating activities. Monthly incomes of the households are categories up to Tk. 10,000, up to Tk. 20,000, up to Tk. 30000, up to Tk. 40000, and above. The table 6.3 shows that the monthly average incomes of Phaharis were observed to be Tk. 25951 and that of Bengali are Tk. 21033. So the mean income is higher for Phaharis and lower for Bengalis. If we compare the average income according to the different ethnic groups it is observed that the average income for Chakma is Tk. 31746.03, that of Marma is 21184.21 and the figure for Tripura is Tk. 24925. On the other hand the mean income for Bengali is Tk. 32958.33 and those of Bengali settlers is Tk. 9108.33 .The result shows that the mean income is markedly low for the Bengali settlers compared to other ethnic groups. Among the Chakma respondents it is found that 47.6 percent earns up to Tk. 30000, and 42.9 percent earn 30000 to Tk. 40000, and only 9.5 percent households earn up to BDT 40000 per

month. When the figures are compared with the Adi Bengalis it is found that 35 percent households earn up to Tk. 30000, 25 percent earn up to Tk. 40000, and 30 percent households earn BDT 40000 and above.

Table-5.3: Monthly Households Income

Ethnic Groups and Percentage						
Monthly Income	Chakma	Marma	Tripura	Bengali	B. Settlers	Total
BDT up to 10000	--	10.5	15	--	80.0	30.8 (37)
10001 to 20000	--	42.1	15	10	12.5	15.0 (18)
20001 to 30000	47.6	42.1	45	35	7.5	30.8 (37)
30001 to 40000	42.9	5.3	15	25	--	15.0 (18)
40001 and above	9.50	--	10	30	--	8.3 (10)
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100 (120)
Average Monthly Income	31746.03	21184.21	24925	32958.33	9108.33	
	<b>25951.75</b>		<b>21033.33</b>			

Source: Fieldwork data 2017

On the basis of the table 5.3 it is manifested that the Bengalis and Chakmas were almost equivalently top position in terms of household's income, whereas Tripura and Marma household's income almost same position, but Bengali settler household's income was lowest in position than all categories households in CHT.

Table-5.4: Monthly Households Expenditure

Ethnic Groups and Percentage						
	Chakma	Marma	Tripura	Bengali	B. Settlers	Total
BDT up to 10000	4.8	--	5.0)	5.0	77.5	28.3 (34)
10001 to 20000	9.5	184.2	60	35	17.5	36.7 (44)
20001 to 30000	57.1	15.8	30	20	5.0	22.5 (27)
30001 to 40000	28.6	--	5.0	35	--	11.7 (14)
40001 and above	--	--	--	5.0	--	0.8 (1)
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100 (120)
Monthly Average Expenditure	27666.67	18105.26	21250	29200	9525	
	<b>22340.64</b>		<b>19362.50</b>			

Source: Fieldwork data 2017

The households' monthly expenditure of the different groups are illustrated in the table no 5.4. It is observed that on an average 28.3 percent households expenditure is up to Tk. 10000, 36.7 percent of the expenditure is between Tk.10000 to Tk. 20000, 22.5 percent respondents are in the category Tk. 20000 to Tk. 30000, 11.7 percent of



the households' monthly expenditure is Tk. 30000 to Tk. 40000, .8 percent respondents are in the category BDT 40,000 above. It is also observed that 57.1 percent of Chakma, 15.8 percent of Marma, 30 percent of Tripura, 20 percent of Bengali and only 5 percent of Bengali settler household's expenditure was up to 30000 Tk. However considering the entire respondent's opinion it is illustrated in the table that on an average Chakma household's expenditure was 27666.67 Tk. followed by Marma 18105.21 Tk., Tripura 24925 Tk., Bengali 32958.33 Tk., and Bengali settler household's expenditure was only 9525 Tk. Here Bengali settlers household's expenditures also lowest among the all categories of households. Bengali settler income was lowest that's why their household's expenditure also insignificant compared to others, they were following the concept that "cut your coat according to your cloth" notwithstanding their month ending balance is defaulted or hand to mouth position.

	Income (Tk.)	Expenditure (Tk.)	Savings (Tk.)
Chakma	31746.03	27666.67	4079.36
Marma	21184.21	18105.26	3078.95
Tripura	24925	21250	3675
Bengali	32958.33	29200	4758.33
Bengali Settlers	9108.33	9525	(-) 416.67 + Rations

Source: Fieldwork data 2017

The household's income, expenditure, and savings are revealed in the above table 5.5. When the monthly income value is in higher position, it is sometimes difficult to relate it to real life. As a result, adi Bengali households' position is upper than Chakma households in terms of income, expenditure, and savings and that their average savings were 4758.33 and 4079.36 respectively. The Marma and Tripura household's income, expenditure, and savings were almost same, though Tripura households little bit ahead than Marma. It is very interesting that the Bengali settler household's monthly deficit BDT 416.67 and there has no similarity between their income and expenditure. One important note should be incorporated here that is; Bengali settler's ration value was not calculated in the above table. If the subsidies of

food items from governmental allocation and its market value incorporated with their income than uprising the savings as well<sup>88</sup>.

#### **5.4 Status of Food Security in CHT and Bengali settlers**

The harsh environment and unrest for decades have made the hill tracts one of the most vulnerable regions in the country in terms of food security, income, employment, health, water and sanitation, education, access to infrastructure and services. The Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord, signed in 1997, brought an end to more than two decades of conflict, making it possible for the local population to start improving their lives. The Government of Bangladesh, particularly through the Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs, is committed to the implementation of the 1997 Peace Accord and the socio-economic development of this region. In recent years, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)<sup>89</sup> has partnered with MoCHTA and other CHT institutions to pursue food and nutrition security for the CHT people.

In the CHT, most rural households are highly vulnerable as they depend overwhelmingly on *Jhum* for survival. An effort to diversify into other agricultural and non-agricultural activities is a key to reducing risk and vulnerability, giving them greater opportunity for additional sources of income and food. Poverty, resource scarcity and poor service delivery are some of the main challenges of the people in the CHT, particularly in remote areas. Small farmers do not have access to affordable inputs such as good quality seeds, balanced fertilizers and effective storage items. If they had access to improved resources, technologies and services, farmers would be able to grow more and earn better. To achieve this, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) provides many key inputs to help farmers raise their agricultural productivity invest in additional livelihood activities and contribute to greater food security and income generation. However, during the fieldwork Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) activities in the field level has been observed in the Shaat

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<sup>88</sup> The settlers are getting 49 KGs of wheat and 35 KGs of rice total 84 KGs rice and wheat for a month. According to ration card holders; Per Kg wheat = 20TK and Per Kg rice = 35TK so, rice and wheat cash value will be,  $49 \times 20 = 980\text{TK}$  and  $35 \times 35 = 1225\text{TK}$  ( $1225 + 980 = 2205\text{TK}$ ). However, after adding total ration value 2205 TK with Bengali settler household's income then their monthly savings is  $(2205 - 416.67 = 1788.33)$  1788.33 Tk.

<sup>89</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) (2014), Achieving Food and Nutrition Security in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Bangladesh

Vhaiya Para (Marma para) and Haduk para (Tripura para) where many inputs to help farmers that FAO providing to raise productivity, such as balanced fertilizer, quality rice seed and grain, storage silos, water canes for irrigation, vegetables seeds, poultry feed and medicine. There has no activities of the Food and Agriculture Organization was observed within the Bengali settler's paras 'Cluster Villages'. Whereas the present study has observed the Bengali settles at four villages/paras in two different upalizas but no project or activities of UNDP, FAO or any other international agencies have not been found. By the initiatives and processes of international donor agencies the access to food in CHT has increased in general. Number of food deficiency months and days in intervention areas of UNDP has decreased substantially. About 56 percent households reported that they having access to food round the year in 2012 and average number of food deficit months in 2012 was 1.2 and it was 2.7 months in the year of 2008<sup>90</sup>. Nevertheless, almost 1729 rice-bank was established by the UNDP to provide option to 50,000 households to borrow rice and overcome food shortage. However, Bengali settlers were not included that type of promotion programme. One of the Bengali settlers Mohammed Charag Ali (65) living in the *Shalban Gucha Graam* since 1980. As he mentioned, though the Bengali settlers are getting ration from the Government. that's why IOs and NGOs might be seemed that no crisis prevailing within the Bengali settler's households, but all the Bengali settlers are not ration card holder, for example, there are sixteen hundred families were living in the *Shalban Gucha Graam* but only 427 ration card holders are getting ration there. It means a huge number of settlers were vulnerable in terms of food security. Nevertheless, NGOs were turn blind eye towards Bengali settles. However, no separate survey report has been found on Bengali settler to understanding their poverty scenarios. Moreover, their socio-economic condition was behind hand as the present study has been observed during the fieldwork, which is explained later in this chapter.

### **5.5 Understanding Bengali settlers within the Trades and Business in CHT**

The CHT is source of forestry, vegetables, fruits and raw materials of pharmaceuticals of the country. It has the potentials to become a business hub of this region. In terms of living strategy there are clear-cut differences between Phahari and Bengali. The

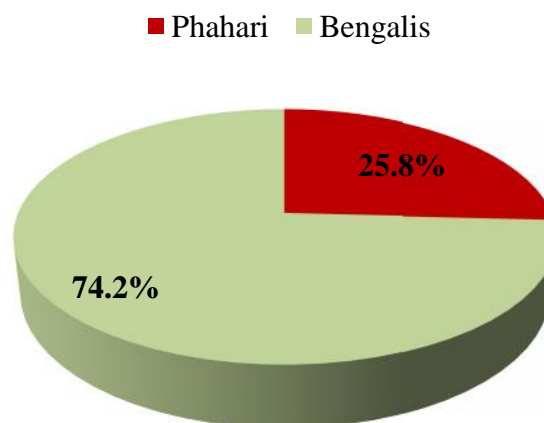
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<sup>90</sup> For more see Abul Barakat and others, (2009) Socio-economic baseline survey of Chittagong Hill Tracts, ;CHTDF of UNDP, Bangladesh 2013

Phahari people depend more on agriculture/*Jhuming* is the major source of income and Bengalis depend more on business as major source of income. Trade is a basic economic concept involving the buying and selling of goods and services, with compensation paid by a buyer to a seller, or the exchange of goods or services between parties.

Chart-11: Status of Controlling Majority of the Trades and Business in CHT

The Bengalis trade status has been compared to Phaharis in this study. When asked about the controlling of trade it was observed that 25.8 percent respondents has said that the trades are



controlled by the Phaharis and 74.2 percent informed that the trades are under the controlling of Bengalis (see the chart no 11). Though the Bengalis are controlling most of the business in the CHT nevertheless Phaharis also superintend some business sector like- handicrafts business. Handicraft business is gaining popularity in 25 Upazilas of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) as the trade proves to be profitable. At least 500 handicraft centers are selling products worth BDT 45-50 lakh a day, fetching hefty profits mainly for the local Phahari people. According to businesses in the area, they can easily mark 30 percent of sales turnover as profit as they sell products that are high in quality. Traders from Chittagong, Rangamati, Bandarban and Comilla come to Khagrachari, Rangamati and Bandarban to buy local handmade products. The other buyers are tourists. Handicraft businessmen said that, the centers have become shelters for the unemployed men and women in the area. Officials with Bangladesh Small Cottage Industry Corporation in Khagrachari district said about one lakh Phahari people from 500 villages weave items, including lungi, gamchha, scarf, khaddar, sari, pinon, thami, bed sheet, shawls and decorative pieces. There are around 60 handloom-textile enterprises, with another 5,000 waist looms in the homes of

Phahari people in CHT. Thousands are directly or indirectly dependent on this business. A major part of the demand for the products in the area is also met by the industry<sup>91</sup>. Notwithstanding, some Bengali respondents/businessman mentioned that, they were trying to create a fixed link between hill and plain land people by some sorts of business. Most of the Phaharis involved in Jhum where they produce agricultural goods and Bengali businessmen buy these goods then sell to the plain land's businessman; Jummas and Bengali businessman both are benefited by this process. However, Bengali settlers were not included in this process thereby; they are not benefited from that sort of businesses. Afsar (72) (one of my Bengali settler respondents) who lives in Comilla Tial Gucha Gram under the Sada Upazila of Khagrachari mentioned that "in the Khagrachari district the Bengali settlers are not strongly sufficient in households economy whereas most of them are depending on the government's ration so, how can they do business cash money. Moreover, they couldn't be able to manage lone easily from the banks or any other local financial organizations for most of the organizations didn't believe them without strong documents, thereby they cannot do business parallel to others groups". He also informed that, there are few misunderstanding and mistrust existing about the Bengali settlers that caused them to be lag-behind and outsider in socio-economic arena. However, there is no organization that comes to share their hardship by working together. Therefore, considering all of these arguments and logics, it is obvious that the Bengali settlers' presence in the business sector in CHT is not mentionable in position.

### **Tourism and Hospitality Business**

Chittagong Hill Tracts, the most prominent region of Bangladesh is said to be the dream place for tourists for its natural beauty and favorable climate and landscape. Liberal Cultural practice of ethnic communities is an added advantage to the visitor coming from the outside of CHT. Even the way of life of different ethnic communities is a vital element for tourist attraction where the tourist can learn many practical things. Because of lavish nature and life style, home building pattern, mood

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<sup>91</sup> Quoted from, the Daily Star (2009). *CHT: Living off handicrafts*, report prepared by Jasim Majumder, Khagrachari. August 27, 2009.

of production and simplicity of people's nature, CHT has enormous potentiality to spread tourism out. Affluence of natural beauty, rich cultural heritage and ethnic diversity, the diversity of sight-seeing and adventure opportunities available is the prospective in developing tourism here<sup>92</sup>. Some of the traditionally attractive and beautiful places mentioned below can be considered as tourist spot as a whole<sup>93</sup>. Panchhari Shantipur Aranya Kuthir, Alutila Parjatan Kendra, Khagrachary Parjatan Motel, Alutila Toigereng, Thalipara Tripura gram, Eco Inn, Dighinal Manikya Dighi, Ramgarh Parjatan Lake, Bhagaban Tila, Goyakhali Toiduchara Jharna in Khagrachari district are the mention worthy<sup>94</sup>. Beyond these, there are many heaven-like beautiful places which can easily be visited in Rangamati and the Bandarban too. Professional diversity is happening day by day and it needs to be supported to refraining inhabitants from extracting forest resources in inconsiderable manner.

The present study has tried to understand the Bengali settlers within the tourism and hospitality business hub of the CHT. In the table 5.6 tourism businesses in terms of ownership and its features are revealed. The data shows that most of the tourism business operated by Bengalis and least of the owner were Bengali settlers. Above 32% tourism related business owned by Bengalis and only 2.5% owned by Bengali settlers. The second highest portion tourism business operate by Phaharis. More than 28 percent business owned by Phahari and almost same portion 26.7% operated by government institution like military business wing. More or less 10 percent tourism business operated by outsiders, nevertheless they are not living in the CHT.

	No. of Respondents	Percent
Adi Bengali	39	32.5
Bengali settler	3	2.5
Hilly people	34	28.3
Govt./Army	32	26.7
Outsiders	12	10.0
Total	120	100.0

Source: Fieldwork 2017

<sup>92</sup> Lalit C. Chakma (2015), Writer is a development activist, Researcher and Thinker on Peace in CHT, Bangladesh.

<sup>93</sup> For more see Parjatan Bichitra, Dhaka, Issue-5, April 2010

<sup>94</sup> Tripura, Provangshu (2012): Parbatyaanchaler Darshaniya Stan o stapatyer porichiti. Rega: adivasi sahitya o sangkriti bishoyak ekti chhoto kagoj Ed. Intumoni Talukder.

Bengalis are related with many types of business like Residential hotels, restaurants, transportation, tourist sports operation, tourist guide and others. On the other hand, Phaharis are usually operating different type of business like residential hotel, traditional handicrafts producer, tourist goods related shops owner and sales, doing job as a sales girl/boy and others.

Tourism sector has the potential to make a huge contribution in the economy of Bangladesh. By ensuring proper development of this sector, it is possible to earn a large amount of foreign currency which will contribute to the growth of national economy. The sector provides an ample employment opportunity for the people who are directly or indirectly involved in this sector. It is a service providing sector. The unemployment problem of the country can be reduced partly by developing necessary infrastructure of this sector<sup>95</sup>. Nonetheless, it will help to increase household income at community level and as well as the revenue of the government. It will also help reduce the economic gap between the rich and poor people of the country.

### **Trends of Tourism: the Present Scenarios**

As Bangladesh is getting economic growth day by day, hence, countrymen are economically sound than previous time, domestic tourism has also been increased tremendously. As a consequence of the economic growth, people's aspiration to discover the countryside is extended largely. Upliftment of life style also leads to the people mobility on tour purpose. In recent trend, the teen ager and the professional who frequently visit the areas also contributed in increasing the rate of tourist entrance in cluster wise area. In tourism sector, nowadays, in CHT security forces have become an inevitable actors for tourism promotion since they have built many resorts, recreation point and attractive places of which *Nilgiri* resort at Banderban, Lake Paradise and Jibtoly resort in Kaptai, Agottor at Baghaichory and Heritage Park at Chengi Bridge, Khagrachari. Sajek, the remote unions of Rangamati came into the attention for developing as tourist destination by security forces and a big amount of money has already been spent over there to built infrastructure i.e. road, footpath and

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<sup>95</sup> For read more see: Md. Lutfur Rahman, at el (December 2010): *An Overview of Present Status and Future Prospects of the Tourism Sector in Bangladesh*: Journal of Bangladesh Institute of Planners Vol. 3, pp. 65-75, Dhaka.

rest houses<sup>96</sup>. Existing tour operators and tour operating agencies those operate in CHT are Dhaka based or divisional head quarter. Participation of local people in this field is quite negligible. They are not aware enough that this field can be a potential job creator for local unemployed. Local people's attitude towards tourism is still in stigma.

Nevertheless, on the perspective of *Phaharis* interest some academician mentioned the present scenarios of tourism in the CHT. As Mukti Chakma (2016)<sup>97</sup> explained "By considering the issue of tourism development in the historical context of indigenous ownership and occupation of the CHT, which has been undermined through two different colonial periods of British and Pakistan respectively and the assimilation policy of the current Bangladesh government, this thesis argues that tourism development on IP lands is really about marginalizing and disempowering IPs, and economic growth is just a façade"

Moreover, unexpected political clash, ethnic conflict and extra ordinary administrative interferences are persistent with socioeconomic nature which breed drawback for tourism promotion in CHT area. Tourism is considered to be one of the important means to drive economic growth of the country. This is because tourism is promoted to be a panacea that alleviates poverty by creating massive scale of employment and income generation opportunities for the local people like Bengali settlers. Though there are huge opportunities to contribute in tourism hence, Bengali settlers are get to avail that opportunity. The obvious reasons that lack of awareness, lack of proper education regarding such kind of business, economic hardship and also tendency to depend on free ratios Bengali settlers were slothful thereby didn't actively involve with tourism business sector.

### **5.6 Overall Economic Conditions of Bengali settles (before and after Settlement)**

Bengali settlers population are economically dependent on government subsidies rations, the gap in living standards between settlers and other inhabitants of CHT are

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<sup>96</sup> For more see Lalit C. Chakma 2015)

<sup>97</sup> Mukti Chakma (2016): *Tourism Development in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh: The Impact on Indigenous Peoples (IPs)*: Unpublished thesis, Master of International Development School of History and International Relations, Faculty of Social and Behavioural Science, Flinders University



widening in course of time. However, after CHT peace accord, not only new development initiatives have been taken by the national and international NGOs moreover, innovative and income generating activities were introduced for improving livelihood of ethnic groups, particularly for those who were not Bengali settlers. This, in turn, is likely to accelerate them backwards.

The present study has also attempted to explore the Bengali settlers' actual conditions before and after settlement in the CHT. This initiative would be helpful to understand whether the Bengali settlers were loser or in better position for getting settlement 'opportunity' in the CHT or not. Economic conditions of the Adi Bengali and Bengali settlers are assessed dividing the variable 'improvement in the family in terms of economic condition' into several categories like "much better than before", "medium than before" and "worse than before". It is observed that the Bengali settlers' economic conditions in-between after and before settlement in the CHT are shown in table 6.7.

<b>Table-5.7: Status of Households in terms of Economic Condition than before</b>	
	<b>Bengali settlers in percent</b>
<b>Much better than before</b>	<b>10.0</b>
<b>Medium than before</b>	<b>25.0</b>
<b>Worse than before</b>	<b>65.0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: fieldwork data 2017

The table 5.7 presents that there are 10 percent Bengali settlers who opined that their condition improved much than before, the figure is found to be 25 percent who told that their condition is medium than before and 65 percent told that their condition became worse than before settlement.

However, between the two categories Bengalis majority of the Bengali settlers could not change their condition from their previous condition and the Adi Bengali households have changed their condition in a better way than their other counterparts.

Table-5.8: Status of Job Facilities Before and After Settlement

Job facility	Bengali settlers in percent
More in the previous place	35.0
Better here	25.0
Same as before	40.0
Total	100

Source: fieldwork data 2017

The job facilities are divided into different categories like “there was a job facility in the previous place”, job facilities are more here, and the third one is same as before. The table no 5.8 illustrates the job facilities in CHT for the Bengali settlers. Among the Bengali settlers 35 percent has given opinion that there was job facilities in the previous district, 25 percent thought that job facilities are more here and the rest (40 percent) of the Bengali settlers’ respondents thought that job facilities are same as before. Moreover, if we give attention to the job opportunities for the Adi Bengalis that there has no crisis of job for them in the CHT. On the other hand, job facilities were better in the previous district for Bengali settlers than their counterparts.

Table-5.9: Presence of Children’s Education Facilities than Before

	Bengali settlers in percent
Good in the previous district	20.0
Good here	57.5
Same as before	22.5
Total	100

Source: fieldwork data 2017

A child of today is the leader in the future. But it depends on proper education and better nurturing during their childhood. When asked to the respondents how was their children’s educational facility than before, someone is in favor of good in the previous district, someone is in favor of good and someone is in favor of same as before. Among the respondents 20 percent of the Bengali settlers respondents told that their children’s educational facilities were good in the previous district (see table no 5.9), whereas the comparable figure is observed to be 57.5 percent in the good category and above 20 percent told that their children’s educational facilities remained same as before.

### Status of Household's Security Facilities

Household's security is an important factor for the dwellers and it is the precondition to improve the productivity of a person. When compared the household security facilities than before settlement in CHT the variable is divided into 'good in the previous district', good here, and bad in the present time, and remain same as before.

Table-5.10: Presence of Households Security Facilities than Before	
	Bengali settlers in percent
Good in the previous district	32.5
Good here	27.5
present time bad here	30.0
Same as before	10.0
Total	100

Source: fieldwork data 2017

Among the Bengali settlers it is observed that 32.5 percent are in the category of good in the previous district, 27.5 percent respondents told that the facilities remain good, 30 percent mentioned that the facilities became worse than before, and only 10 percent are in the opinion that their facilities remain same as before. In terms of household security facilities Bengali settler responds mentioned that the overall security facility almost same in the CHT and their previous district.

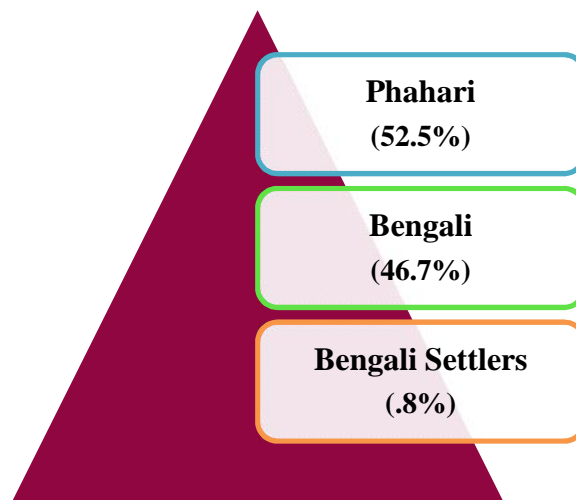
It is manifested by the above discussion; in an average Bengali settler's conditions were not improved in terms of economy, job facility, households' and security. Moreover, Most of the Bengali settler's households informed their economic conditions are as before, albeit only few respondents of them said economic conditions are better than before. Condition of job facility also lower than their before districts, at the same time majority household's mentioned working facilities in CHT as same as before. However, they have given different opinion regarding children's educational facility that they are now getting better opportunity for educational. On the contrary, they also mentioned that, during the insurgency period there was no scope for getting education thereby whole generation were growing up almost without institutional education. After Peace Accord, political situations in the CHT were improving without some unavoidable circumstances and Bengali settlers are trying to achieve higher education. Nevertheless, most of the settlers' households feel insecure to move away from their social boundary because most of the army camps were

withdrawal due to pledge of the CHT Peace Accord. For more details see the chapter ten ethnic conflicts section where it is discussed about the status of CHT Peace Accord implementation and current situation of CHT.

### 5.7 Positioning of Ethnic Groups in Terms of Socio-Economic Conditions

The present study has taken a challenge to determine that which community in is better position in terms of socio economic conditions. It was very difficult to measure socio-economic status of different ethnic communities, that's why the present study has gone through very transparently and in natural way that it has raised a question to the respondents for getting opinion that 'comparatively whose condition is good, better, and best among the communities' thereby the respondents have given their own opinions without any interference. The chart no. 12 clearly presents the positioning of different groups of the CHT on the basis of their socio-economic conditions.

Chart-12: Community opinion about 'Who Stood First Position in Terms of Socio-Economic Conditions in CHT'



Source: fieldwork data 2017

The outcomes of the above chart assess that the good, batter, and best position of the studied groups in the CHT. Among the 120 respondents 56 are found for the Bengali, 63 are observed for the Phahari and remain single respondent has given opinion in favor of Bengali settlers. If we compare the percentage of respondents in different categories it was found that 46.7 percent of the total respondents mentioned that the Bengalis are in best position in the CHT with consideration of their overall socio-

economic conditions. On the other hand, 52.5 percent of the total respondents informed that collectively the Phaharis are in best position compared to their Bengali counterpart. However, the rest 0.8 percent said the Bengali settlers are comparatively in better position. So considering all the opinions it is illustrated in the chart 15 that the Phaharis is in the best and Bengalis in good and Bengali settlers are insignificantly remarkable in position in terms of all over socio-economic conditions. However, the overall assessment indicates that the economic dynamics made dwellers interaction as well as hierarchy positioning in the CHT.

## **CHAPTER- 6: Development of CHT and Bengali settlers**

- 6.1 Introduction**
- 6.2 Estimation of Bengali settlers Population in Khagrachari District**
- 6.3 The Notion of Development in the CHT**
- 6.4 Government Initiatives for Development to the CHT People**
- 6.5 International Donor Agencies Initiatives for CHT Development**
- 6.6 Policies and Laws Relating to Phaharis in the name of Indigenous People**
- 6.7 Development Challenges and Status of Poverty in the CHT**
- 6.8 CHT Development VS Bengali settlers**
- 6.9 Development Initiatives by Local NGOs in Khagrachari**

## 6.1 Introduction

According to the objectives, the present research has tried to unfold the development features of the CHT. However, it is also needed to explore that what is the actual positioning of Bengali settlers within the development dynamics in the CHT. As mentioned before, the poor Bengali settlers are going through economic hardship and ethno-political conflicts in CHT. Though, historically there were many types of development processes which we have seen during the different period, such as development in British, Pakistan and Bangladesh period. Therefore, the present study has intended to explore the post peace accord conditions regarding the development dynamics in CHT. In this chapter, the first intension is to understand what kind of development initiatives has been taken by the government and nongovernment organizations for the CHT people, then to determine who the actual beneficiaries are.

## 6.2 Estimation of Bengali settlers Population in Khagrachari District

Before discussing the development dynamics and Bengali settlers' position in the CHT, it is necessary to know the total population living in the study areas. There has been no actual statistical or census data about the total population of Bengali settlers in 3 hill districts. However, the present study has given concentration to calculate the total population of Bengali settlers in the Khagrachari district. Bengali settlers were living in only 80 Cluster Villages (*Gucha Graam*) of the Khagrachari District. However, it is assumed that they are more or less one fourth of the total population of Khagrachari district. The assumption on the basis of some statistical calculation that is- there are 80 Bengali villages/ Paras holding 26262 families and all of them receive rations against their ration cards<sup>98</sup>. The average family size of is 4.54 in Khagrachari district<sup>99</sup>. Therefore, about 119229 Bengali settlers are living in the Khagrachari district. On the other hand, the total Population of the Khagrachari district is 613917 among them 316987 Phahari and remaining 296930 are both Adi Bengali and settlers. Out of Bengalis 296930 and only 119229 are Bengali settlers which are 29693 – 119229 Bengali settlers = 167701 Adi Bengali population. The Bengali settlers' population in the Khagrachari might be more than that calculation because many

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<sup>98</sup> For more see Thomas Feeny 2001, *The Fragility of Peace in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh* - in *Forced Migration Review*, October 2001  
Internet: <http://www.fmreview.org/FMRpdfs/FMR11/fmr11.10.pdf>

<sup>99</sup> For more see *Khagrachari District Statistics*, 2011

households observed that they are not ration card holder but settled and permanently have been living in the CHT since 1979. Here question is that, why it is needed to calculate these people in particular, yes, it is obviously needed for the purpose of the understanding and dynamics of the development initiatives by NGOs and International Organizations (IOs). Development initiatives won't see the face of leaving the Bengali settlers aside.

In corresponding to the total HH in Khagrachari district are 133792 in the year of 2011<sup>100</sup>. Out of the total households 70460 HHs are different ethnic groups except Bengalis. Total Bengali households are 63332 However, total adi Bengali HHs are  $(63332-26262) = 37070$  hence, it means about one fourth of total households were Bengali settlers alone in the Khagrachari. Moreover, there are 1704 Para/villages in the Khagrachari District and Bengali settlers were living only in 80 Cluster Villages/Paras. As a result, how Bengali settlers are living in Khagrachari as well as total CHT. It is very unhygienic and congested situation for their livelihood without changing decade after decades.

Therefore, it is evident that Bengali settlers in CHT are backward and under subsistence level. They have very limited space or scope to change their socio-economic condition without assistance from the both GOs and NGOs. In this study no Bengali settler's Para (Cluster Village) was found where the UNDP operates their development activities for the welfare of the Bengali settlers. But the UNDP has been operating their development activities in all 3 districts of CHT, 20 Upazilas (out of 25) and 3,257 Paras/ Villages (out of 6,087), prioritizing the remote and underserved areas. Although most of the Cluster Villages are situated in the remote and underserved areas however Bengali settlers' are not included in the UNDP's development activities. This section tries to explore this issue based on the evidences of the development dynamics of CHT.

### **6.3 The Notion of Development in the CHT**

Scholarly writings of the different researchers show that the Phahari people of the CHT have become too painfully aware, 'development' for them proved dislocation,

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<sup>100</sup> For more see Khagrachari District Statistics, 2011



disruption, and destruction<sup>101</sup>. When the Hydro-Electric project was constructed on the bank of Karnafuli river in Rangamati. For this a huge lake was created to the north and east of a barrage at Kaptai Village during 1957-1962 with US financial and technical assistance, the constructed dam had far-reaching consequences on the hill people. No social impact study of the project was made before its construction. It made nearly 10,000 Chakma ploughing families having proprietary rights, and 8,000 Chakma jumia families comprising more than 100,000 persons landless and homeless. It also affected about 8000 Bengalis and 1,000 Marmas<sup>102</sup>. The Government rehabilitated 5633 families who received three acres of inferior land which on average was half of their original holding. In this rehabilitation programme the government favored the Bengalis. It settled 570 Bengali families in the best available land at the Kassalong tract<sup>103</sup>. The kinds of development projects that have been undertaken in the CHT since the 1970s in the wake up of the armed movement organized by the Jana Samhati Samiti don't do much to alleviate the fears and suspicion of the local people. On the contrary, development was conceived of as a counter against 'insurgency' as can be inferred from the fact that the CHT Development Board (CHTDB) used to be headed by military commanders until very recently<sup>104</sup>. However, in the post-peace accord, there is now a genuine opportunity for promoting development activities that is sustainable, participatory and truly beneficial to the local people.

The political turbulence which lasted for a little more than two decades (1974-1996) in CHT have barred development organizations from taking any significant initiative directed towards the poor in the region. The signing of the Peace Agreement in 1997 created an environment for such ventures in the region. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) had made their presence felt in the region starting from the early part of the 1980s. Most of these are small local NGOs endeavoring from income generation, better health, and education for the CHT people. On the other hand,

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<sup>101</sup> For recent assessment of the "aggregation of development" in the CHT, see Muhamad (1997).

<sup>102</sup> For more see M. Q. Zaman 1982, Crisis in Chittagong Hill Tracts, Ethnicity and Integration, EPW. January 16, Bombay: India

<sup>103</sup> For more see Sopher 1963, p. 350-351

<sup>104</sup> Prashanta Tripura 2000, Culture, Identity and Development in the Chittagong Hill Tracts; in edited book of Philip Gain: The Chittagong Hill Tracts: Life and Nature at Risk. Dhaka: Society for Environment and Human Development (SHED).

Christian missionaries have been active although in the region for a long time. Besides converting the people of the region to Christianity the missionaries provided economic, education, and health assistance to the converted<sup>105</sup>. The Peace Accord created a more favorable environment for assistance activities in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (1999-2003). Unlike all other regions of Bangladesh, the armed conflicts of the past decades have been severely restricted the activities of NGOs in the CHT (Aarens and Chakma, 2002). Notwithstanding the foregoing, many national and transnational NGOs, International Donor Agencies as well as a growing number of newly formed local NGOs have begun operation in the CHT. The Huge Development activities were launched after a joint assessment by the government and the UNDP (2003) reported that the CHT is safe for development workers to return and that it is important to provide facilities in the tension torn CHT.

#### **6.4 Government Initiatives for Development to the CHT People**

The government committed itself to a large-scale development programme for the region and has started rising funds for the purpose. Development in the CHT started after the signing of the Peace Accord in 1997. Fifteen years of systematic development efforts have brought improvement, but much remains to be done. A number of steps were taken by the present government immediately after it took power in 2009 as a demonstration of political support of the CHT. Among these were the establishment of the National Committee for Implementation of the CHT Peace Accord and the Task Force on Rehabilitation of the Returnee Refugees and Internal Displaced People. In order to resolve land disputes, the Ministry of CHT Affairs, having consulted with the CHTRC<sup>106</sup>, finalized a 13-point amendment proposal of the Land Dispute Resolution Commission Act of 2001; the amended draft amended Act was recently approved by the Cabinet, paving the way for the formation of a five-member Chittagong Hill Tracts Land Dispute Resolution Commission for resolving

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<sup>105</sup> For more read see Mohammad Rafi and A. Mushtaque R. Chowdhury, 2001.

<sup>106</sup> The CHTRC has been established and its mandate has been legally secured in the Regional Council Act of 1998. Although the tribal and gender representation on the CHTRC is specified in the Peace Accord and its Act, its actual membership is to be elected by the elected members of the HDCs. This has not taken place as HDC elections continues, over a decade later the compilation of a new voters list of land owners, which is being delayed by the large number of outstanding disputed land titles. Membership of both the CHTRC and the three HDCs is presently through Government nomination. There has been an inadequate administrative budget provision for the CHTRC and this has restricted staff recruitment and the CHTRC's ability to carry out its development and supervisory functions.

land disputes in the three hill districts. A number of temporary army camps were also removed. The establishment of these bodies together with the new governance system mean that the institutional arrangements for carrying out development activities are now in place and functional. This has created opportunities for further efforts in the Chittagong Hill Tracts to improve lives.

Recently the Government has stated the features of development which are ongoing throughout the CHT. The Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina stated the CHT development, while she was speaking at a function making the foundation stone-laying of 'Parbatya Chattagram Complex' (Chittagong Hill Tracts Complex) at the capital's Bailey road. The government is committed to amend the Land Reform Act, 2001 to gear up the activities of the CHT Land Reform Commission. She said the CHT peace treaty is the only deal in the world which was done without the help of any third party; huge refugees were repatriated, while 1800 members of the Shanti Bahini surrendered their arms. She also mentioned her government constructed 1,369 km of roads in three districts, 873 km of transmission lines for smooth supply of electricity and established a Science and Technology University and a medical college in Rangamati. The CHT complex will have a six-storey building with a multi-purpose hall, dormitory, administrative building, museum, library and residences for the CHT Affairs Minister and Chairman of the CHT Regional Council. The complex will be built on a 1.94-acre of land costing BDT 106 crore and is expected to be opened by June 2018. In this connection, the Government has made an elaborate need-analysis for the region. The donors (e.g. United Nations Development Programme, Asian Development Bank, World Bank, European Economic Council, etc) have made independent need-assessments in 1998-1999 for the region. All the assessments put emphasis on the development of infrastructure, harmonious relationship among the ethnic groups, agriculture, forestry, fish cultivation etc.<sup>107</sup>. Nevertheless, UNDP assessment during spring 2003 concluded that the area was safe for starting development activities. Medicines Sans Frontiers (MSF) is the first aid organization to earn permission to work in the region, where unkept promises of autonomy for the tribal people resulted in off-and-on low-level conflict. Access to health care, especially for the non-

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<sup>107</sup> For more see The Daily Jugantor, 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2000.

Bengali population, is limited (MSF 2000)<sup>108</sup>. Because of the ongoing conflicts very few development organizations were working in the CHT area before the accord of 1997. However, in the post accord era many big national NGOs have expanded their activities and services in the region.

### **6.5 International Donor Agencies Initiatives for CHT Development**

After the implementation of the treaty, focus is on the improvement of livelihood of these marginalized and deprived people, especially the Phaharis, who have got a new dimension with development initiatives taken by the Government, and development partners. In the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Article 28(4), Phahari peoples are recognized as backward section of population and provision of positive discrimination regarding any types of development efforts is enshrined. On the line of the constitutional recognition International Donor Agencies and NGOs have taken various development initiatives for the CHT people especially for the Phahari people. On the contrary, Bengali settlers were not under consideration of these international agencies and NGOs, thereby many problems created among the CHT groups protesting prejudiced development initiatives. The international donor agencies and NGOs development initiatives are mentioned below, at the same time the present research tries to unfold that what kind of development is going through in the CHT and where the Bengali settlers are standing within the development dynamics.

#### **1) First Project of Asian Development Bank (ADB 2003)**

The project was the first development initiative in the CHT since the signing of the Peace Accord in 1997. In October 2000, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved a loan for the Chittagong Hill Tracts Rural Development. The project covered all three districts (Khagrachhari, Rangamati, and Bandarban) of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) of Bangladesh. The project executing agency was the new Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs (MoCHTA)<sup>109</sup>. The implementing

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<sup>108</sup> Medicines Sans Frontiers (MSF) (2000) is an international, independent, medical humanitarian organization. MSF was founded in Paris, France in 1971

<sup>109</sup> Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs: In order to deal with all major administrative and developmental matters related to the Chittagong Hill Tracts, the establishment of a separate ministry for regional affairs, headed by an indigenous person and advised by an advisory committee, was included in the Accord, and the Ministry was formally established in 1998.

agency was the CHT Regional Council (CHTRC) supported by the three hill district councils (HDCs); the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) of the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives; the community development committees (CDCs) from all 111 unions in the three districts; and the Palli Karma Shahayak Foundation (PKSF). The design of the project objectives of poverty reduction through the development of basic infrastructure and the creation of more income and employment opportunities through skill development and microfinance. Against the backdrop of pervasive absolute poverty in the CHT, the inaccessibility of the region and its poor communication network, and the lack of development initiatives during more than two decades of insurgency, the project was a boon to the millions of rural poor people in the CHT, especially for the Phahari people. The project was estimated as \$60.30 million, out of this \$11.03 million from foreign countries such as \$8.30 million and \$2.70 million was contributed by Asian Development Bank and DANIDA respectively. The remaining \$49.27 million has been contributed by the local Government. As the ADB mentioned the project was especially for the indigenous people (Phaharis) thereby Bengali settlers were seems to be deprived from this project. During the fieldwork it was also observed that the Bengali settlers informed they never heard about such kind of development project because they are not included in such development.

## **2) Second Project of Asian Development Bank (2011) on Rural Development of CHT**

The second project of ADB has been designed largely based on the lessons from: (i) the implementation of CHTRDP-I; (ii) the outcomes of the CHT study for Potential for Integrated Small-Scale Water Resources and (iii) the PPTA Concept Paper. Preliminary field scoping investigations were undertaken in parallel with extensive literature review and meeting discussions with other development partners operating in CHT. Project design will continue and enhance the work of CHTRDP-I taking into account the review of achievements and the experiences of other development initiatives in the CHT area including those of NGOs and UN. The project cost was \$55 million in 2011. The themes of this project are to ensure the economic growth, social development, gender equality, and capacity development. The project is ongoing and expected loan closing date is June 2019. The Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs Bangladesh is the executing agency of this project. The project has

included separate planning frameworks; namely, a Land Acquisition and Resettlement Framework (LARF), and an Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP). The project has targeted poor people in the CHT area including indigenous peoples, women and other vulnerable groups.

The project has intention to support institutional strengthening of MOCHTA, CHTRC and HDC to plan, implement and monitor sustainable rural development in the three districts (Rangamati, Khagrachari and Banderban) of CHT. The Project is community driven and designed to: (i) improve livelihoods; (ii) food security and nutrition; and (iii) reduce poverty among the rural population in the three CHT districts. For understanding the living condition as well as development dynamics in the CHT, the present study has been conducted at four Cluster Villages in the two Upazilas of Khagrachari district where the Bengali settlers informed that they are not the people for whom ADB project has been taken.

### **3) UNDP Project (2009) on the Promotion of Development and Confidence Building in the CHT**

In its implementation, UNDP is working closely with the main governmental institutions that are specifically set-up for the development of the region, primarily the Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs (MoCHTA), the CHT Regional Council (CHTRC), the Hill Districts Council (HDC), the Traditional Circle Chiefs System, and the CHT Development Board (CHTDB). The CHTDF actively facilitates the empowerment of poor indigenous communities (Phahari communities), and currently over 1600 communities scattered throughout the hills and comprising of at least 200-250,000 people, implement small scale projects funded by the Quick Impact Fund – so far over 2.4 Mio € have been paid out under this scheme. The project was started 1/1/05 end: 30/9/09 and the project budget was €42 million, among this the European Commission donation was €23.5 million. The Ministry of Chittagong Hills Tracts Affairs was the implementing agency. The project aimed at socio-economic development of Chittagong Hill Tracts and confidence building among communities towards a sustainable peace. The programme has specific attention for safeguarding the traditional cultures, customs and ways of life of all the different indigenous communities, nonetheless with a specific focus on the minorities within the minority groups.

Here it is clear within the objectives of this project; which they mentioned that ‘the project has specific attention for safeguarding the traditional cultures, customs and ways of life of all the different indigenous communities’, Bengali settlers are not eligible for getting benefits from this project because this project is only for Phahari community.

#### **4) UNICEF Project (1997): Integrated Community Development Project**

UNICEF has partnership with the Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs to support specific interventions to contribute to the improvement of the lives of women and children in the CHT. As part of the Integrated Community Development Project, services were decentralized to the grassroots level, to the Para (village). The project supported a new concept at the community level, for Paras to build their own "para centre", a delivery point for basic social services. Each para centre had a catchment area of approximately 25-30 houses. To date, 2220 para centers exist in over 1800 paras of which 70 per cent are for indigenous communities. The estimated population served is 340,000. The para centers are managed and run by community members, women in most cases. The para workers have at least eighth grade schooling and were initially provided a one month training followed by refresher courses.

##### **The para centre provides the following:**

- A venue for early learning for children aged 3-6 (pre-school)
- A place for children and women to receive micronutrient supplements
- A setting for health service delivery from Health and Family planning departments to offer immunization as well as other preventative and curative services
- A demonstration site for sanitary latrines, safe water use and other appropriate technologies
- An information centre and meeting place for the community
- In isolated areas, primary schooling for children (class 1-3)

In 2005, more than 44,400 children received pre-primary education at the para centers. For those children who had 'graduated' from para centers and were eligible for primary school, the para worker would advocate with the parents and ensure that these children attend primary school (formal or non-formal). What's more important,

the para centers' pre-schools and school readiness programmes are conducted not only in Bangla, but also in the children's own mother tongue. This is creating one of the appreciable steps in promoting multilingual education.

As the UNICEF states 70 percent para centers are providing services for the Phaharis. Though the UNICEF did not clearly mention clearly that rest of the 30 percent Paras centers were situated for whom, thus the Adi Bengalis think that these might be for them, however Bengali settlers informed that there exists UNICEF Para center within the four studied villages/paras (Cluster Villages) where Bengali settlers are living.

**(5) UNICEF (2006) has undertaken a joint programme with the World Food Programme (WFP).**

Beginning in 2006, the nutritional support (Food for Education) to children attending the Para centers in the CHT was initiated as a joint UNICEF-WFP collaboration. This programme aims to alleviate micronutrient deficiencies in pre-school children while also improving their attendance and enrolment at pre-school. In the 300 Paras where UNICEF is providing intensive support on hygiene promotion, sanitation and safe drinking water, marked improvement has been noted in the sanitation and hygiene practices. However, in the living of sample places a section of people not included the development process. It should be understood that the development process creating a new problem as well as discriminated of the rights. As a result, it is uneven development which creating another problem in CHT.

**6) UNDP New Project (2016): Strengthening Inclusive Development in CHT**

The Government of Bangladesh reaffirmed its commitment to fully implement the Chittagong Hill Tract Peace Accord, 1997, as it signed an agreement with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for a new development project, focusing sustainable and inclusive development of the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

The planned amount for the new project is US\$ 31,629,363 out of which about US\$ 19.6 million is funded by Denmark (US\$ 8.55 million), South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Development Fund (US\$ 1.55 million), USAID (US\$ 3.49 million), UNDP (US\$ 1 million) and the Government of Bangladesh (US\$ 5 million). The remaining unfunded amount of US\$ 12 million will be covered by



other development partners. The new project “Strengthening Inclusive Development in the Chittagong Hill Tracts” will be implemented in the next five years. This is a continuation of a very successful project “Promotion of Development and Confidence Building in the CHT” that has been implemented with significant results since 2003 in the three districts of the CHT area – Rangamati, Khagrachari and Bandarban. As in the past, the Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs (MoCHTA) as the executing agency assumes overall ownership and responsibility for project activities and will be accountable for the results. The project is being implemented within the framework of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility (CHTDF) programme. The CHTDF has been present in the CHT since 2003 as the first large scale development intervention in this remote and hard-to-reach area of the CHT. UNDP Bangladesh Country Director has said, “This new phase of development in the CHT addresses new and also the remaining development challenges in CHT. Its main focus will be inclusiveness of all communities in the area, and it will have a stronger impact on ecosystems, social development, and development of institutions” (UNDP 2016). As UNDP Bangladesh Country Director mentioned ‘this project will be inclusiveness of all communities in the CHT’ nevertheless, Bengali settlers suspect that they will not be benefited from this large scale development project because they never had got any sorts of benefits from any international organizations or NGOs in the past.

### **UNDP stated what CHTDF achieved for Indigenous Peoples since 2003.**

The mutual cooperation between the Government of Bangladesh and international partners helped improve lives of the people living in CHT and, as the statistics show, improve safety in the region. Major conflicts have been prevented and twice as many people now move confidently throughout the area. In the fifteenth constitutional amendment in 2011 the Government acknowledged the tribal or ethnic communities thus setting the ground for protecting their rights and preserving their culture. Furthermore, Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (BIPRA) has been drafted and once approved by the parliament it would be the first legal instrument in the country designed to protect and promote the rights of indigenous or tribal groups. Majority of the subject areas, as per the CHT Peace Accord have been transferred to Hill District Councils (HDCs) from the relevant ministries. The CHT Land Dispute Settlement Commission Act 2001 Amendment Ordinance 2016 has been promulgated

while the harmonization of the CHT Laws will be completed as per the roadmap that was developed in alignment with the CHT Accord. The Government of Bangladesh stays committed to fully implement CHT Accord by 2020 as reflected in its 7<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan<sup>110</sup>.

#### Main achievements of UNDP for Indigenous People since 2003

- 829 community infrastructure projects completed and 260 kilometers of rural roads constructed or renovated.
- Trust in local CHT police increased as 287 indigenous/tribal police personnel now work in the CHT districts and over 770 local police personnel trained on working with vulnerable groups.
- Improved safety in remote areas as 19 remote police outposts renovated and 11 police stations have special women friendly police facilities.
- 132 schools across CHT provide education for nearly 7,000 indigenous children in their native languages.
- Over 20,000 children every year have improved conditions for education in 315 newly constructed or renovated primary schools.
- Basic health services enabled and improved for over half a million CHT people especially in remote areas following creation of a network of 1,000 skilled local health workers.
- 16 mobile medical teams and 80 weekly satellite clinics have been established throughout CHT.
- Due to early detection, proper treatment and preventive measures in the past ten years a number of malaria cases dropped to 1.1% from 12.8% and number of households affected by malaria dropped to 4.2% from 24.5%
- 1,729 rice-banks established to provide option to over 50,000 household to borrow rice and overcome food shortages
- 1,633 Farmers Field Schools (FFS) have been established to teach farmers new techniques to improve agriculture production and increase their income
- Annual household net income increased by 19.2 per cent in 2013 compared to the 2008 baseline of BDT 85,050

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<sup>110</sup> For more see UNDP (2016)

[http://www.bd.undp.org/content/bangladesh/en/home/operations/projects/crisis\\_prevention\\_and\\_recovery/chittagong-hill-tracts-development-facility/achievements.html](http://www.bd.undp.org/content/bangladesh/en/home/operations/projects/crisis_prevention_and_recovery/chittagong-hill-tracts-development-facility/achievements.html)

- 365 marginalized local women employed into 16 newly formed weaver groups
- Small-scale community projects aimed at improving the status of women are now being managed and implemented by 1,935 newly organized and trained community women groups
- Marginalized women victims of violence provided with access to legal, financial and medical support
- 34,243 households benefit from the multi-year Capacity Development Plans prepared and implemented by the local government institutions
- Over 10,550 people have better standards of living thanks to improved management of the forests
- 55 Village Common Forests (VCFs), or Mouza Reserves, are supported to protect biodiversity, improve livelihoods of the people and strengthen participatory forest management
- 3,507 Para/Village Development Committees (PDCs) have been trained, linked with banks and Government's line departments, and supported to manage and implement community development projects benefiting over 115,000 households

### **BRAC Initiatives for Phaharis in the name of Indigenous People**

Development agencies such as national and international NGOs, bilateral donors, international financial institutions have different programmes and strategic preference on indigenous issues in Bangladesh. Even though in most cases, their supports are not solely on indigenous issues, indigenous peoples receive their services being among other target groups. Some remarkable national NGOs<sup>111</sup> among others directly or through partner NGOs work on indigenous issues are MJF (human rights, primary education), ALRD (land rights), SEHD (environment and indigenous rights). Some international NGOs among others relevant to mention are Caritas (integrated development programme), OXFAM International (on rights, development and disaster management), Action AID (rights, development), IWGIA (indigenous rights) and Tebtebba Foundation (indigenous rights) UNDP being supported by a donor consortium implements a programme in CHT named CHT Development Facility

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<sup>111</sup> Full name of the national NGOs, ALRD: Association for Land Reform and Development, MJF: Manusher Jonno Foundation SEHD: Society for Environment and Human Development.

(CHTDF). Among the leading bilateral development agencies<sup>112</sup> supporting projects on indigenous issues are the EC, JBIC, DFID, NORAD, SIDA, CIDA, and DANIDA. *Among international financial institutions, ADB supports CHTDF programme and PEDP-II. Some of them have specific policy and strategy framework on indigenous peoples for their international development operations.*

Each BRAC programme specializes in a different development sector and works to alleviate the socioeconomic condition of and empower people living in poverty, especially women. This inclusive and integrated development approach of BRAC has rendered the responsibility for and given ample opportunity of working on indigenous issues. Awareness and capacity building of BRAC staff on indigenous issues is an important entry point for BRAC. Both the senior staff at strategic position and direct implementers at field level should be trained on the socioeconomic, human rights, historical and political dynamics of indigenous peoples and their development issues. Knowing indigenous issues with professional care will enhance the effectiveness of programme intervention. CEP and BEP for example have trained their staff working on indigenous concentrated areas or working in indigenous related components.

## **6.6 Policies and Laws Relating to Phaharis in the name of Indigenous People**

The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh as 15th amendment (2011) of the constitution of Bangladesh stipulates, "The state shall take steps to protect and develop the unique local culture and tradition of the tribes, minor races, ethnic sects and communities<sup>113</sup>." Many international development agencies including those of United Nations and financial institutions have taken specific policy or strategy framework on indigenous peoples. United Nations' Indigenous Peoples' Partnership (UNIPP) brings together the ILO, OHCHR, UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF in a partnership with indigenous peoples, governments and other stakeholders to facilitate implementation of international standards on indigenous peoples, in particular the UNDRIP and the ILO Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (ILO Convention No. 169). UNIPP has formulated collective strategy and Strategic Framework 2011-

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<sup>112</sup> EC: European Commission, JBIC: Japan Bank for International Cooperation, DFID: Department for International Development, NORAD: Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, SIDA: Swedish International Development Authority, CIDA: Canadian International Development Agency, DANIDA: Danish International Development Agency.

<sup>113</sup> Anna Minj, and James Ward Khakshi, (2015) *Mapping BRAC Development Activities Relating To Indigenous Peoples*, Integrated Development Programme. BRAC Dhaka, Bangladesh

2015 relating to indigenous peoples. The World Bank (WB) in 2005 has approved a revised policy on Indigenous Peoples. The updated policy, as reflected in the Revised Operational Policy on Indigenous Peoples (OP) and the Revised Bank Procedure on Indigenous Peoples (OB). OP/BP 4.10 applies to all investment projects, for which a project concept review took place on or after 1 July, 2005. European Union (EU) in 1998, adopted the 'Council Resolution on Indigenous Peoples within the Framework of the Development Cooperation of the Community and Members States', which provides the main guidelines for support to indigenous peoples. Asian Development Bank (ADB)'s Policy on Indigenous Peoples was adopted in 1998. Moreover, ADB's Operations Manual from 2003 describes ADB policy and procedures in addressing indigenous people's issues in ADB projects. The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) in 2003, adopted the report entitled "Report of the African Commission's Working Group of Experts on Indigenous Populations/Communities" published in 2005. The report is used as a conceptual framework by the African Commission in the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples in Africa. Inter-American Development Bank (IADB)'s policy on indigenous peoples is entitled 'Strategy for Indigenous Development'. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Indigenous Peoples: A Policy of Engagement is an overview of UNDP's policy and engagement with indigenous peoples based on its mandate from the Charter of the United Nations. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)'s relevance to indigenous peoples is the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity adopted in 2001. It also contains main lines of an action plan for the implementation of the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity.

The World Conservation Union (WCU)'s policy agenda for indigenous peoples and conservation is very broad and the unit's work is guided by the resolutions of the World Conservation Congress (WCC). Policy development in these areas is guided by specific international agreements, IGO's and UN agencies. In particular, the unit's work in these areas is guided by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Danish International Development Assistance (DANIDA) in 1994 formulated its first strategy on indigenous peoples. From 2000-2001, it was reviewed

by a team of indigenous experts. In 2004, a revised version of the Strategy for Danish Support to Indigenous Peoples was adopted. This strategy aims at integrating the concern for indigenous peoples at all levels of Denmark's foreign policy and development cooperation, and raise indigenous issues through policy dialogue with partner countries. In mid 2007, the Danish Government made public a new discussion paper on priorities for the Danish cooperation with Africa 2007-2011. The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD)'s policy on indigenous peoples is entitled 'Guidelines for Norway's Efforts to Strengthen Support for Indigenous Peoples in Development Cooperation'. The State Acquisition and Bengal Tenancy Act, 1950: The act forbids the transfer of lands owned by 'aboriginals' to non-aboriginal persons without the express consent of the government's district officer. The indigenous names mentioned under this act are Santhals, [Banais] Bhuiyas, Bhumijes, Dalus, Garos, Gonds, Hadis, Hajangs, Hos, Kharias, Kharwars, Kochs (Dhaka Division), Koras, Maghs (Bakerganj District), Mal and Sauria Paharias, Maches, Mundas, Mundais, Oraons and Turis (Anna Minj, and James Ward Khakshi, 2015).

National Education Policy 2010 aims, among others, to promote the culture and language of small ethnic groups. In pre-primary and primary level, it requires taking necessary steps for education in mother tongue, indigenous teacher and proper textbook for indigenous children. In indigenous inhabited areas, establishing primary school with residential facilities for indigenous teacher and students has been promised in the policy. National Women Development Policy (NWDP 2011) promises to ensure the respective rights of indigenous peoples for their development and promotion. It was also emphasized that they sustain their respective tradition and culture during promotion. The NWDP further recommends taking special activities for indigenous women. Small Ethnic Group Cultural Institution Act: Small Ethnic Group Cultural Institution Act 2010 was enacted to incorporate the job conditions and facilities of the officials of seven cultural institutions for small ethnic groups across the country within government rules. It mentions (only) 27 ethnic groups bypassing the names of many other indigenous nations. The sixth five-year plan (2011-15): The policy plans to ensure indigenous people's social, political, and economic rights; security; and fundamental human rights; and preserve their social and cultural

identity. They will ensure access to education, healthcare, food and nutrition. It also promised to implement the CHT accord 1997 accordingly.

There are some acts particularly relevant to the CHT. Some of them are the CHT Regulation 1900, the CHT Development Board Ordinance 1976, the Hill District Council Acts of 1989, the CHT Regional Council Act 1998, and the CHT Land Disputes Resolution Commission Act 2001 (Roy 2009 and 2010). These acts in general and the CHT accord in 1997, in particular, has identified the CHT as tribal inhabited area and stipulated special administrative and development strategies to preserve the distinct cultural feature of the region. There is a Ministry for Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs in which some posts and mandates are particularly for indigenous peoples. ILO Convention No 107 in 1957 has first recognized the necessity of special measures for preserving the rights and development of indigenous peoples. Bangladesh ratified the ILO Convention No. 107 in 1972, which in general, recognized many of the pressing issues of human rights and development of indigenous peoples. ILO Convention 107 has been later replaced by ILO Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples 1989 (Convention No. 169). The latter dismissed the assimilationist and paternalistic approach of the former and added some points as paradigm shift. Some of the new points are the importance of self-identification, recognition and protection of the cultural and other specificities of indigenous peoples, and ensuring participation of indigenous peoples regarding their rights and development. It is strongly recommended that Bangladesh ratifies the progressive ILO Convention 169 (in place ILO Convention 107). UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP, 2007) is the most comprehensive declaration for identifying and recognizing the issues of indigenous peoples' rights and development. It sets out the individual and collective rights of indigenous peoples, as well as their rights to culture, identity, language, employment, health, education and other issues. It prohibits discrimination against indigenous peoples, and promotes their full and effective participation in all matters that concern them and their right to remain distinct and to pursue their own visions of economic and social development. The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII 2000) is the United Nation's central coordinating body for matters relating to the concerns and rights of the world's indigenous peoples. The forum is an advisory body that reports to the UN's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC); however, it performs an advisory function in relation

to other branches of the United Nations system. The six mandated areas of the PFII are socioeconomic development, education, culture, environment, health and human rights. The second decade of UN International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (2005-2015) started with the theme of 'Partnership for action and dignity'. The decade aims to fulfill the five objectives relating to promoting non-discrimination and inclusion, full and effective participation in decision making, re-define development policy from a vision of social equality, adopt targeted policies with emphasis on special groups (women, children and youth), develop strong monitoring mechanisms and enhance accountability at all levels to protect the rights of indigenous peoples. There is a Ministry for Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs in which some posts and mandates are particularly for indigenous peoples. The Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP) was established by the Human Rights Council, the UN's main human rights body, in 2007, under Resolution 6/36 as a subsidiary body of the council. The Expert Mechanism provides the Human Rights Council with thematic advice, in the form of studies and research, on the rights of indigenous peoples as directed by the council. The Expert Mechanism may also suggest proposals to the council for its consideration and approval.

### **6.7 Development Challenges and Status of Poverty in the CHT**

Although the whole of Bangladesh faces challenges of widespread poverty, the development challenges faced by the CHT are different to those in other parts of the country because of its special socio-cultural and geographic situation. The livelihoods of people in the CHT are more susceptible to environmental and economic changes than those in the lowlands. Sustainable development in the CHT is hugely challenged by the remoteness and poor accessibility, poor infrastructure and social and economic services, rapid socioeconomic change, and growing stress from climate change with inadequate measures to support adaptation<sup>114</sup>. Although progress has been made in certain areas, success stories remain limited and the expected benefits in terms of socioeconomic development and environmental protection have yet to emerge.

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<sup>114</sup> ICIMOD, (2015). A Strategic Framework for Sustainable Development in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh. International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, Kathmandu, Nepal



Despite recent progress in economic and social development, the CHT remains a disadvantaged region. CHT is one of Bangladesh's pockets of poverty. National studies show that around 52% of the CHT population is below the poverty line, and 21% are hardcore poor, compared to 32% and 18%, respectively, in Bangladesh as a whole. A socioeconomic survey by Barakat et al. (2009)<sup>115</sup> in the CHT showed around 62% of households in the region irrespective of ethnicity, to be below the absolute poverty line in terms of daily calorie intake per capita (below 2,122 kcal), and 36% to be hardcore poor (below 1,805 kcal). The annual household income in CHT is around BDT 66,000 (approximately USD 850), considerably lower than the national average for rural areas of BDT 84,000 (approx. USD 1,080) (CHTDF, UNDP 2014; FAO 2013). Non-income poverty is also higher in the CHT than in other parts of Bangladesh. Fifteen of the 64 districts in Bangladesh have been identified as the least developed and most deprived in terms of roads, electricity, credit, education, health, water supply, and overseas employment; they include all three of the districts in the CHT<sup>116</sup>.

### **6.8 CHT Development VS Bengali settlers**

After the political turbulence which lasted for a little more than two decades the Government and development partners were fully concentrated to the development of the CHT. Many organizations were involved with these development initiatives. The Government is one side and International donor agencies, international NGOs, national NGOs, and local NGOs are another side, both are together involved with these development processes. The present government has taken a number of positive steps to accelerate socio-economic development and improve the lives of the people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, especially the ethnic minorities, thereby reduce the gap between the CHT and other regions. The CHTRC, HDCs, and MOCHTA were all established to address the special needs of the people in the CHT, and to a great extent authority have now been devolved to local government (ICIMOD 2015). The HDCs<sup>117</sup> now implement the major development activities in the Chittagong Hill

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<sup>115</sup> Barakat, A; and others (2009) Socioeconomic baseline survey of Chittagong Hill Tracts. Dhaka, Bangladesh: Human Development Research Center

<sup>116</sup> Khondker, BH; Mahzab, MM (2015) Lagging districts development: Background study paper for preparation of the Seventh Five-Year Plan. Dhaka, Bangladesh

<sup>117</sup> The Hill District Councils (Bandarban, Rangamati and Khagrachari) Act, 1998 (along with the Schedule – 1) is a major piece of legislation for the decentralized governance of the

Tracts and have authority over the government development agencies. Overall, the development allocation per capita is much higher in the CHT districts than the average for the rest of Bangladesh and several development programmes have been undertaken.

Table- 6.1: Beneficiary Groups of NGOs Intervention

Ethnic Group												
Beneficiaries	Chakma		Marma		Tripura		Bengali		Bengali Settlers		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
<b>Bengali Settlers</b>	3	2.5	0	0.0	1	0.8	1	0.8	1	0.8	6	5.0
<b>Phahari people</b>	5	4.2	3	2.5	6	5.0	15	12.5	31	25.8	60	50.0
<b>Phahari-Bengali Equally</b>	13	10.8	16	13.3	13	10.8	4	3.3	8	6.7	54	45.0
<b>Total</b>	21	17.5	19	15.8	20	16.7	20	16.7	40	33.3	120	100

Source: Fieldwork data 2017

When it is assessed the status of the NGOs intervention to the different communities and determination of beneficiary groups, the variable is categorized into three different categories namely Bengali settlers, Phahari people, equal for Phahari and Bengali people (see table 6.1). Among the respondents, only 5 percent of them have informed that the Bengali settlers are beneficiary group of NGOs interventions, whereas the comparable figure is observed to be 50 percent that they informed the Phahari people are more beneficiary group by the NGOs interventions on the other hand, almost 45 percent respondents mentioned that Phahari and Bengali are equally benefited by the NGOs interventions. Among the 5 percent respondents in the Bengali settlers only 2.5 percent are observed in the Chakma community, none is in the Marma community, 0.8 percent of the Tripura, Bengali and Bengali settlers respectively mentioned that the Bengali settler is beneficiary group. On the other hand among the 50 percent respondents in the Phahari people 4.2 percent are observed to be in the Chakma community, 2.5 percent in the Marma community, 5 percent in the

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CHT. This is a very broad authority which in practice the HDCs have seldom exercised till date. Their weak institutional capacity and subservience to the ruling party may be the main explanation. Nevertheless, Section 64 of the HDCs Act states: a) Notwithstanding anything contained in any law for the time being in force, no land within the boundaries of Rangamati (and Khagrachari and Bandarban) Hill District shall be given in settlement without the prior approval of the Council and such land cannot be transferred to a person who is not a domicile of the said district without such approval; and b) Provided that, this provision shall not be applicable in case of areas within the Protected and Reserve Forests, Kaptai Hydroelectricity Project, Betbungia Earth Satellite Station, land transferred or settled in Government and Public interest, land and forest required for state purposes.

Tripura community, 12.5 percent in the Bengali and 25.8 percent of Bengali settler community. When comparing the figures in the equality with Phahari and Bengali category the figure is obtained to be 10.8 percent of Chakma, 13.3 percent of Marma, 10.8 percent of Tripura, 3.3 percent of Bengali and 6.7 of Bengali settlers. So, it is crystalline from the table that the Bengali settlers are not beneficiary group of national and international NGOs development interventions in the CHT.

Though the huge development initiatives have been undertaken by the Government and NGOs for Phaharis but no specific development initiatives has taken for the betterment of Bengali settlers. A Bengali settler lives in the Ultachari Gucha Gram has mentioned that, “All the organizations work for the development of Phaharis (tribal people) in the name of CHT development. No national or international agency were not come to work for the betterment of our life. However, some national NGOs like Proshika, ASA, Grameen Bank were come to do business with us in the name of helping. The NGOs are provided lone for us but take return with high rate of interests; thereby who has taken lone from these NGOs most of them were looser. They never give donation or any sorts of congestion only do business regarding our weakness. If the CHT development was fallen down for two decades insurgency our livelihood also degrading with other groups, whereas there are massive development activities going throughout the CHT unfortunately no initiative has been taken for advancement of the Bengali settlers”. As a result, the society again became an unequal and stratified to make emerge a new social problem in CHT or elsewhere in the world.

Currently more than one hundred NGOs are working in the CHT and if any foreign NGO wants to work for the CHT people they need to take permission either from the MoFA or from the Ministry of Home<sup>118</sup>. On account of unequal distribution of wealth and financial benefits provided by the International Organizations (IOs) is one of the major causes of crisis in the CHT. Most projects related to the development of the CHT people by the IOs and NGOs are intangible. NGOs should work in a way that ensures transparency. Uneven allocation of economic benefits provided by the IOs

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<sup>118</sup>For more see Mohammad Ashab Uddin, (2012) Major General ndc, psc, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) Seminar paper on “*Evaluation of Current Situation in CHT, Challenges and Way Forward*”, Seminar on: “CHT - Revisiting the Peace Accord” Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS). Dhaka on 2 October 2012.

should be controlled. There the international and local organizations are working with community development projects but their activities raise in controversy. However, Bangladesh government is paying due attention in this regard.

According to the Syeda Sajeda Choudhury, MP, Deputy Leader of the Bangladesh Parliament and Chairman of Peace Treaty Implementation Monitoring Committee, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. She was spoken as the Chief Guest in a seminar of BISS (2012). She expressed her concern that the foreigners, although are investing huge amount of money for the hilly people, are making the situation more unstable. She further informed that, in the name of development, the foreigners establish school with certain groups of Chakma depriving others and therefore it brings a negative impact in the CHT. She argued that without discussion among all the stakeholders in the CHT, peace and harmony cannot be achieved as each group in the region has individual demands, perceptions and standpoints. She suggested bringing all the parties together including the tribal people for a meaningful discussion which will ultimately lead the stable situation in this area. She believed that if all the parties sit together the problems can be solved promptly.

The above statements are absolutely supporting in conformity with the present study. It is evidently proven that, after the CHT accord Phaharis are getting more facilities from the both International Organizations (IOs) and non government organization (NGOs) against Bengali settlers, though they are as marginalized as ethnic minorities. There are a series of dimensions that made the Bengali settlers as second class citizen in the CHT and the economic hardship is one of the dimensions. Moreover, during the period of insurgency (1979-1997), eleven major massacres of hill people took place whereas Bengali accused Shanti Bahini (SB) for killing 30,000 Bengali in the CHT (Jahan, 2009)<sup>119</sup>. Most of the Bengali settlers lost their land and dwelling places during the political conflict with PCJSS. The Bengali Students Forum (*Bangali Chatro Porishad*) claimed that, after the CHT accord (from 1997-2017) there are more than 3500 occurrences including torture, killing, rape, kidnapping, etc occurred due to Phahari and Bengalis conflicts and mistrust. According to the Task Force on Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (2000), thousands of households (both

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<sup>119</sup> For more see Nusrat Jahan, 2009. *The Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord Implementation in Bangladesh: Ideals and Realities*. South Asian Journal of Policy and Governance (SJPG), India

Phahari and Bengali) were displaced due to political unrest before signing the CHT treaty. The taskforce compiled a list, identifying 90,208 indigenous families and 38,156 Bengali families as internally displaced families but PCJSS said that only tribal people would be considered as internally displaced persons and Bengalis are not displaced and getting these facilities. That is the reason that the refugees rehabilitation initiatives going slowly which has been explained in details in chapter 10 of this study.

### Case Study: Understanding Development Dynamics in the CHT

Dellowar Hossen (66) was living in the 3 no Chaan Tila under the Panchari Upazila of Khagrachari District. In 1986 when insurgency was pick in position his family relocated in the Zia Nagar Gucha Gram with many others family and from 1986 to till now he is living in the Zia Nagar with his family. He said that, “when military gathered us in the Zia Nagar Gucha Gram we thought that it would be a temporary shelter house for us, whereas we were waiting to go back our previous address- Chaan Tila area. However, after 20years of the CHT Peace Accord we cannot back to our pavilion where we peacefully living with our lands”. Dellowar has mentioned regarding the basic amenities and development within the Cluster Villages/Paras. As he said-

“Most of the basic amenities were absent in the Bengali settler’s residential areas- Cluster Villages. It would be better to say ‘Poultry Farm’<sup>120</sup> instead of ‘Gucha Gram’ because in the poultry farm many chicken are living within a very congested area at the same way Bengali settlers are living in the Cluster Villages. Those who are living in the Zia Nagar they are better in position compared to those who are living in the Babu Chara<sup>121</sup> where 812 families are living within 18×12 square fit houses, which is the reality of Bengali settlers”. He further said that ‘we (settlers) did not come to the CHT for living in the Cluster Villages. The Cluster Villages can be a temporary shelter centre but it cannot be a permanent residential are for the mainstream people

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<sup>120</sup> The respondent use this term to referred the worse condition of cluster villages, however the ‘Poultry Farm’ is a kind of place where thousands of chicken lives within a very congested room or shade.

<sup>121</sup> Babu Chara is one of the Cluster Village located in the Diginala Upazila of Khagrachari district

like Bengali settlers. During the creations of Cluster Villages the armies were assured us that after ending of the unrest situation all of you (settlers) will return yours previous address with your land but very unfortunately after a long period of Peace Accord we cannot return our home and not getting our land. However, the government has settled us in CHT with more or less 5 acres of land and other facilities, whereas now we are the marginal people within the marginal's. There is no high official or any organization came to us to know our hardships and discommodities'. Dellowar also mentioned that, there are a lot of NGOs and International Donor Agencies working for the betterment of CHT people but no development organization came to do something for the upliftment of the Bengali settlers. The NGOs have taken many projects for the CHT dwellers whereas they have forgotten that we are also permanent residents of the CHT. The government also has not taken any initiatives for the Bengali settlers whereas government has settled us in CHT. Nevertheless, we think that it is government's responsibility to take care us and should create job opportunities with our lands which the government has given us as settlers. We are humbly waiting for rescue from the crisis in the Cluster Villages.

Foreign donor agencies take different programs in different corners of the CHT for the development of the communities who are lagging behind from the mainstream community. When the variable is taken to know whether the respondents are involved with foreign donor agencies in the development projects it is found that 26.7 percent are involved with the foreign donor agencies and the rest 73.3 percent are not involved with the foreign donor agencies for the development projects.

Table-6.2: Ethnic Groups Involvement with Donor Agencies in Development Projects

	Ethnic Group (%)					
	Chakma	Marma	Tripura	Bengali	B. settlers	Total
<b>Yes</b>	52.4	47.4	40.0	20.0	--	26.7(32)
<b>No</b>	47.6	52.6	60.0	80.0	100.0	73.3(88)
<b>Total</b>	100	100	100	100	100	100 (120)

Source: Fieldwork data 2017

Among the respondents who are involved with the foreign donor agencies in development projects it is found that 52.4 percent are in the Chakma community, the figure in the Marma community is observed to be 47.4 percent; the percentage of the

respondents in the Tripura community is noted to be 40 percent. The Bengali is 20 percent (see table 6.2). It is surprising that none of the Bengali settlers was involved with development agencies in the development projects. However, foreign development agencies were not taking any development initiative for socio economic development of the Bengali settlers that the community is far behind compared to other contemporary communities. So initiatives should be taken at the right time and in the right community by the foreign donor agencies to mitigate the distress of the Bengali settlers and to improve the socio economic conditions of the people residing in that community.

However, considering all these issues it is revealed that, these migrated Bengali settlers have been going through various forms of struggles ranging from economic hardship to the politics of existence in the CHT. Though the Phahari-Bengali population ratio 51:49 in census 1991 but is near about same, nonetheless development initiatives were not taken equally for all. An average rural household annual net income of the Adi Bengalis is around Tk. 71,000 and the same for Phaharis (tribals) around Tk. 62,000 (Dhaka Ahsania Mission 2000) but now Phahari's annual household net income increased by 19.2 per cent in 2013 compared to the 2008 baseline of BDT 85,050 (UNDP 2015) and at the same time, Bengali settlers household's annual net income much less than compared to the other Bengalis, which the study explained in details the chapter 5. Moreover, Bengali settlers were deeply depreciated due to more than two decades insurgency in CHT. Nevertheless, the perception of present study outcome and development dimension of GOs and NGOs are also partial and turn blind eyes towards Bengali settler's splits.

More than that, though massive development efforts has been undertaken by the international donor agencies as well as NGOs for the prosperity of inhabitants in the region, thus these initiatives are mostly creating the hating situation between Phahari and Bengali settlers because one of them is beneficiary and another one is non-beneficiary. For example, there are 413 UNDP projects have been completed in the CHT, out of which 43% are targeted solely towards the Chakma population (Ahmed,

2011)<sup>122</sup>. Therefore, it is very easy to understand that what kind of developments are going throughout the CHT and who are the more beneficiary group by development initiatives of International Donor Agencies like UNDP, ADB, UNICEF and others. As mentioned above, the features of development initiatives for the people of CHT, which mostly that in favor of Phaharis. No Bengali settler's issues were found in the index of International Donor Agencies and NGOs. On the contrary, from the government side there has not mentionable development initiatives have been observed in the field during the fieldwork but at the same time it is apprehensible that the government has intention to do something for the betterment of Bengali settlers, unfortunately most of the time it could not be possible due to opposition of Phahari political groups especially for PCJSS, which the study elaborately explained in the chapter ten. However, the government has earnestly wants to rehabilitates the all refugees of the CHT those who displaced during the political troublous in the CHT, whereas PCJSS doing opponency for it because they are not interested to be rehabilitated the Bengali settlers though the Bengali settlers and Phaharis were became refugees in a same ground and same way. As a result, it would be continue, the peace and harmony in CHT is questionable issues among the settlers and other dwellers.

Table-6.3: Presence of Taking Loan from NGO by Ethnicity

	Ethnic Group (%)					
	Chakma	Marma	Tripura	Bengali	Bengali settlers	Total
<b>Yes</b>	47.6	47.4	85.0	40.0	42.5	50.8 (61)
<b>No</b>	52.4	52.6	15.0	60.0	57.5	49.2 (59)
<b>Total</b>	100	100	100	100	100	100 (120)

Source: Fieldwork data 2017

One takes loan when he is in crying need of money but no facilities are available to pay the money back without interest. At that time the one has taken money from any organization to pay the money back under the condition that he must pay with some interest against the capital taken. It is revealed from the analysis that 50.8 percent of the respondents took loan from the NGOs and the rest 49.2 percent did not take any loan from the NGOs. It is noted that the chance of taking loan from the NGOs is

<sup>122</sup> United Nations (2011). Economic and Social Council. Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Study on the status of implementation of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord of 1997. Paper presented by Iqbal Ahmed, First Secretary, Bangladesh Mission to United Nations, May 25th, 2011. Tenth session, New York, 16-27 May 2011



almost 50 percent. Among the respondents who took loan from NGOs it is observed that 47.6 percent respondents are Chakma, 47.4 percent were found in the Marma community. The highest numbers of respondents were observed within the Tripura community who has taken loans from the NGOs, 85 percent of the total respondent. The Bengali settlers were 42.5 percent and the least number was observed among the Bengali respondents (see table 6.3). In compare to the involvement of the respondents in taking loan from the NGOs it is clear that Majority are Phaharis and the lowest number is found to the in the Bengali settlers community.

Table-6.4: Status of Improve Standard of Living by Taking Loan by Ethnicity

Ethnic Group (%)						
	Chakma	Marma	Tripura	Bengali	Bengali settlers	Total
Improved	70.0	66.7	70.6	75.0	23.5	57.4 (35)
Disproved	10.0	22.2	17.6	.0	35.3	19.7 (12)
Not improved	20.0	11.1	11.8	25.0	41.2	23.0 (14)
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100 (61)

Source: Fieldwork data 2017

It is well established that standard of living depends on the income of a person and the taste & expenditure quality of the consumers. When one takes loan he may improve the status or his position may fall down from the previous status or he may remain in the break- even point. In the variable about the improvement status of the respondents by taking loan there are three categories namely Improved, Disproved and the rest is not improved. Among the respondents who took loan from the NGOs it is observed that 57.4 percent improved the condition, 19.7 percent disproved and 23 percent remain in the break -even point. So taking loan is positive for the improvement of the socio economic condition of the respondents. Among the respondents who improved the socio economic condition by taking loan from the organization 70 percent are in the Chakma community, 66.7 percent are in the Marma community, 70.6 percent in the Tripura community. The Bengali respondents are observed to be 75 percent and the Bengali settlers are observed only 23.5 percent. If we compare the improvement status Bengali settlers are far below than their other contemporary respondents. While comparing the disproved categories it is depicted that no Bengali disproved their condition while the figure is obtained to be 35.3 percent in the Bengali settlers who

disproved their condition after taking loan from the organization. If we compare the break- even point i.e. no profit no loss it is found that the majority are in the Bengali settler's community.

### **6.9 Development Initiatives by Local NGOs in Khagrachari**

There are many local NGOs who have been working for betterment of the CHT people. The local NGOs mainly were working as a local partner of international NGOs and donor agencies as well. In the Khagrachari dozens of local NGOs are working for reducing poverty, health care, education, creating employment opportunity etc. Assistance for the Livelihood of the Origins (ALO), JUMOFUL is one of the big local NGO in Khagrachari district. All of these local NGOs are working with Paharis. During the fieldwork there has no local NGO been observed working for the betterment of Bengali settlers'.

On the contrary, there were both locally formed cooperative organization and NGOs working directly or indirectly for the economic upliftment of the villagers. The cooperative were organized and managed by the villagers themselves. In contrast, NGOs were managed by the authorities located outside the villages. Although a considerable number of Chakma villages had local cooperatives (70%) none of these villages had any NGOs working therein. There are large scale operations of the foreign NGOs in this region. However, large scale of NGOs operation is alarming. The foreign NGOs operation in the CHT should be examined. On the other hand, the dominance of Chakma in various aspects may create discrimination among the CHT community (Siddiqui, 2012)<sup>123</sup>. Any propaganda regarding the CHT should properly be handled. Investigation of any propaganda should be opened for all and truth or true information must be circulated. Bangladesh's foreign missions are very weak to mitigate foreign propaganda, so they should be active in this regard<sup>124</sup>. Moreover, Bangladesh government should monitor the activities of the foreign organizations as well as NGOs. Also, the role of Army is very important to make the situation under control of the CHT. Nonetheless, it is very interestingly observed during the fieldwork

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<sup>123</sup> Nazmul Alam Siddiqui, 2012. Former Secretary was spoke in a Seminar on "*CHT - Revisiting the Peace Accord*" was organized by Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) in Dhaka on 2 October 2012.

<sup>124</sup>, Lt Gen. M. Harun Ar Rashid, BP, rcds, psc (Retd.) 2012, former Chief of Army Staff, was spoke in a Seminar on "*CHT - Revisiting the Peace Accord*" was organized BISS, Dhaka.

that all the communities of CHT believed in inner peace. Though there are many differences among the ethnic groups, nevertheless all of them (100% respondents) agreed to keep peace where that peace is very essential for the development of CHT but they don't know how peace would prevail there. Bengali settlers suggested that one of the major aspects would be to keep peace that all development initiatives should be taken equally for the all communities of the CHT including Bengali settlers because it also has to be considered that they are the almost one fourth population of the CHT.

## **CHAPTER- 7: CHT Land Disputes VS Bengali Settlers**

- 7.1 Brief History of Land Disputes in the CHT**
- 7.2 Estimation of total Land of the CHT**
- 7.3 Land Administration in the CHT**
- 7.4 Government Initiatives for CHT Land Disputes Resolution**
- 7.5 Status of Land Ownership: Phahari and Bengali**
- 7.6 Present Status of Land Disputes**
- 7.7 Status of Land Documents and Controlling over Land**
- 7.8 CHT Land Disputes and Bengali Settlers Aspirations**
- 7.9 Land Acquisition in the name of Religious Institutions**
- 7.10 Solution of the CHT Land Disputes**

## 7.1 Brief History of Land Disputes in the CHT

The history of changing land rights in the CHTs was the taking over of the 'ownership' of all its lands by the British colonial state. This 'legal fiction' was put forward in 1868 with little regard for the historical fact that the Hill People had been using these lands long before the arrival of the British. In 1875, two categories of forest lands were created by the state: the Reserve Forests (RFs), and the District Forests<sup>125</sup>. By 1882-83, nearly one fourth (24%) of the total area of the CHTs was 'enclosed' as Reserve Forests (Roy, 1996). Thus even though no land was destroyed as such the acquisition of RFs areas by the colonial state resulted in a substantial reduction in the total stock of land available for cultivation and self-provisioning activities by the Hill peoples<sup>126</sup>. One of the first major development interventions in the CHTs was the establishment of the Karnafuli Paper Mill in 1953 which utilized the bamboo and softwood as raw material extracted from the hill forests of the area. A new category of 'Protected Forests' (PFs) was established in the CHTs in 1962 by the then Pakistan Government where *Jhum* cultivation was prohibited and plans to establish a 'softwood working circle' (21,000 acres) and a 'fruit tree working circle' (14,000 acres) were taken up. The most ambitious and controversial development intervention in the CHTs during the Pakistan period was the 'Karnafuli Multipurpose Project' better known as the 'Kaptai Hydro Electricity Project' which submerged an area of approximately 1036 sq. km' (400 sq. miles) including old Rangamati town, the principal urban centre of the CHTs (Shelley, 1992). Crucially 54,000 acres of the highly-prized plough lands in the river valleys went under water, amounting to a loss of 40 percent of such lands (Mohsin, 1997). The Lake also submerged *Jhum* lands and Reserve Forests (more than 70 square miles).

In general, the Phaharis (tribals) did not have any clear notion of ownership of land. They used land but they did not consider it to be their private property. Therefore, they were not much associated with ownership rights as they were with its use. This applies to hill lands (for *Jhum* cultivation) but, in the case of flat land they consider land as a part of property. The ownership of *Jhum* land is not comparable with flat or

<sup>125</sup> Mohsin, A. (1997) *The Politics of Nationalism: the case of the CHT*, Bangladesh. The University Press Limited, Dhaka, P. 253.

<sup>126</sup> Adnan, S. (2004). *Migration, Land Alienation and Ethnic Conflict: Causes of Poverty in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh*. Research & Advisory Services, Dhaka, Pp.20-43.

valley land. For Jhum land no formal document or legal title exists (Bessaignet, 1958)<sup>127</sup>. After the Peace Accord land disputes' situation has not improved for the CHT people even regulations of new legislation for the re-vamped Hill District councils. Nevertheless however, the government has taken many positive stapes in several times to resolve the land disputes hence that the all people of CHT could be peacefully living together, but these initiatives couldn't gone in with sustainable way because it was very difficult to accommodate all demands which comes from the different pockets of interest groups.

## 7.2 Estimation of total Land of the CHT

The total area of land in CHT is difficult to assess, as there has been no land survey done recently. According to various sources, the total area of CHT is 5093 square miles. Of these, reserve forest is 775.63 square miles, public owned land 1423 square miles and unclassified state forest about 2894.37 square miles<sup>128</sup>.

Figure-II: Estimation of Total CHT Land (at a glance)

Estimation of CHT Lands		
The total area of CHT is 5093 square miles		
Reserve forest is 775.63 square miles.	Reserved Forest includes: Kaptai Hydro Electricity Project, Betbungia Earth Satellite Station, State-run industries and recorded government lands, are not subjected to the peace accord.	Total area of land subjected to the accord is about 1423 square miles comprising 3 Districts.
Public owned land 1423 square miles		This means, rest 3670 square miles area is Government controlled land.
Unclassified state forest about 2894.37 square miles		

Source: Hossain, 2013

Of these, reserved forest, Kaptai Hydro Electricity Project, Betbungia Earth Satellite Station, state-run industries and recorded government lands, are not subjected to the peace accord. Thus, total area of land subjected to the accord is about 1423 square miles comprising 3 Districts. This means, rest 3670 square miles area is Government

<sup>127</sup> Bessaignet, P. (1958). Tribesmen of the CHT, Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Publication No. 1, Dhaka

<sup>128</sup> Md Sarwar Hossain, Brigadier General hdmc, psc (2013) IN-DEPTH: Chittagong Hill Tracts land. Article published in the Daily Star September 25, 2013.

controlled land (Hossain, 2013). Land ownership of a household in context of CHT is to be understood along with three major types of ownership: (i) Individual registered ownership (ii) Traditional ownership recorded and/or not recorded with headman under usufruct rights (iii) Usufruct rights to ownership of common property different from that in plain land. Though Act 64 of the Peace Accord empowers the Regional Council to provide permission before (including Khas land) any sort of lease, purchase, sale or transfer, this has now been stayed by the High Court Appellate Division.

### 7.3 Land Administration in the CHT

Presently land is under surveillance by the district administration, Hill District Council and the traditional system under the Circle Chiefs<sup>129</sup>. DCs<sup>130</sup> usually employ the Headman in consultation with the Circle Chiefs. The Headmen collect revenues on the Jhum and lands from respective Mouza<sup>131</sup> under the overall jurisdiction of the Circle Chiefs. Land administration, specially the transfer process, is time consuming, that many applicants expire before the completion of the process. In May 1900, by introducing 'Hill Tracts Manual -1900' they were given degree of autonomy and the Circle Chiefs were made responsible for collecting land revenue. After the introduction of the manual, Circles Chiefs divided their area into Mauzas and Paras under a 'Headman'<sup>132</sup> and a '*Karbari*'<sup>133</sup> respectively. They were employed to collect taxes, which were ultimately handed over to the DC by the Circle Chiefs. Practically,

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<sup>129</sup> The Circle Chief, also under the CHT Manual (1900), is the traditional the apex of a hereditary chieftainship system. They were first incorporated in the formal government structure by the British in the later part of 19th century. Considered, custodian and repository" of the traditional value system of the IPs, they hold primary authority in the land and revenue administration and also the traditional justice system as the authority over headmen and the traditional institutions. Their authority is recognized by law and in both the land acquisition and titling process, they play a pivotal role.

<sup>130</sup> The DC, along with the Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) and the Land Record Office (LRO), used to enjoy, besides their usual administrative powers, very broad authority in almost every aspects of government's administration, far more extensive than their peers in the plains. However, following the establishment of the HDCs in late 1980s and particularly with the resulting administrative and governance framework of the Peace Accord of 1997, they enjoy a far reduced power. Nevertheless, they still are the "final authority" with regard to land titles and land acquisition.

<sup>131</sup> A Mouza Revenue Village is the lowest unit of land administration in Bangladesh. Mouza consists of more than two villages/Paras headed by Headman.

<sup>132</sup> Headman is the head of the mouza, generally headman having one mouza but sometimes it can be more than one mouza.

<sup>133</sup> Karbari is the head of the Village, but in CHT the village is popularly known as Para.

three Circle Chiefs and Headmen became local agents for collecting revenue. Every *Headman* and *Karbari* are getting allowance BDT 1000 and 500 respectively per month from their collected revenues.

Land administration reflects the overall anomalous situation in the CHT of having three different types of Government administrative systems, which are often overlapping or conflicting in day to day operations. These are: 1) *The Self-Rule Government System*: Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council (CHTRC), Hill District Councils (HDCs) 2) *General Administrative Governmental Organs*: Office of the Deputy Commissioner (DC), Upazila Parishad/Thana, Union Parishad/<sup>134</sup>Pourasova 3) *Traditional Administrative Structure*: Chief (Raja), Chief of Circle, Headman – Head of Mouza, Karbari – Head of Village/Para (RHDC, 2003). Under the CHT Manual (1900), the Headman is a key authority/institution at the *mouza* level in the land and revenue administration in the CHT. Headmen are comparable to the *tehsildar*<sup>135</sup> in the plains. There are in total 3 districts 25 Upazilas, 111 Unions, 379 Mouzas and 4,426 Paras in CHT with a headman having one or more *mouzjas*. For land titles and land acquisition, they are first contact and authority as the primary official for revenue collection.

Their main authority and responsibility consists of, inter alia:

- Collecting land revenue for depositing to the Government treasury;
- Collecting *jhum* tax from *jhum* families; Responsibility for looking after the land within the *mouza*.
- Keeping land records. In matters of settlement, transfer, purchase or sale of landed property, and his consent is required;
- Preparing *jhum touzi*<sup>136</sup> annually and submits the same to the Circle Chief;
- Providing assistance in land disputes, survey, lease and transfer of Government land; Settlement of minor civil and criminal disputes;

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<sup>134</sup> The Union *Parishad* is one of the lowest administrative units in Bangladesh, part of a four-tier local government, namely *Gram* (Village) *Parishad*, Union *Parishad*, *Upazila* (Subdistrict) *Parishad* and *Zila* (District) *Parishad*

<sup>135</sup> Local revenue collector at *teshil* level. lowest union-level revenue unit comprising several *mouza*.

<sup>136</sup> *Jhum Touzi* refers to a statement containing some information relating to *Jhum* families and payment of *Jhum* tax as well as other pertinent information.



- Settlement of disputes brought by the people of the *mouza* to ensure justice following the prevailing social norms and customs. Can impose a fine of up to Tk25.0;
- Maintaining law and order and assisting administration and police in prevention of theft and other crimes;
- Protecting forest and other resources;
- Communicating Government directives and policies to the inhabitants of the *mouza*;
- Regulating *jhum* cultivation and cutting of bamboos and other trees;
- Maintaining of ferry *Ghats*;
- Providing land allotment up to 30 decimal for homestead purpose; and
- Providing 1-year lease (*eksona bandobasti*) of fringe land.

The Circle Chief, also under the CHT Manual (1900), is the traditional apex of a hereditary chieftainship system. They were first incorporated in the formal government structure by the British in the later part of 19th century. Considering custodian and repository of the traditional value system of the Phaharis (IPs), they hold primary authority in the land and revenue administration and also the traditional justice system as the authority over headmen and the traditional institutions. Their authority is recognized by law and in both the land acquisition and titling process, they play a pivotal role.

The DC, along with the ADC and the Land Record Office (LRO), used to enjoy, besides their usual administrative powers, very broad authority in almost every aspects of government's administration. However, following the establishment of the HDCs in late 1980s and particularly with the resulting administrative and governance framework of the 1997 Peace Accord, they enjoy a far reduced power. Nevertheless, they still are the 'final authority' with regard to land titles and land acquisition. HDCs are presently the key fulcrum of local decentralized administration. Land is one of the transfer subjects, which as yet has not been devolved to the HDCs by the Government. But they still can influence in very important way, all land transfers, titling and land acquisition. The CHTRC and LC do not play any direct role on land and revenue administration, including land titling and land acquisition; but they

remain influential indirectly<sup>137</sup>. The former as the embodiment of the PA gains and the latter for its eventual role in resolving the outstanding CHT land ownership disputes.

#### **7.4 Government Initiatives for CHT Land Disputes Resolution**

A Land Commission headed by a retired justice was formed in 1999. The government also enacted ‘CHT Land Dispute Settlement Commission Act 2001’ for functioning of this commission, and resolving the land disputes. Presently, 4th Land Commission is working to settle all the land disputes. First three Land Commissions could not function properly as JSS demanded for 19 amendments in ‘CHT Land Dispute Settlement Commission Act 2001’<sup>138</sup>. The activities of the 4th Land Commission are also stalled for non-cooperation and abstention of the Phahari political leaders.

#### **The CHT Land Dispute Resolution Commission (Amendment) Act, 2016**

The CHT Land Dispute Resolution Commission (Amendment) Act, 2016 was gazetted on August 8, 2016. The draft law also modified the existing provisions of quorum of the meeting of the commission. According to the existing law, the decision of the Chairman has so far been considered as the decision of the Commission itself. But the new law proposed taking a decision based on opinion of the majority members of a meeting. This is the basic difference between Settlement Commission Act 2001 and Amendment Act, 2016. Many Bengali settlers mentioned that this amendment is the demand of Phaharis where most of the commissions’ member comes from the Phahari groups thereby they can easily take any decision against any land dispute whereas settlers cannot do anything for the ‘No Appeal’ provision.

#### **The commission constituted with the following members:**

- a) Retired justice
- b) Circle chief (concerned)
- c) Chairman/representative of the Regional Council
- d) Divisional commissioner/additional commissioner
- e) Chairman of the District Council (concerned)

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<sup>137</sup> For more see ADB, RRP BAN 42248, 2011

<sup>138</sup> United Nations (2011). Economic and Social Council. Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Study on the status of implementation of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord of 1997. Paper presented by Iqbal Ahmed, First Secretary, Bangladesh Mission to United Nations, May 25th, 2011. Tenth session, New York, 16-27 May 2011

The new law proposed that the quorum of a meeting of the Commission will require attendance of at least three members and its Chairman instead of two members and Chairman as it is in the existing law. No appeal shall be maintainable against the judgment of this commission and the decision of this commission shall be deemed to be final. This provision shall be applicable in the case of fringe-lands. This is the main complaining point and argument ground for the Bengali settlers which has discussed later portion of this chapter.

### **7.5 Status of Land Ownership: Phahari and Bengali**

As it is discussed before that the Bengalis were settled in the CHT through different ways. The present study has categorized the Bengalis into two broad categories such as: Settler Bengalis and Adi Bengalis. Basic difference between Settler Bengalis and Adi Bengalis is that those who were settled in the CHT by Government policy and sponsorship they are treated as Bengali settler and those were settled by natural process that service, business, and relatives and also without government helps they are treated as Adi Bengali. Almost all the Bengali settlers have legal documents against their land from the government during their settlement and Bengalis; those who brought land from others they also had registered documents. On the contrary, most of the Phahari has no legal paper regarding their land. Phaharis seemed that, if a tribal household uses part of para common property as homestead or as cultivated land, all members from his/her Para traditionally honor his/her usufruct right of ownership on that part of common property. To understand the land problem in the CHT it is needed to calculation of land that how much lands Bengali settlers were getting from the government and how much lands still have under their controlling now. The table 7.1 reveals mean amount of land possessed by different ethnic groups in two different time periods, one is before settlement and another is after settlements. The analysis shows that mean amount of land among the Chakma community per household before is 352 decimal, whereas, increasing the mean amount of land is 402.50 after settlements. For the Marma people it is found that mean amount of land is 159.74 decimal before and that of the now the figure is 175.79 decimal. The mean amount of land for Tripura is observed to be 317.47 decimal before and 251.59 now which indicate gradually decreasing of possession in land. As the result shows that the mean amount of land now declines for the Tripura community. The result for the adi Bengali people is that the mean amount of land is 213.33 decimal before and 151.28

decimal now. It is observed from the analysis that the mean amount of land for Bengali settlers was 406.18 decimal during settlement and the figure is only 39.60 decimal after peace accord (now) which is indicating their marginalized position on the land perspective.

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Before Accord</b>	<b>Now</b>
<b>Chakma</b>	352.00	402.50
<b>Marma</b>	159.74	175.79
<b>Tripura</b>	317.47	251.59
<b>Adi Bengali</b>	213.33	151.28
<b>Bengali Settlers</b>	406.18	39.60

Source: Fieldwork data 2017

It reveals that the settlers means of production is vulnerable than other communities. Nonetheless, it is evidently debunk that on an average Phaharis own more land than both types of Bengalis in the CHT where they (*Phahari*) had least number of registered ownership documents. Most of the Phaharis lands fall under the category of traditional-customary property. Whereas, on an average Bengali settlers were getting 406.18 decimals of lands from the government but during the insurgency period they left their land and after CHT peace accord they did not getting back to their lands that's why their under controlling lad is 39.60 decimals however they had documents without lands. Most of the Bengali settler respondents informed that, in general "Phahari's has lands without documents and Bengali settler's has documents without lands" this is the main climax of the CHT land problems.

However, Dhaka Ahsania Mission (2000)<sup>139</sup> has presented some important survey data; moreover they also tried to explore CHT land disputes scenarios which also are comparable to the present study that their important findings regarding lands are mentioned below:

- ▶ Almost all the CHT households (93%) have land irrespective ethnic identity.

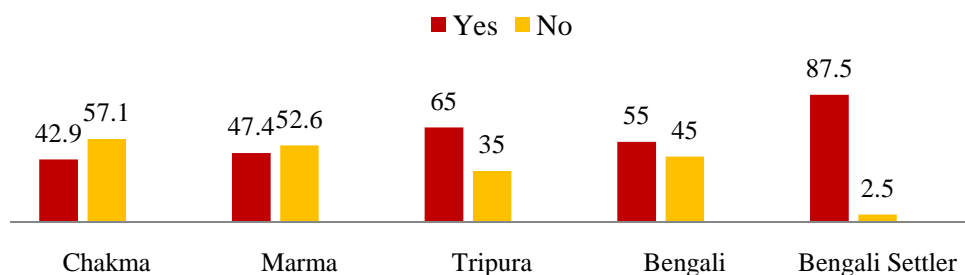
<sup>139</sup> For more see Dhaka Ahsania Mission 2000, Report on: Development Issues and Priorities of Indigenous People in CHT, Dhaka, Bangladesh

- ▶ On an average 3.2 acres of land owns each Phahari (tribal) household and a Bengali household owns 1.3 acres.
- ▶ On an average agricultural land is owned by 27% households.
- ▶ A total of 46% households from among Phahari (tribal) communities own *jhum* land.
- ▶ Among the Phahari (tribal) communities, most lands fall under the category of traditional-customary property (55%).
- ▶ Over half (52%) of land properties have been categorized as “Registered Ownership” for the Bengalis and the same for the Phaharis is 21%.

### 7.6 Present Status of Land Disputes in CHT

The Land Commission, threw up under the landmark CHT Peace Agreement five years ago, is yet to start business, while about 35,000 cases of dispute grew as the real millstone around the region's neck. The cases, most of which pit Bengalis settlers against the Phahari (tribal) people in Rangamati, Bandarban and Khagrachari hill districts. The land disputes are snowballing every day<sup>140</sup>. The hills people didn't preserve their documents while most of the Bengali settlers were keeping their documents with care as a last substance. The below chart (chart no 13) reveals that on an average 64.17 percent households ( or 77 households out of 120) had land disputes and the rest 35.83 percent (or 43 households out of 120) informed that they haven't any land dispute. So, the majority of the households were suffering from land dispute problem. Among the respondents who have land dispute problem 42.9 percent are Chakma, 47.4 percent are Marma, 65 percent are Tripura, 55 percent are Bengali and 87.5 percent are Bengali settlers.

Chart-13: Presence of Land Disputes by Ethnic Groups (%)



Source: Fieldwork data 2017

<sup>140</sup> Norwegian Refugee Council/Global IDP Project (2005) Bangladesh, February, 2005 report, Geneva, Switzerland.

It is manifested from the chart no 17 that the suffering from land dispute is very severe for the Bengali settlers compared to other ethnic communities. Among the respondents who have no land dispute it is observed from the table that 57.1 percent are Chakma, and the figure is followed by Marma having the percentage 52.6 and this figure is followed by Tripura ethnic community having the percentage 35 and the figure for Bengali respondents is 45 percent and only 2.5 percent respondents of Bengali settlers told that they have no land dispute. On an average, 77 households out of 120 observed that they are suffering by the land disputes problem.

Table-7.2: Estimation of Land dispute Continuation in CHT

Ethnic Groups (%)						
Duration	Chakma	Marma	Tripura	Bengali	B. Settlers	Total
6 to 10 years	--	11.1	--	9.1	--	2.6 (2)
11 to 20 years	--	22.2	23.1	9.1	8.6	11.7 (9)
21 to 30years	22.2	--	--	27.3	17.1	14.3 (11)
31 to 40 years	77.8	66.7	76.9	54.5	74.3	71.4 (55)
<b>Total</b>	100	100	100	100	100	100 (77)

Source: Fieldwork data 2017

The duration of land dispute continuation was displayed in the table no 7.2. It is found from the above table that 2.6 percent respondents told that land dispute continued for 6 to 10 years, the figure is 11.7 percent for those who told that the dispute continued for 11 to 20 years and this is followed by 14.3 percent for those who respondent that the dispute continued from 21 to 30 years and 71.4 percent respondents told that the land dispute continued to 31 years to 40 years. So, it is also clear that the land disputes in the CHT are not a recent phenomenon where it is 30-40 years long problem for the people of CHT. Therefore, land dispute is one of the vital issues in CHT.

### **Type of Land Disputes in the CHT**

There are many types of land disputes in the CHT. People living in the CHT have been suffering for years. Not only the Bengalis but also the Phaharis are the equal sufferers of land disputes. While assessing the classification of land dispute the study has divided the variable into ownership of the land, occupant, evacuation and others. The study reveals that 32.5 percent land disputes occurred for ownership problem, 50.6 percent for occupant, 11.7 percent for evacuation and the rest 5.2 percent are due to others. The table no 8.3 also shows that 22.2 percent Chakma told that the dispute

occurred for ownership, the comparable figure for Marma is 88.9 percent, the figure for Tripura is 61.5 percent, the figure for Bengali is 27.3 percent and the figure for Bengali settlers is 11.4 percent. When observed the land dispute due to occupant it is found that 44.4 percent falls in the Chakma category, 11.1 percent in the Marma , 15.4 percent in the Tripura, 63.6 percents in the Bengali and 71.4 percent in the Bengali settlers community.

Types	Ethnic Groups (%)					Total
	Chakma	Marma	Tripura	Bengali	B. Settlers	
<b>Ownership of the land</b>	22.2	88.9	61.5	27.3	11.4	32.5 (25)
<b>Occupant</b>	44.4	11.1	15.4	63.6	71.4	50.6 (39)
<b>Evacuation</b>	33.3	--	7.7	--	14.3	11.7 (9)
<b>Others</b>	--	--	15.4	9.1	2.9	5.2 (4)
<b>Total</b>	100	100	100	100	100	100 (77)

Source: Fieldwork data 2017

While assessing the dispute for evacuation it is found that 33.3 percent are in the Chakma, none is observed in the Marma, 7.7 percent are in the Tripura, none is in the Bengali and 14.3 percent are in the Bengali settler's category. While assessing the land dispute due to other reasons none is found in the Chakma community, none is in the Marma community, 15.4 percent in the Tripura community, 9.1 percent in the Bengali community and only 2.9 percent in the Bengali settler's community.

### 7.7 Status of Land Documents and Controlling over Land

Over the time, people of the CHT have been becoming landownership by many processes: getting land by the Government, by purchasing and hereditary process. Maximal portion of Bengali settlers got land by the Government, whereas Adi Bengalis became land owner by purchasing, on the contrary, most of the Phaharis were getting land by inheritance and ancestral process. Nevertheless, the Phaharis believe that land, forest and hills are collective property. The existing government system of land registration is at variance with the ancestral land management system. To the Chakmas, land used for habitation is considered as ones personal property, but a collective ownership prevails over lands outside their habitants. According to the tradition of the Chakma community, anyone can use a piece of land to build house for

which no deed or legal document is needed. On the contrary, Adi Bengalis and also Bengali settlers do not believe in the way of practicing which Chakma community is traditionally practiced. Regarding the land ownership papers the Bengali settlers are fully documented that almost all of them have legal papers which the government has provided during the settlement. The table 8.4 shows the status of land ownership paper according to different ethnic communities. The status of land ownership paper that is categorized as registered document or ancestral, oral commitment, community land and no papers.

	Ethnic Group (%)				
	Chakma	Marma	Tripura	Bengali	B. Settlers
Registration/ Ancestral	66.7	57.9	70.0	85.0	87.5
Oral commitment	--	--	--	15.0	--
Community Land and No papers	33.3	43.1	30.0	--	2.5
Total	100	100	100	100	100

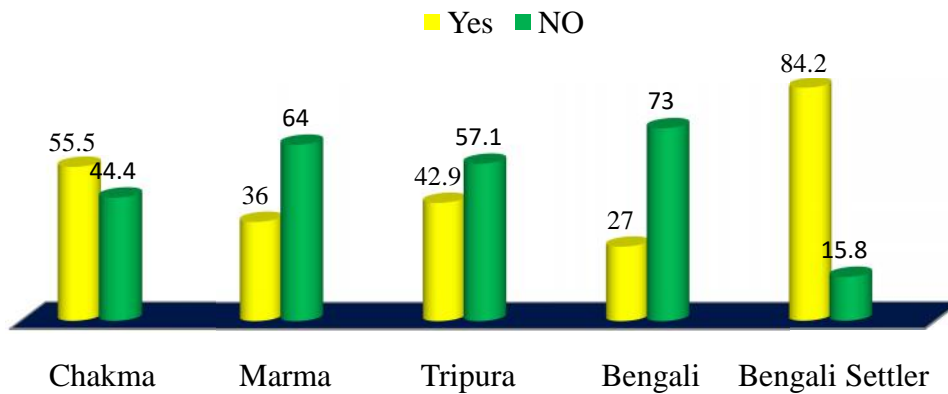
Source: Fieldwork data 2017

The table 7.4 shows that 66.7 percent of the Chakma, 57.9 percent of the Marma and 70 percent of Tripura households informed they have land ownership papers that these are registry and ancestral document, none is found in the oral commitment categories, more over the rest 33.3 percent of Chakma 43.1 percent of the Marma and 30 percent of Tripura households informed these are community land and they have no papers just traditionally using. It is also depicted from the table that 85 percent of the Bengali owned land due to registration, 15 percent owned due to oral commitment and no papers categories. For the Bengali settlers it is found that 87.5 percent people owned land due to registration/Khas land document, none owns land merely by oral commitment, and only 2.5 percent owned land due to community land and no papers. It is importantly noted here that, somehow Bengali settlers mix-up that what is community land concept and what is no papers category land, actually all of them have a legal paper which they got from the government, however 2.5 percent households mentioned they have no legal papers that these households are living in another person's land which they seem to be their lands.



One of the major problems is to determine the ownership of Paharis land. Among the Pahari population many did not possess any documentation of land ownership, while Bengali settlers taking over their land obtained official certificates.

Chart-14: Presence of Loosing Control over Land due to Dispute (%)



Source: Fieldwork data 2017

As per Act 42 of the Hill Tracts Manual 1900, one does not need the ownership to use a land. Thus the Paharis continued to reside and cultivate in their ancestral lands without registering and acquired fresh lands whenever needed by paying revenues to the Circle Chiefs. When asked the respondents about losing the control of land due to dispute the study shows that on an average 59.6 percent respondents informed that they have lost control over land due to dispute, the 40.4 percent told that they did not lose control over land due to land dispute (see chart no 14). Among the respondents who lost control over land due to land dispute it is found from the analysis that 55.5 percent are in the Chakma community. In the Marma community 36 percent lost control over land due to dispute and 64 percent told that they did not lose control over land due to dispute. When the result is analyzed for Tripura community it is found that 42.9 percent told that they lost control over land due to dispute and 57.1 percent told that they did not lose control over land. It is again observed from the result that 27 percent of the Bengali lost control over land due to dispute whereas 73 percent did not lose control over land. The table shows that 84.2 percent of the Bengali settlers lost control over land due to dispute and only 15.8 percent did not lose control over land. So, dispute is the main reason for losing control over land for the Bengali settlers.

### Causes of Losing Control over Land

During the insurgency period most of the Bengali settlers lost their controlling over their lands. Bengali settlers were settling in the CHT in eighties, at the time of settlement they were little bit peacefully living there but after few years their misery started mainly because of land. In the Ultachari and Zia Nagar Gucha Gram many Bengali settlers has informed that, from the beginning of the Bengali settlement in the CHT the Phahari political groups opposed to this settlement, consequently Shanti Bhahini (SB) started to attack them and set fires on the settler's houses and Bengali settlers also reacted at the same way with military help, notwithstanding settlers were not salvation from that conflict, consequently they were bound to leave their houses and then military were sheltered them in the Cluster Villages as a safe zone. On the contrary, many Phahari people also lost their controlling over land due to construct Cluster Villages on their ancestral land. More than that a sum of 12,222 CHT Phahari (Jumma refugee) families numbering 64,609 persons have returned to CHT from Tripura that they were not yet properly rehabilitated. Today, 3,055 repatriated families (25%) are still unable to reclaim their land, with 80 entire villages occupied by Bengali settlers refusing to leave in the Khagrachari district. Many families remain in Refugee Transit Camps, where three years have passed without any progress in their cases (Fenny, 2001). There are many causes that the ethnic communities mentioned during the field study, some important causes are mentioned below:

When identifying the causes of losing control over land the categories are taken as due to legal papers, forced occupants, Phahari-Bengali land dispute. The study shows that 22.6 percent of the respondents lost the control over land due to legal papers, whereas the figure is observed to be 64.2 percent for the forced occupant, the figure are 13.2 percent due to Phahari-Bengali conflict.

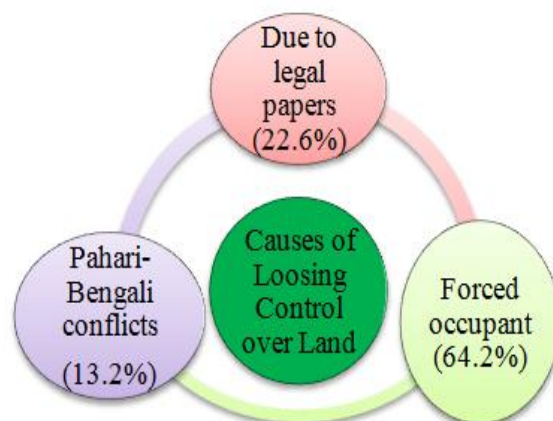
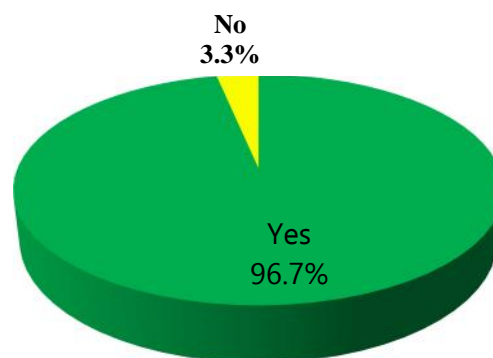


Figure-12: Causes of Losing Control over Land

In the Bengali community none lost the control over land due to legal papers and 100 percent lost control for forced occupant and none for Phahari-Bengali land dispute. The results for Bengali settlers are none lost control due to legal papers, most of them for occupant and the rest for Phahari-Bengali conflicts. Nevertheless, Bengali settlers mentioned that during the insurgency period most of them were bound to leave their lands and sheltered in the cluster villages. After the Peace Accord when conflict seems to be resolved then the Bengali settlers tried to return their lands but it had not been possible due to obstacles by the Phaharis.

Chart-15: Status of communities thinking that “the Main Problem of Bengali settler with the Phaharis is Land Dispute”



Source: Fieldwork data 2017

To find the main problem of Bengali settlers with the Phahari people, the study has focused and intensively explore regarding land dispute. Whether land dispute is the main problem of Bengali settler with the Phaharis it was observed about 96.7 percent thought that the land dispute is the main problem of Bengali settlers with the hilly people whereas only 3.3 percent thought that land dispute is not the main problem of Bengali settlers with the hilly people (see chart no 15). As a result, the means of production i.e. land is the basic problem of the study area as well as CHT

### **7.8 CHT Land Disputes and Bengali Settler’s Aspirations**

In the eighties the government dispatched several thousand landless Bengali families to settle in CHT. The Government allotted 5 to 3 acres of land for every Bengali family, which the Phaharis (tribals) consider unduly given. In the wake of heightened insurgency, the situation deteriorated and the Bengalis relocated themselves in and around secured zones. The Phaharis (tribal) then took hold of the lands left by the

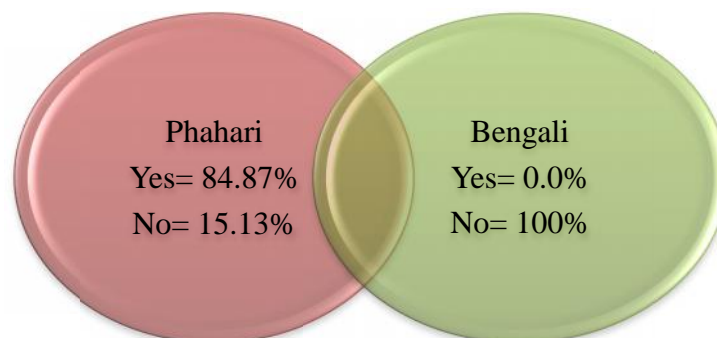
Bengali settlers. That is how the land dispute kept on getting complicated (Hossain, 2013). By the Hill District Council Act 1989, the Hill District Chairman has been vested with the power of giving prior approval in case of any sale, purchase, transfer or acquisition of land. Alongside, Hill Tracts Manual 1900, introduction of this new act added complicity. The Chittagong Hill Tracts Land Dispute Resolution Commission (Amendment) Act, 2016 added a provision that-

No appeal shall be maintainable against the judgment of this commission and the decision of this commission shall be deemed to be final.

The Bengalis are protesting against this clause because they seemed to be deprived without appeal provision. In the Land Commission there has been no representative from Bengali Settlers, whereas most of the land dispute cases were pit Bengali settlers against Phahari people. The Bengali settlers became worried for that, if once the Land Commission gives decision against them then they have no alternative place to put up their land documents for review again. It means the human rights should be questionable and again unrest situation exist in the CHT.

On the contrary, as per CHT accord 1997 part D. provision 3 mentions that, ‘in order to ensure the land ownership of tribal families having no land or lands below two acres, the government shall, subject to availability of land in the locality, ensure settling two acres of land per family. In the event of non-availability of required land, grove-lands shall be tapped’. Bengali settlers are thinking that the Land Commission will be implemented this provision. However the present study has tried to understand the community thinking about the ownership of settlers’ land thereby it would be clear who thinks that.

Chart-16: Communities thinking that “the land occupied by Bengali settler is owned by hilly people”



Source: Fieldwork data 2017

When asked whether the land occupied by Bengali is owned by hilly people it is observed that 84.8 percent of Phahari respondents thought that land occupied by the Bengali settlers is owned by Phaharis whereas not a single percent Bengalis including Bengali settler thought that land occupied by the Bengali settlers is not owned by hilly people. But, 15.13 percent of the Phahari people perceived that land occupied by Bengali settlers is not owned by Phaharis (see chart no 16). Therefore, it is important to note that though almost all the Phaharis thought that land occupied by the Bengali settlers which is owned by Phaharis nevertheless Bengalis were not thinking so. Bengalis also mentioned that, all the lands owned by the government where the Bengali settlers were settled.

### **Case Study: Understanding Land ownership of Bengali settlers in CHT**

Jasmin Akter (49) lives in Ultachari Gucha Gram of Panchari Upazila with her husband and three children. Her husband is an unemployed person where he tried to manage a work in everyday. The Jasmine's family was settled in the CHT by the government policy and sponsorship from Noakhali, subornachar area in 1980. First time they got settlement opportunity in the Fatema Nagar under Logang union of Panchari Upazila. She was getting 5 acres of land from the government during the settlement. Still now she has reserved the legal papers of her land but very unfortunate that no land is remain under her family controlling. More over her husband was two times physically assaulted and injured by the Shanti Bhahini during the insurgency periods. According to her:

“..... Our family was deeply damaged by the river erosion in the Noakhali Char areas. Consequently, we have lost all the lands where we live and cultivate. We had huge land and cattle for both cultivation and domestic use nevertheless river erosions erased all of our assets except our lives. We were very happy to hear that the government has initiated to settle landless households in the CHT with huge land and other opportunities. Later we entried our household name as a poor and landless family. After completing all the local procedure, in 1980 we started journey from Noakhali to Chittagong. First we arrived at the Hazi Camp which was temporarily established in the Chittagong city. Later army gave us an allotment card which called 'Hazi Camp card' and settled us in the Fatema Nagar of Panchari Upazila. My family was started cultivation on our newly allotted land and tried to restore life cycle with

new hope. My family almost peacefully living there for next few years but when the insurgency started in-between military and Shanti Bhahini (SB in 1986 than we were in between of them as a result we relocated in the Ultachari Gucha Gram (Ultachari Cluster Village)”. Jasmin has also mentioned that, when her family came to get sheltered in the Ultachari Gucha Gram in that time there was no land for them to live. However, they purchased 10 decimal lands from their previously known family and started living in on that land. After the CHT Accord they tried to set up their controlling over land but the land now under the controlling of Phaharis that’s why they didn’t get back their lands. Now Jasmin’s family had 5 acres legal land papers without land whereas Phaharis had land without legal papers.

### **Bengali settler’s Demonstrations against the Amendment Act-2016**

From the beginning, Bengali settlers have been protesting against the ‘CHT Land Dispute Resolution Commission Amendment Act 2016’ and demonstrating by many ways including hartal, human chain, press conferences etc. The national print and electronic media has given highly coverage of their demonstration. Some of which are:

*Bengali settlers called hartal in CHT on 10 Aug 2016:* Five organizations of Bengali settlers called dawn to dusk hartal in Chittagong Hill Tracts demanding the cancellation of Chittagong Hill Tracts Land Dispute Resolution Commission (amendment) Act-2016. The organizations are: Parbatya Nagarik Parishad, Parbatya Bangali Chhatra Parishad, Parbatya Sama Odhikar Andolan, Parbatya Gana Parishad and Parbatya Bangali Chhatra Oikya Parishad in separate press conferences they announced the hartal.

The CHT Land Dispute Resolution Commission (Amendment) Act, 2016 was gazetted on August 8, 2016. Most of the Bengali people would be deprived from getting fair justice during the land disputes as there were no Bengali members in the commission, the organizations said. They demanded the government to keep representative from the Bengali community in the newly activated land commission. The leaders said, settler Bengali people living in three hill districts will be deprived from their land right and once again they will be refugees if government start operation of the land commission without considering the interests of Bengali settlers.

“The Bengali community leaders in the Chittagong Hill Tracts think that the government step to settle the long-pending land disputes is part of a conspiracy to drive them away from the region, once dominated by indigenous people”<sup>141</sup>.

The tribal leaders and activists, however, welcomed the commission’s notice published on September 8, 2016 seeking complaints as they think the move will help the genuine owners get back their lands.

We cannot welcome the Land Commission decision. This law is disputed; it aims at evicting the Bengalis from the hill tracts. Moreover, the commission chairman is not neutral. We will declare protest programmes whenever the chairman visits the region said, Md Abdul Majid, senior vice-president of Parbatya Bengali Chhatra Parishad – one of the five agitating groups. Md Abdul Aziz Akanda, president of Parbatya Bengali Dolpoti Parishad, informed that the steps to settle the land disputes would not bring anything good for the Bengalis, as the commission does not have any member from the Bengali communities. They have also threatened to go to the court as they deem the recently-approved draft of the CHT Land Dispute Resolution Commission (amendment) Act 2016 is controversial and discriminatory.

### **7.9 Land Grabbing in the name of Religious Institutions**

The government has built hundreds of Mosques and *Madrashas* (Islamic religious educational institutions) throughout the CHT as a part of its plan to Islamize the tribal homeland<sup>142</sup>. The PCJSS has given an estimate of the Mosques and *Madrashas* built in the CHT during the period of (1979-1983) five years where they reported that in 1979 the total Mosques in the CHT was only 421 but it increased 525 in the year of 1982 and after one year it was more increased to 529 in 1983 (see table 7.5). Apart from Islamization, there have been accounts of the persecution of the tribals for their religious beliefs and attacks by the military and settlers on Buddhist and Hindu temples, churches and religious images<sup>143</sup>. Besides, the Christian missionaries are also active in converting the tribals to Christianity.

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<sup>141</sup> For more see Dhaka Tribune, September 10, 2016

<sup>142</sup> For more see Barua, B.P. 2001, Ethnicity and National Integration in Bangladesh: A Study of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. P. 117, New Delhi: HAR-ANAND Publications Pvt. Ltd

<sup>143</sup> For more see CHTC Report, May 1991, p. 14

Table- 7.5: Mosques and Madrashas in the CHT

Year	Growth of Mosques and Madrashas in the CHT	
	Number of Mosques	Number of Madrashas
<b>1979</b>	421	4
<b>1982</b>	525	35
<b>1983</b>	529	39

Source: B.P. Barua 2001, p. 117

It is true that after Bengali settlement in the CHT, many Mosques were built in due to the 400000 Bengali Muslim settler's religious demand. On the contrary, after the CHT Peace Accord the Phahari's religious institutions such as Mandirs, Churches, and Pagodas are increasing as well (see table 7.6). Until 2011, there are a total of 554 Phahari's religious institutions established in the Khagrachari district alone, whereas Bengalis religious institutions are almost 415. Though the Phahari-Bengali population ratio is 49:51 in Khagrachari, however Phahari's religious institutions much more than Bengali's religious institutions.

Table-7.6: Number of Religious Institution  
Khagrachari Dist

Mosque	Temple (Mandir)	Church (Girza)	Pagoda	Total Mandir, Girza and Pagoda	Others
415	178	29	347	554	30

Source: District Statistics 2011; Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS, 2011)

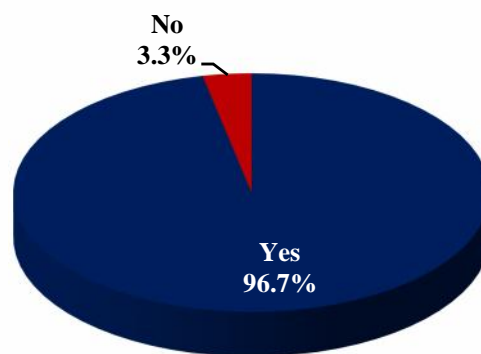
During the fieldwork in the Panchari Upazila of Khagrachari district that there are many Bengali settlers informed, their lands which they have got from the government were occupied by the Phaharis in the name of religious institutions. They mentioned "we have heard that religious institutions will not be destroyed if once it is established". There are many lands of us where '*Panchari Shantipur Aranya Kutir*' (the largest Buddhist sculpture of the country) was established". They also mentioned that- by the way, day by day Phaharis are capturing their lands under the controlling of religious institution, that's why they fear that will never getting return the lands and solution of CHT land problems will be more complicated for that reason.



### 7.10 Solution of the CHT Land Disputes

A solution to the land problem has become absolutely crucial to ensure peace and harmony in the region. The land Commission is empowered to cancel the ownership of illegally occupied lands and hills. The State has to ensure that lands are not owned by the outsiders. Besides, UN and other International Organizations, the tribal often refer the term 'indigenous' to gain leverage in the settlement of land issues. Late Aungshoi Prue Chowdhury, the 15th Bomang Circle Chief clearly said that there are no indigenous people in CHT (Hossain, 2013). In 2008, while Barrister Debashish Roy was the Advisor on CHT Affairs, his office even didn't endorse such claim.

Chart-17: Status of Communities thinking that "there should be permanent settlement of land by Government"



Source: Fieldwork data 2017

The above chart 17 shows the possibility of permanent settlement of land dispute by government. The result shows that 96.7 percent of the respondents thought that land dispute would be solved by the government interference whereas the other 3.3 percent thought that the dispute would not be solved by the interference of the government. So, the study reveals that government can play a vital role in solving the land dispute problem. The recent approval 'CHT Land Dispute Resolution Commission (Amendment) Act 2016' to some of the proposed land dispute settlement acts ushers new hopes though but wouldn't last long without addressing Bengali aspirations. At least, from the instant Bengali reactions in all the three Hill Districts, it appears so. Without conceding space for each other's demands based on mutual respect and reconciliation it would be difficult to reach an amicable solution. Moreover, Raja

Devasish Roy<sup>144</sup>, has given attention to the solution of land disputes in the CHT. He mentioned that this matter is undoubtedly the most difficult matter that requires a just settlement. One possible way to solve this problem in a reasonable manner would be if the settlers or a significant percentage of them sought to be rehabilitated outside the CHT on a voluntary basis. Because of the marginalized condition of most of these settlers, it is not unlikely that they may agree to be rehabilitated elsewhere provided that the rehabilitation measures offer them a better life than what they have, at least with regard to economic opportunities. Even today, the settlers' presence in the region requires to be subsidized by government rations of foodstuff (which no other section of the CHT population is provided with on a regular basis). The European Parliament is known to have offered financial assistance in the event that such a process is agreed upon by the Government of Bangladesh. However, it does not seem that the Government of Bangladesh has agreed to this proposal. Therefore, some other way of dealing with this problem will eventually have to be found. Otherwise, the violation of the land rights of the dispossessed people will remain unresolved. Perhaps NGOs and other sections of civil society could help work out a negotiable settlement in this regard, by being respectful towards the rights of the dispossessed people, and the rights of the settlers, who too have been merely used as pawns during the internal conflict, and who are as poor and as marginalized as the people that they have dispossessed.

In the light of the above discussion, it was obviously blooming that the Bengali settlers' fortune depends on the CHT Land Commission and their sensible judgment against the land disputes. Nevertheless, the CHT Land Dispute Resolution Commission and others concerned authorities have to give more attention to the resolution of CHT land disputes where all the groups could set their trust upon them. At the end of the discussion the study would like to narrate with comments of a Bengali settler respondent Edris, (50) who have been living in the Zia Nagar of Panchari Upazila since 1986 to onwards. He mentioned with very discontentment that- there is no alternative without confessing that we were landless poor Bengalis

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<sup>144</sup> Raja Devasish Roy, 2004. *The Land Question and the Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord*. Published in Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury (ed), *Land: A Journal of the Practitioners, Development and Research Activists*, Vol 11, No. 7 Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD) (pp. 43-65) Dhaka, June, 2004.

and at the same time mainstream people in the plain land but the government has made us 'Settler' in the name of rehabilitation in the CHT, consequently, difficult situation of the Hill Tracts has created us adversary and conflicting group against the Paharis, furthermore Shanti Bahini made us refugees, along with we think that, Land Commission will make us landless again and we don't know what'll be our last destination! As a result, they will become an ideally crisis as well as sects of 'settlers' and emerging new issues for further study.

## **CHAPTER- 8: Ethno-Political Conflicts and the Positioning of Bengali Settlers**

- 8.1 Introduction**
- 8.2 Local Politics in CHT and the Emergence of PCJSS**
- 8.3 Emergence of UPDF as a Regional Party**
- 8.4 Emergence of Equal Rights Movement as a Bengali settler's Spokesman**
- 8.5 Presence of Political Conflict within the Phahari Groups**
- 8.6 Status of Local Political division between Phahari and Bengali**
- 8.7 Presence of Subscription Collection in the name of Local Political Parties**
- 8.8 Ethnic Conflicts: Before and After Peace Accord Scenarios**
- 8.9 Presence of Getting Security by Army (Past and Post- Peace Accord)**
- 8.10 Status of Facing Problems for not Getting Security by Army in CHT**
- 8.11 Status of Ethnic Groups and getting security from Gov. Foresees**
- 8.12 Status of Ethnic Groups and Security in the CHT**
- 8.13 Main Problems of Bengali Settlers Reside in the CHT**
- 8.14 The post-Peace Accord Scenario of the CHT**

## 8.1 Introduction

The ethnic groups are also divided in terms of local politics in the CHT. The Phaharis are mainly divided into two parties, one of them is Parbatya Chattagram Jana-Samhati Samiti (PCJSS)<sup>145</sup> and another is The United Peoples Democratic Front (UPDF)<sup>146</sup>. In fact, these two local political parties were controlling the CHT since 1997. There was only one (PCJSS) local political party for the Phaharis after independence of Bangladesh and before signing CHT peace accord in 1997. There was a long history of PCJSS as a sole platform of ethnic minorities in the CHT. So, it is necessary to mention here that, without understanding of emergence of local political groups it would be difficult to understand the dynamics of local politics and the position of Bengali settlers.

## 8.2 Local Politics in CHT and the Emergence of PCJSS

Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS) a political organization of the tribal people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT). The organization waged an armed resistance against the government in the 1970s with the object of safeguarding the rights of the hill people. The Jana Samhati Samiti was established in 1973 with the aim of securing the hill people's right to autonomy. Soon after its emergence the

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<sup>145</sup> Parbatya Chattagram Jana-Samhati Samiti (PCJSS) a political organization of the indigenous tribal peoples of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT). The organization waged an armed resistance against the government in the 1970s with the object of safeguarding the rights of the hill people. The Jana-Samhati Samiti was established in 1973 with the aim of securing the hill people's right to autonomy. Soon after its emergence the military wing of the Samiti, shanti bhahini started its activities. Since then the Bangladesh Army and Shanti Bahini had been in confrontation until the peace accord in 1997. As this four-point manifesto was rejected by the government, it gave rise to resentment among the hill people and the concepts of Jumma nationalism and Jummland took its genesis. With the object of securing the rights of the hill people, PCJSS was founded on 15 February 1973 under the leadership of Manabendra Narayan Larma. The aims and objectives of Parbatya Chattagram Jana-Samhati Samiti were: humanism, nationalism, democracy, secularism, and establishing the rights of autonomy of the small tribes.

<sup>146</sup> The United Peoples Democratic Front (UPDF) is a political party based in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh. Founded on 26 December 1998 at the end of a Preparatory Conference held in Dhaka, the UPDF is a manifestation of the strong and serious reservations against the Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord of 2 December 1997. The Accord failed to address fundamental demands of the Jumma people. UPDF was formed with a pledge to fight for the right of self-determination of the indigenous Jumma peoples through the establishment of FULL AUTONOMY. The UPDF firmly believes in the principles of democracy, fraternity and equality, and above all it seeks to establish a society free from all forms of oppression and exploitation. The principles of equality of nations, equality of both sexes and non-communal and democratic ideals constitute the basis of all activities of the Party.

military wing of the JSS, so called Shanti Bahini, started its activities in CHT. Since then the Bangladesh Army and Shanti Bahini had been in confrontation until the peace accord in 1997<sup>147</sup>. As a result of discriminatory policies against the Phaharis over a long period resentment combined with political consciousness gradually grew in them. They felt that they were subject to economic, political, and religious subjugation which was increasingly endangering their identity. Such an attitude compelled them to stand for safeguarding their identity and integrity for their homeland. In response to this concern Manabendra Narayan Larma led to delegation to Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on February 15, 1972 with a charter of demands. The Prime Minister dismissed the charter on the ground of it being a move for session. Over and above this he advised M. N. Larma to accept integration into the new state by 'becoming Bangalis'. In response M. N. Larma and his younger brother Jyotirindra Bodhipriyo (Shantu) Larma established the PCJSS in 1972. In 1975, M. N. Larma went into hiding and joined Shanti Bahini, the military wing of PCJSS.

After the charter was dishonored the demand of the Phaharis turned to for self-determination through armed struggle. Late in February 1976 the Shanti Bahini struck its first blow against the Bangladesh army. The result gradually scaled up. The government reacted militarily to such assault. It also adopted the policy of settling landless Bengalis from the plains in CHT. The armed encounters resulted in immense loss of lives and resources in both sides. Findings that policy of military operations and settlement of Bengalis in the region was not a solution to the problem rather had aggravated it the government looked for the political solution to the problem<sup>148</sup>. As an outcome of this effort an agreement was signed between the Government of Bangladesh and PCJSS in 1997.

### **8.3 Emergence of UPDF in Opposition to CHT Peace Accord**

After signing CHT peace accord between the government and PCJSS some Phahari people were against it. These protestants formed another local political party like UPDF. It was founded on 26 December 1998 at the end of a preparatory conference

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<sup>147</sup> For more see Banglapedia (2015) National encyclopedia of Bangladesh. See more at: [http://en.banglapedia.org/index.php?title=Parbatya\\_Chattagram\\_JanaSamhati\\_Samiti](http://en.banglapedia.org/index.php?title=Parbatya_Chattagram_JanaSamhati_Samiti).

<sup>148</sup> Rafi, M., Chowdhury, A. Mushtaque R. (2001), *Counting the Hill: Assessing development in Chittagong Hill Tracts*, Dhaka: The University Press Limited.

held in Dhaka. During the fieldwork the present study has observed that in recent years the UPDF is mainly controlling Khagrachari District and PCJSS controlling Rangamati and Bandarban Districts. But it doesn't mean there is no supporter of UPDF in other two districts and PCJSS supporters in Khagrachari district. The present study also observed that, most of the Union Parishad<sup>149</sup> chairmen were elected from UPDF in Khagrachari District. It indicates that, UPDF is the dominant local political party for the Khagrachari District. At the same time, most of complains for forcibly collection of subscriptions also goes to the UPDF<sup>150</sup>. The Phahari respondents mentioned that, the CHT peace accord created brotherhood conflict among the united Phaharis consequently, Phaharis are divided into two major local political parties; moreover, they were involved in blood shading patricidal conflicts which created the CHT more unrest.

Table-8.1: State of Involvement in Local Political Groups

Local. Political Groups	Ethnic Groups (%)				
	Chakma	Marma	Tripura	Bengali	Bengali settlers
<b>UPDF</b>	28.6	31.6	30.0	--	5.0
<b>PCJSJ</b>	10.0	5.3	15.0	--	--
<b>Equal Rights</b>	--	--	--	50.0	50.0
<b>None</b>	56.7	63.2	55.0	45.0	45.0
<b>Others</b>	4.8	--	--	5.0	--
<b>Total</b>	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Fieldwork data 2017

The table 8.1 reveals that the involvement of political organization by different ethnic groups. The table clearly shows most of the Bengalis were involved in Equal Rights Movement (i.e. ERM is a local political organization, who were struggling for equal rights and opportunities for all the dwellers in the CHT) and most of the Phaharis involved in UPDF (i.e. United Peoples Democratic Front in a local political organization in the CHT). Almost 50 percent of Bengali and Bengali settlers informed they were supporter of equal rights movement. On the contrary, majority of the Phahari said they were not supporter of any political organization. In the present observation there had no UPDF and PCJSS supporter been found in the Bengali communities at the same time there had no Phahari people been found who were

<sup>149</sup> Union Parishad is the smallest administrative rural geographic unit comprising of mauzas and villages and having union parishad institution.

<sup>150</sup> According to The Daily Prothom Alo report On: forcibly collection of subscriptions (Chadabaji in Bangla) , 12 March 2017

involved with Equal Rights Movement. Above 28 percent of Chakma, 31 percent of Marma and 30 percent of Tripura were the supporters of UPDF along with 10 percent of Chakma, 5.3 percent Marma, 15 percent of Tripura involved with PCJSS and above 56 percent of Chakma, 63 percent of Marma, 55 percent of Tripura were not supporter of any local political organization. On an average 50 percent each of Bengali and Bengali settlers involved with Equal Rights Movement and 45 percent of them were not involve with any political organization. Only few (4.8% of Chakma, 5% of Bengali) households observed they were involved with other organization. Therefore the present study areas are under dominated by UPDF and their political alliances.

#### **8.4 Emergence of Equal Rights Movement as a Bengali settler's Spokesman**

There has been no local political organization for the Bengali settlers except Equal Rights Movement, popularly known as *Sama Odhikar Andolan* in the CHT. It was established in 2001 by Wadud Bhuiyan former Member of Parliament from Rangamati. Actually, the *Sama Odhikar Andolan* is not a local political party; it is a platform where Bengalis tried to gather for getting equal opportunities of CHT. But due to acquiescent to the national political parties, Bengalis were separated into many groups like BNP, Awami Leage (AL), etc. The *Sama Odhikar Andolan* failed to fulfill Bengalis demands on account of national political equation. Forasmuch Wadud Bhuiyan was elected by BNP's ticket that's why AL supporters in the CHT were not interested to stand on BNP created platform like *Sama Odhikar Andolan*. The Bengalis couldn't stand on such kind of platform where they raise their voice for getting equal rights and opportunities.

During the period of insurgency, eleven major massacres of hill people took place whereas Bengali accused PCJSS for killing 30,000 Bengali in the CHT. Neither tribals nor Bengalis can put their confidence on and trust each other, as trust in persons result from past experiences. The past experiences and incidents of communal atrocities committed by the settlers and tribal insurgents actually sow the seed of distrust among them. The fear of forceful expulsion of settlers, overall domination by Phahari (tribal) and feeling of deprivation has generated resistance among them. The Bengali demanded equal rights and status as envisaged in the accord for the tribal. They also demanded that either the post of the Chairman of RC should be made contestable for all communities or the Vice- Chairman's post should be created for a



Bengali. The denial of the fundamental rights has hardened their attitude towards the implementation. Thus, the Bengali – Phahari (tribal) relation, clouded with mist and distrust make the implementation of the accord more complicated if not impossible<sup>151</sup>. Nevertheless, during the fieldwork most of the Bengali respondents mentioned that, by the demonstration of the Equal Rights Movement (*Sama Odhikar Andolan*) they are struggling for getting equal rights and opportunities which Phahari people are getting in the name of indigenous people. However, in recent years Bengali settlers are trying to show protest demonstration in the name of Parbatya Bangali Chhatra Parishad (Bengali Students Forum). There are some other Bengali organization working with *Sama Odhikar Andolan* such as Parbatya Bangali Chhatra Parishad, Parbatya Nagarik Parishad, Parbatya Gana Parishad and Parbatya Bangali Chhatra Oikya Parishad that these organizations are trying to serve the interest of Bengali settlers in different ways thereby they can establish their demands. These forums were collaborately organized series of programme on behalf of Bengalis (especially Bengali settlers) for getting equal treatment from the government and non government organizations.

### **8.5 Presence of Political Conflict between PJCSS and UPDF**

Since we are captives of social, economic and political circumstances that may with concerted effort over time be mitigated but never fully erased and much of what occurs in the course of an implementation effort cannot be changed by policy formulators and implementers (Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1981, p18). Among these factors, the conflicts between Phahari organizations mainly UPDF and PCJSS are important. UPDF refused the accord on the ground that the provisions are not consistent with their demand of autonomy, do not recognize their identity and rights over land and not constitutionally protected. They viewed that the government, instead of the hill people, benefited from it<sup>152</sup>. The ideological conflict between PCJSS and UPDF turned into armed fighting that result in the downslide of law and order situation in CHT. According to a report of the Daily Star<sup>153</sup>, there has killed more than 500 people and injured about 1,000 since December 1998. Kidnapping and

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<sup>151</sup> For more read see Nusrat Jahan 2009. The Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord Implementation in Bangladesh: Ideals and Realities. South Asian Journal of Policy and Governance (SJPG), India

<sup>152</sup> For more see The Independent, December 1, 2001

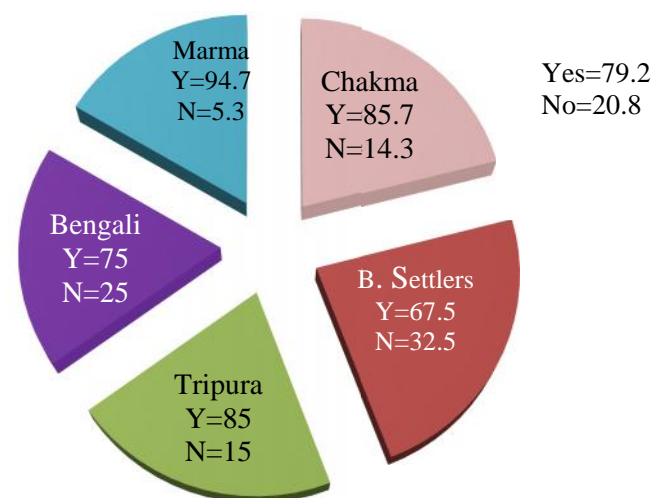
<sup>153</sup> For more see The Daily Star December 1, 2004

extortion by local gangs are frequent: more than 1,000 people have been kidnapped in the past 11 years. According to the Government statistics there had been 61 incidents of armed fighting between the UPDF, PCJSS and the security forces since the signing of the Treaty<sup>154</sup>. These conflicts were creating instability in CHT, dividing the people and making the implementation of CHT Peace Accord uncertain.

The figure 13 illustrates the political discord among the different ethnic groups in the CHT. On an average overwhelming majority of the respondents mentioned that, there are political conflicts being occurred between Phahari and Bengali. More than 79 percent of the total respondents reported politically conflicts are existing in the CHT. Only 20 percent respondents informed there were no political discords within the ethnic groups. The graph presented that, more or less 94 percent of Marma, 85 percent of Chakma, 67 percent of Bengali settler, 85 percent of Tripura, and 75 percent of Bengali thought that, there is political conflict among the ethnic groups.

Fig-13: Status of Political Discord by Ethnicity (%)

On the contrary, 5.3 percent of Marma, 14.3 percent of Chakma, 32.5 percent of Bengali settler, 15 percent of Tripura, and 25 percent of Bengali also seemed that there are no political discord between Phahari and Bengali.



As mentioned above, there are two vital local political groups were struggling for establishing their political power over the CHT. This intra-communal violence has occurred despite the fact that both UPDF activists and PCJSS cadres had been victims of atrocities by the Bangladeshi security forces. Several other smaller Phahari groups also feel unrepresented and resent the fact that *Shanti Bahini* is in charge of

<sup>154</sup> For more see Jahan, 2009, p10-12

implementing the peace agreement. The UPDF and other smaller dissident groups claim that the police, with the support from the PCJSS, continue arbitrary arrests of their members. For its part, the PCJSS alleges that these dissident groups have targeted their members for kidnapping and killing (Amnesty International, 2009). More than two decades arm based politics in CHT turned to a new formation after the peace accord. The PCJSS and UPDF were not only involved in killing, some displacement of Hill People had also happened for this reason especially in some areas where both groups were crazy to control the area (Nasreen, 2005). The refusal of the PCJSS which seeks to be the sole representative of the *Jummas* to even talk with the UPDF has furthermore vitiated any possibility for intra-communal peace<sup>155</sup>. Nonetheless, most Phahari people blame the government for escalating the continuing intra-group conflict in the CHT region. They believe that conflict persists because of non-implementation of the CHT Peace Accord of 1997 by the government.

#### **8.6 Status of Local Political division between Phahari and Bengali**

Phahari and Bengali are also divided in terms of politics. After above 25 years political troubles the people of CHT are concentrated to the development of themselves. Nevertheless, there are some tensions due to lack of confidence and mistrust with each other. Previous records of the CHT show that, there was no conflict between Hill People and Bengali People before the government that initiated Bengali settlement. Whereas Adi Bengali and Phaharis used to keep trust upon each other but Bengali settlers created fracture in this trust. One effect of the current intra-Phahari group violence has been that it draws attention away from the conflict between Phahari people and Bengali settlers in the CHT, a conflict over political rights and natural resources. It also weakens the Phahari people in a number of ways. For example, since the intra-Phahari conflict is largely concentrated in Chakma-inhabited areas, it is mostly ordinary Chakmas who are the direct victims of the intra-communal violence. Other ethnic groups are also affected because of the restrictions placed on movement, difficulties in operating trade and other businesses, and frequent extortion. Phahari community is therefore becoming increasingly divided, its economy is dwindling, and its social and human development (including health care and

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<sup>155</sup> Panday, Kumar Pranab. and Jamil Ishtiaq 2009, Conflict in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh: An Unimplemented Accord and Continued Violence. The Journal of Asian Survey, Vol. 49, Issue 6, pp. 1052–1070.

education) is becoming stand still partially as a result of this intra-communal violence. The second source of violence in the CHT is the conflict between Phahari insurgent groups (especially the UPDF) on one side, and government security forces and Bengali settlers, on the other. The militaristic mobilization of Bengali settlers has, in fact, added increased complexity to solving the CHT conflict. A movement called Sama Odhikar Andolan (SAA, Equal Rights Movement) organized by Bengali-speaking settlers after 2001 has created further discontent among the indigenous people in the region. These settlers believe the accord has made them second class citizens in the CHT region. The SSA movement has also opposed the PCJSS for signing the accord and has carried out several agitations demanding annulment of the 1997 accord (Panday and Jamil 2009). In the light of the above statements, it is manifested that, there are a different types of local political conflict existing, some of them are intra-Phahari conflict and another one is Phahari-Bengali conflicts. Materially, these triangulation systems of conflict have made the CHT uneven and unrest.

### **Case Study: Understanding the Local Politics of the CHT**

Salema Begum (39) living in the Zia Nagar, Ultachari union of Panchari Upazila with her others family member. She is an elected women member from 2 no ward of Ultachari union of Panchari Upazia. In 1981 Salema came to the CHT with her parents. From her childhood she has been observing the Bengali settlers' sorrow and aspiration. After her adulthood she decided to involve in politics for doing social work for the Bengali settlers' upliftment. She is involved with Bangladesh Awami League's politics but as a Bengali settler she is also involved with local politics which is Shomo Adikar Andolon. She mentioned that- "though I am a supporter of Awami League but I am also working for the betterment of Bengali settlers with standing on the platform of Shomo Adikar Andolon. My main political objective is- all the people of CHT will get equal opportunities, treatment and equal rights whether he/she is Phahari or Bengali. From the very beginning of Bengali settlement in the CHT, the settlers have deprived in each and every aspect of socio-political and development dynamics. The Phahari are playing political game with the Bengali settlers and they are not accepted as permanent citizen of the CHT. I would like to say - according to the constitution of Bangladesh it is guaranteed that all the citizen of Bangladesh can move and settle in

everywhere within the territory of the country. If a tribal people can permanently live in the plain, why we cannot permanently live in the CHT, this is the question. It is true that we have some lackings where all the Bengali settlers are not united for establishing their rights. Most of them are divided for the loyalty to the national politics. Some of them are supporter of Awami League and some of them are BNP and other national political parties that's why they are not united. On the contrary, if you see the political activities of the Phaharis, you will observe that though they are involved in national political parties nevertheless they also support any sort of Phahari organization, for example- if you are a student you are must involved Phahari Student Forum, if you are women, you have to be involved in women federation, at the same way, youth, aged people, service holder all of them are involved in respective organization- this is the main political difference between Bengali settler and Phaharis”.

Salema also said- the government was trying to do some better things for the Bengali settlers but that initiatives didn't become successful for the interruption and unwillingness of Phahari political parties. For example, the government has taken initiative to rehabilitate all the Internally Displaced Persons but Phahari political parties den't agree to rehabilitate Bengali settlers though they were as refugees as tribals. Moreover, she suggested that all the Bengali settlers should stand up on an unique platform where they will be able to raise their voice for getting equal rights and opportunities. She hopes by this process Bengali settlers will be able to establish their equal rights.

### **8.7 Presence of ‘Subscription Collection’ in the name of Local Political Parties**

Almost all the people of the Khagrachari district are bound to pay subscription to the local political parties, especially for the UPDF. According to the Daily Prothom Alo,<sup>156</sup> report on: subscription collection (the report was in Bangla: Chadabajite Othisto Khagracharir Manus). The report states that, all the farmers, service holders, businessman, and laborer have to pay fixed amount of money to the local political parties. They were giving this subscription year after years. If any transport businessman is being delayed to pay subscription the collectors hold the transport and

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<sup>156</sup> According to a report of The Prothom Alo March 12, 2017

sometimes burned transport due to mentioned reason. If any farmer sold their cultivated fruits, goods, vegetables, duck and chicken then they are must bound to pay fixed amount of money. In the Khagrachari District- UPDF, JSS, Bengali student forum, and in limited space of Jatio Jonoshoghoti Samiti are collecting this subscriptions. UPDF is the largest regional political party and most of the subscription collection against them. The leaders of the UPDF (not interested to disclose name) said, “If any businessman gain profit one lac Taka then he gives us five thousand Taka from his profit, on the contrary if we don’t give shelter him hence he can’t do the business. So businessmen are willingly giving us the subscription. This is the reality of the CHT”. The JSSJ leader Shuda Shindu Khisha mentioned about subscription collection “all the subscription collection will be stopped if civil administrators stop their bribe and bakshish collection” (popularly known as Ghush in Bangla). However, the present study has tried to get information from the communities about how many people bound to pay subscription to the local political groups. The table 8.2 revealed that the status of subscription paid by ethnic groups for local political or social organization. The table evidently presents that more or less all the ethnic groups have to pay subscription to local political or social organization in the CHT.

Table-8.2: Presence of Subscription paid to Local Political groups by Ethnicity (%)

<b>Ethnic Groups</b>						
	Chakma	Marma	Tripura	Bengali	Bengali settlers	Total
<b>Yes</b>	90.5	78.9	70.0	30.0	60.0	65.0 (78)
<b>No</b>	9.5	21.1	30.0	70.0	40.0	35.0 (42)
<b>Total</b>	100	100	100	100	100	100 (120)

Source: Fieldwork data 2017

The highest portion of Chakma and lowest portion of Bengali pay subscription to local political groups. Among them 90.5 percent of Chakma, 78.9 percent of Marma, 70 percent of Tripura, 60 percent of Bengali settler, and 30 percent of Bengalis were paying subscription for local political organization. Rest of them was not paying subscription for local political organization. In an average 65 percent of the total households were paying and 35 percent households were not paying subscriptions for local political or social organization in the CHT. Bengali settlers said, it is very difficult to pay subscription but we are bound to pay if we want to living in the Khagrachari.

### Status of Impacts on Household Economy for paying Subscription

It is presented in the table 8.3 that the status of economic impacts on households for giving subscription to the local political groups. Most of the Bengali settler households reported that, there had been serious problem to maintain family due to paying subscription for local political organizations. On the contrary, over majority Chakma and Bengali households mentioned they were not facing any problem for paying subscription to the local political organization. Only 14.3% of Chakma, followed by 11.1 % of Marma, 33.3% of Tripura, 7.1% of Bengali and 56.2% of Bengali settler households observed who were facing problem to maintain family due to giving subscription. On an average, 13.6 percent of total observed households were facing problem in running their business for giving subscription and only 5.5 percent each were facing problems in service and land cultivation.

Table-8.3: Status of Impacts on Households Economy for paying Subscription

Problems	Ethnic Groups (%)				
	Chakma	Marma	Tripura	Bengali	B. settlers
Hardship in family maintenance	14.3	11.1	33.3	7.1	56.2
Problem in running business	14.3	16.7	5.6	14.3	15.6
Problem in service	--	16.7	16.7	--	--
Problem in land cultivation	--	22.2	--	--	6.2
No Problem	71.4	33.3	44.4	78.6	21.9
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Fieldwork data 2017

Under these circumstances, it is evidently proved that due to giving subscription majority of Bengali settlers have to undergo hardship in family maintenance. Albeit most of the Chakma and Bengali households mentioned there were no problem to maintain their family after giving subscription. One of the Chakma respondents mentioned that, ‘we are willingly paying subscription for local organization because after all we are beneficiary by such kind of organization’. He also informed, these organizations are playing safe guarding role for doing business, service, and land cultivation. However, these organizations are mostly providing security for the family members. Therefore, the people have recognized the political groups by payment for social security and other purposes. This trend of subscription collection is very much unethical and collides with rules and norms of the state and society at large.

### **8.8 Ethnic Conflicts in CHT: Before and After Peace Accord Scenarios**

The peace accord was hailed and welcomed not only by the tribals of CHT but also by democratic and progressive political parties of Bangladesh along with the United Nations, European Union and many democratic governments of the world and many national and international organizations as well. The Peace Accord that was signed in 1997 by the Bangladesh Government and the Partbattya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samiti (PCJSS) formally ends more than two decades of armed conflict in Bangladesh and it has opened up opportunities to improve the life and livelihood of the citizens of the CHT. Therefore, the CHT Accord has become a milestone for development activities in the region. The implementation of the Accord is on progress with the establishment of the Ministry of CHT Affairs, the CHT Regional Council and the Land Dispute Settlement Commission. The initiatives, however, are interrupted with some impediments: misinterpretations, inadequate and inappropriate information sharing; and unconstructive propaganda. Debate on local people's lands and dislocation of locals from their own lands continue. Therefore, consistent stresses are on settlement of the CHT issues emanating from the land right and the settlement-related disputes. The Peace Accord and its aftermath have again taught us that building peace is not just about arriving at a political settlement to an armed conflict. More important is about creating an environment that will enable the CHT people to live with dignity and in harmony with each other, based on social justice and equal rights (Quayes, 2012). Moreover it is necessary to ensure dialogue among all the groups and strengthen the role of Bangladesh government, Bengalis including Bengali settlers, Tribal groups and other stakeholders for the implementation of the CHT Peace. It is presented in the table 8.4 that the status of ethnic conflict among the groups of CHT.

On the basis of these information it was ultimately revealed that most of the Bengali settler respondents (60%) mentioned there was ethnic conflict with Phaharis, on the contrary less amount (30%) of Bengali said ethnic conflicts are exist in the CHT. At the same time, 47.6 percent Chakma, 42.1 percent of Marma, and only 35 percent of Tripura informed there has ethnic conflicts with Bengalis. On an average less number (45.8 %) of respondents thought that conflicts are happening with each others.



Table-8.4: Presence of Ethnic Conflict by Ethnicity

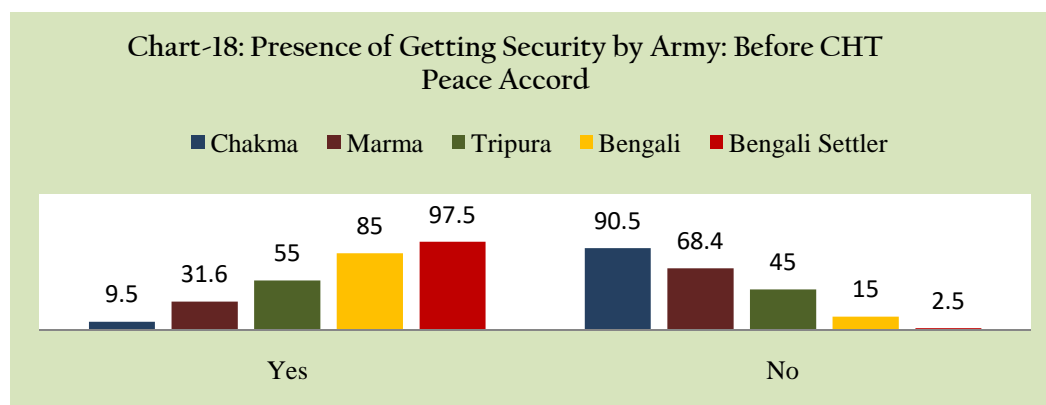
	Ethnic Group and percentage					Total
	Chakma	Marma	Tripura	Bengali	Bengali settlers	
Yes	47.6	42.1	35.0	30.0	60.0	45.8 (55)
No	52.4	57.9	65.0	70.0	40.0	54.2 (65)
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100 (120)

Source: Fieldwork data- 2017

Nevertheless, highest portion (70%) of Bengalis along with 52.4 percent Chakma, 57.9 percent of Marma, 65 percent of Tripura and only 40 percent of Bengali settlers mentioned that, there is no ethnic conflict existing in the CHT. So, here it is transparent that, most of the respondents (52.2%) think that there is no ethnic conflict existing in the CHT. Notwithstanding, the majority Bengali settler respondents gave different opinion.

### 8.9 Presence of Getting Security by Army: Past and Post- Peace Accord Scenarios

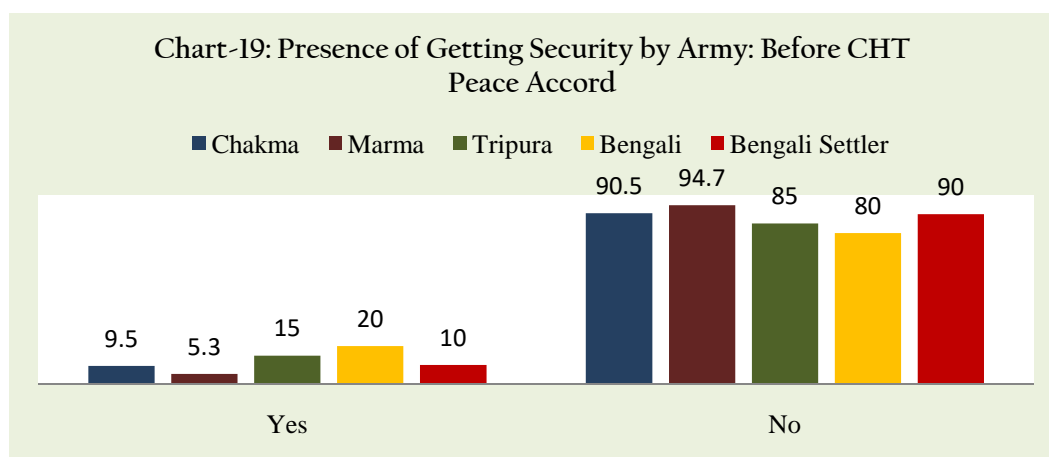
Here it is elucidated the ethnic groups in terms of their getting security from military before and after peace accord. The chart no 18 are comparing the security facility before and after accord situation. Here it is clear that, Bengali settlers were getting more security facility from CHT army than all other communities. Above 97 percent Bengali settlers reported they were getting security from military before the CHT accord but at the same time 90 percent respondents also informed they are not getting security after CHT accord.



Source: Fieldwork data 2017

The least number 9.5 percent of Chakma respondents mentioned that, they never got any security from army before and after CHT accord. Equally Marma and Tripura respondents uttered the same dialogue because only 31.6 percent of Marma and 55 percent of Tripura were not getting army security. This scenario increases after peace

accord hence they are getting lesser security. On an average army security is on the decline for all the inhabitants of CHT. Almost 80-90 percent respondents from all community mentioned that, armies are not giving shelters them after the CHT accord. Nevertheless, 20 percent of Bengali, 10 percent of Bengali settler, 15 percent of Tripura, and 5.3 percent of Marma mentioned armies are giving security after the CHT accord (see chart no 19).



Source: Fieldwork data 2017

During the fieldwork Bengali settlers mentioned, they get more security from military for obvious reasons. They also mentioned some reasons why army provided shelter to them. Here are some reasons mentioned by Bengali settlers during the field study:

1. More than 400,000 Bengali settlers got scattered in the three hill districts, where they don't know how the CHT is, moreover as a government agency the army forces are settled them in the CHT so, it is their responsibility to shelter them with others.
2. During the insurgency Santi Bahini (SB) targeted Bengali settlers as they seemed to be their land grabber. So it was necessary to protect them from SB by the military.
3. The CHT was unrest due to more than two decades insurgency between military and Santi Bahini but once it turn into Phahari-Bengali conflict, nevertheless untrained Bengalis are not prepared to do fighting with opponent in that circumstance army were came to protect them.
4. When the military saw that, many Bengalis murdered by the blood shading sudden attacks by SB than there has no alternatives without return them in a safe zone. The military created *Cluster Village* as a safe zone for the

Bengalis. All the Bengali settlers gathered in to these *Cluster Villages* with many other Bengalis. The military were increased their forces around the *Cluster Villages*. In that process the Bengali settlers were getting more security than other communities.

But after the CHT Peace Accord situation was reverted for the Bengali settlers in terms of security. According to the *Thomas Feeny* (2001)<sup>157</sup> Over 400,000 Bengali settlers were transferred to the CHT in the early 1980s accompanied by approximately one-third of the entire Bangladeshi military for ‘counter-insurgency measures’ and the issue of minority insecurity suddenly became an international concern. 30,000 people lost their lives as the politics of ethnicity. After the 1971 War of Liberation, the newly Government created as sovereign and independence state, as well rejected requests by tribal leaders for autonomy and relocated 400,000 Bengali settlers into the CHT, intensifying competition for resources. Over 120,000 soldiers were also relocated to the CHT to protect the new arrivals but in fact they simply joined forces in carrying out a variety of human rights atrocities against the tribal people, including more than 12 major massacres. Around 80,000 tribal refugees subsequently fled into the neighboring Indian state of Tripura

In the line of the CHT peace accord the government withdraw many security camps from the field level which was mostly besides the *Cluster Villages*. During the period of 1998 to 2004, a total of 200 security forces camps were closed down from different parts of CHT. In August to September 2009, 34 more security forces camps including one Infantry Brigade were withdrawn<sup>158</sup>. As per above arguments it has to be mentioned here that ensuring more security for the Bengali settlers was the demand of that time. After CHT accord the Santi Bahini (SB) armed cadres were rehabilitate and returned to the normal life. On the contrary, Bengali settler households couldn’t return to their previous houses, still now they are waiting in the *Cluster Villages* to return their land. Majority of Bengali settlers are living with minimum police security in

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<sup>157</sup> For more see: Thomas Feeny, 2001, The Fragility of Peace in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh - in Forced Migration Review, October, 2001, Internet: <http://www.fmreview.org/FMRpdfs/FMR11/fmr11.10.pdf>

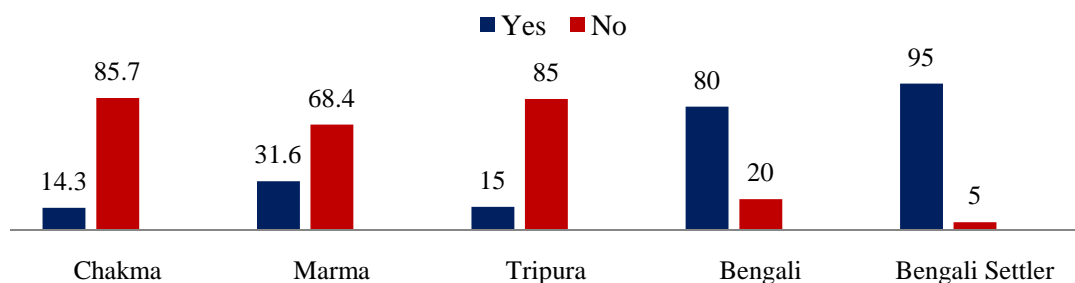
<sup>158</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Council (2011), Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues Tenth session, New York, 16-27 May 2011, Statement by Bangladesh delegation Honorable Iqbal Ahmed, First Secretary, Bangladesh Mission to United Nations

only 80 Paras (villages) against 1702 Paras<sup>159</sup> of the Khagrachari district. As they mentioned, most of them feel insecure due to military withdrawal, hence that would not be a major issue if they will get rehabilitation opportunity as per the government declaration. They are hopeful with that, the government initiatives for the CHT refugees' rehabilitation that almost 38,156 Bengali settlers' households will get privilege to return normal life.

### 8.10 Status of Facing Problems for not Getting Security by Army in the CHT

Most of the Bengalis mentioned they were facing problem due to not getting army shelter. The chart no 20 shows that the ethnic groups and the status of facing problems for not getting security from army. Almost 95% of Bengali settlers and 80% of Bengalis reported they were facing problem. On the contrary, least number of Phahari respondents mentioned, they were not facing problem due to that. Only 14.3 percent of Chakma, 31.6 percent of Marma, and 15 percent of Tripura said that they were not facing problem for penury of army security in the CHT.

Chart-20: Facing Problems for not Getting Security by Army (%)



Source: Fieldwork data 2017

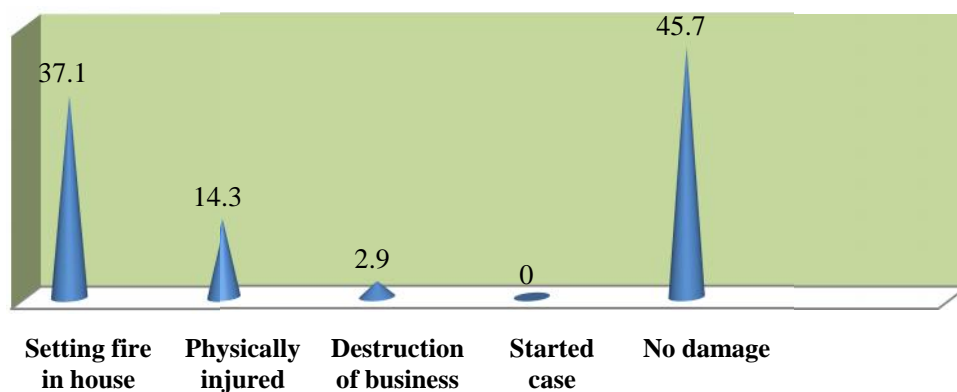
Nevertheless, only 5 percent of Bengali settler and 20 percent of Bengalis also mentioned they don't facing problem in absence of military and at the same time almost 70-80 percent Phaharis were give same opinion. Here it is evidentially clear that Bengali settlers are mostly want to military appearance as their safe guarder whereas Phaharis do not want to military appearance in the CHT as a general people's security. The Phaharis mentioned some reasons that why they do not want military as a security forces of CHT people.

<sup>159</sup> For more see: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) 2011, Population and Housing Census, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Statistics and Informatics Division, Ministry of Planning.

The some reasons the Phaharis mentioned that as below:

- 1) During the two decades insurgency period the military were against us and they didn't gave us any sorts of security rather than oppressions. So, how can we want their shelter?
- 2) The Bengali settlers became crazy with the support of military and we observed that there were far differences of Bengali settlers' attitude with and without military support. However, settlers will be quite normal without army so, it is better for us than army.
- 3) We have gained a lot of experiences from last forty years and our consciousness says- no problems for movements in absence of military security throughout the CHT. But it doesn't mean that there's no need of military for the CHT, military is obviously essential for the sovereignty of the country including the CHT but not for mass people's security.

Fig-14: Status of damage that Bengali settlers were facing due to Ethnic Conflicts



Source: Fieldwork data 2017

The figure 15 illustrates the status of damage that Bengali settlers had to face due to ethnic conflict before the CHT accord. As mentioned before that most of the Bengali settler households were forcefully ousted from their land and houses due to two decades of insurgency between state tropes and *Shanti Bahini* turn into Phahari-Bengali conflict. Among the Bengali settlers, majority of them lost their houses. Almost 37 percent of the total households from Bengali settlers mentioned that their houses were burned by the *Shanti Bahini* members during the insurgency period. More than 14 percent household claimed that they were physically injured during the troubled situations. At the same time 2.9 percent households informed that, their business center (which was located inside the Paras) destroyed for the same reasons. Bengali settlers also informed that, no case was formed against them. One important

aspect of the figure is that, almost half of the respondents (45.7%) mentioned that nothing was damaged which is mentioned in the above figure.

### 8.11 Status of Ethnic Groups and getting Security from Government Force

The pyramid graph (figure no 16) illustrates that the ethnic groups and status of getting securities by the government in the CHT. The figure states Bengalis were getting more security than other communities. Almost half (50%) of the total respondents mentioned that Bengalis were getting more security from the government agencies. Only 12 percent of the respondents opined that Phaharis were getting more. All together 37.5 percent respondents all are equally getting security from the Govt. security forces.

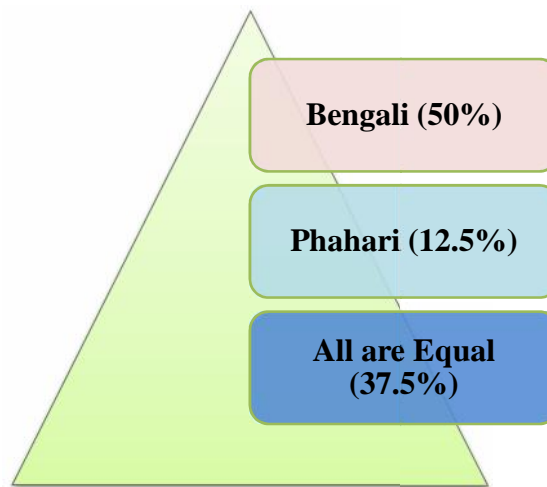


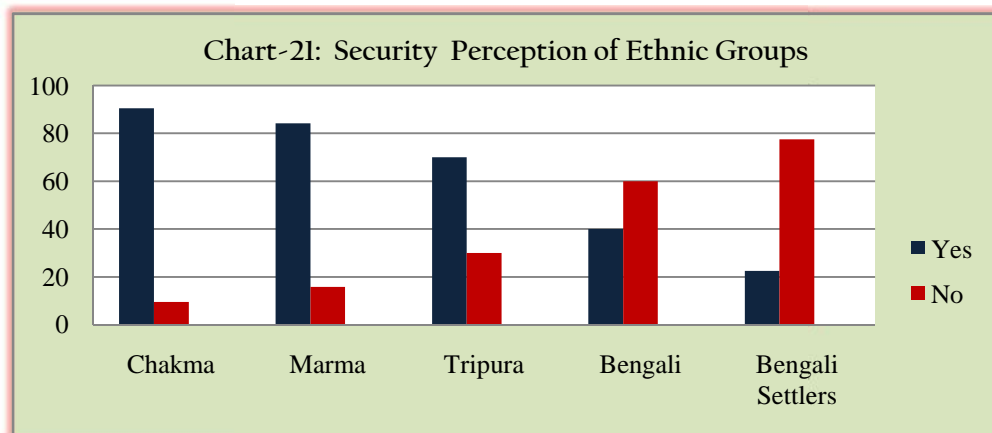
Fig-15: Getting Security from Govt. Foresees by Ethnicity

It was evidently proven by corresponding to others studies; Bengalis were getting more security from government agencies. According to Zobaida Nasreen (2005), CHT Bengalis were getting more security than others. She was mentioned that, “yes it is government, who always favors the majority people and gives concentration on majority interest. They had settled down the Bengali people and ensured security at the banner of cluster village, but at the cost of displacement of Hill People”. So, it is important to be noted here that, the Government’s security should be equally provided to all the people of the CHT but those who are not interested to get army’s security their matter are different against in general perception.

### 8.12 Status of Ethnic Groups and Security in the CHT

After the Peace Accord virtually peace is prevailing on the CHT, nevertheless all the ethnic groups do not feel like that. Without Para military force the Bengalis (settler and Adi Bengalis) didn’t feel comfort, on the other side Phaharis were not interested

in deploying the military as they feel better without them. The chart no 25 illustrates the ethnic group's feelings regarding security in the CHT.



Source: Fieldwork data 2017

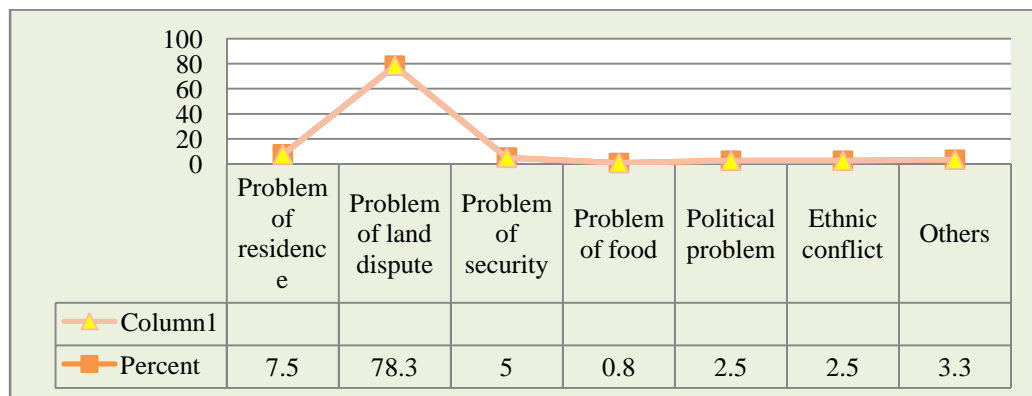
Interestingly Phaharis feel more secured than the two Bengali groups. On the other hand most of the Bengalis were feeling unsecured including Bengali settlers of the CHT. The Chakma communities were top in position in terms of feeling secured and Bengali settlers were least in that position. Almost 90 percent of Chakma, 84 percent of Marma, 70 percent of Tripura, 40 percent of Bengali and only 22 percent of Bengali settlers were feeling secured in the CHT. However, most of the Bengali settlers (77.5%) seemed that they are not secured; at the same time least percent (9.5%) Chakma, respectively 15.8% of Marma, 30.5 of Tripura, and 60% of Bengali were feeling unsecured (see chart no 21). As a result, the graph illustrated that, on an average most of the Phahari respondents are not interested to deploy military for general public security, on the other hand majority of the Bengali settlers are demanding army and they are not feeling secured without military security.

### 8.13 Main Problems of Bengali Settlers

In the case of the CHT, if the Phahari people had been accorded basic constitutional recognition and authority concerning the development and exploitation of resources in their area, more than 20 years of insurgency might well have been avoided. Nevertheless, by the Peace Accord Bengali settlers seemed that they were gain less opportunities than Phaharis. Still now they are in trouble in some unavoidable circumstance. Problem now is that the very same factors that the resource competition, lack of confidence, Phahari–Bengali settler mistrust, land dispute and unresolved issue of refugees rehabilitation are once again creating unrest in the CHT. The present study has tried to understand the problems that the Bengali settlers are

mainly suffering. The chart 22 reveals most of the Bengali settlers are having trouble with land disputes. Above 78 percent respondents from this community mentioned that land disputes is the main problem of the Bengali settlers. Some of them informed there have been a problem of residence along with security problem; ethno-political conflict problem and problems of food. Though the above mentioned problems are very much present in the CHT, but they don't cause much uneasiness in the course of life

Chart-22: Status of main problems of the Ethnic Groups reside in the CHT



Source: Fieldwork data 2017

Many Bengali settlers mentioned that, they have been facing lot of problems in the CHT. From the beginning of the settlement economic suffering, inadequate economic development, insufficient poverty elevation activity and lack of employment generation- are the main problems of Bengali settlers of the CHT. Nevertheless, they are also suffering from some basic and unavoidable circumstances that are- 1) *land disputes*: during the insurgency the military rearranged them into the Cluster Village and they left their land but could not recover the lands never ever. 2) *Prolongation of refugees' rehabilitation*: Many Bengali settlers lost their houses for setting fire on their houses during insurgency period; consequently they were listed as refugees of the CHT. An estimation of the 'Task Force on Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (2000)', almost 38,156 Bengali settler families were listed as internally displaced families albeit they are in tormenting situation than other settlers. 3) *Misperceptions in socio-economic activities*: the present study also tried to explore the 'perception to Bengali settlers' in the CHT, regarding this many Bengali settlers informed that there are many misperception about the Bengali settlers. There has a negative perception created against the Bengali settlers the Phaharis are the responsible for that said Bengali settler respondents.



Considering all the above reasons it could be said that, the Bengali settlers are suffering not only for economic hardship and land disputes problem but also becoming refugee as well. They are also by suffering the identity crisis that is, 'are the Bengali settlers permanent resident of the CHT or not'. From very beginning of the settlement the Phahari political group was opposing the settler. Consequently they are still not convinced to agree that the Bengali settlers are permanent residents of the CHT.

### **Case Study: Victim due to Ethnic Conflicts in the CHT**

Abdul Motalib (65), his father was- late Khoaz Ali. Motalib is the first son of his parents and he was a farmer but there was no personal cultivable land in their previous district. Once Motlib heard that the Government has taken a programme: the poor, landless Bengalis will get opportunity to settle in the CHT with huge lands and other facilities. Then he communicated with their U.P Chairman and the Chairman took necessary steps in favor of him with others. In 1979 he left his permanent address that was- Dist, Mymansing, P.S- Shohagi, P.O- Valikbar, to the CHT. After completing all necessary process he got 5 acres of land, house building facility, and ration with new address which was in Aambagan area under the Khagrachari Sadar Upazila. He had three children, wife and himself total five member's household. After settlement of 1979 to 1998 he was peacefully living in the CHT. He was doing cultivation in his new land. Consequently, his family conditions also almost became solvent. He expressed his sorrow that, "on 24<sup>th</sup> April of 1988 at 10.00 pm I was asleep with my family. In that time Shanti Bhahini attacked gun my house and other houses in the Aambagan area with gun. Suddenly they started firing gun to the armless Bengali settlers; my three children with my wife were murdered by the bulleting of Shanti Bhahini. I was also bulleted but fortunately remained alive but my whole family members were bulleted, burnt and died inside my house. I just alone came to the Comilla Tila and took shelter in one of my previously known Bengali brothers' house. Later, though he filed a case against Shanti Bhahini for murdering his family he did not get any result of this. Bengalis collected money for him then they gave him 5000Tk for building a new house. Now he is living in Comilla Tila of Khagrachari Sadar Upazila, in a mud made house with second time married wife and their two children. He has no specific job but only depends on ration. After crying for a while,

he stated that, “I have lost my family members, house, land; I have lost everything. After CHT peace accord I tried to return to my land which I got from the government but Phaharis sent me back claiming that the land is theirs. I have the document that I collected from the land office. Nevertheless, I can’t go to my land whereas Phaharis are threatening me of murder, like my family members. Several times, informed the respective authorities but they showed no interest to take necessary action against that complain”. However, Motalib said that, now he has no land without homestead though he was the owner of nine acres of land (5 acres government allotted and 4 acres purchased) hence, no land for cultivation. He was three times shifted from his homestead: firstly time by the natural disasters in the Mymensing; secondly from Mymensing to CHT and thirdly from Aambagan to Comilla Tila. That’s why life is meaningless to him though he has married again. He said, he is living without knowing the purpose of living.

#### **8.14 The post-Peace Accord Scenario of the CHT**

The post Peace Accord Scenario, “Operation Uttaran” called “Transition to Peace” had been launched in 2001 in the hill districts of Khagrachari, Rangamati and Bandarban to foster the Peace Accord implementation process. According to the Major General Mohammad Ashab Uddin, ndc, psc, (2012) the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA)<sup>160</sup>, while assessing the current situation of the CHT, he remarked that, except one or two stray incidents, the situation in the area is quite stable under the control of security forces and civil administration. Inter-party rivalries, abductions, killings and communal tensions occurred during that time are local in nature and usually remain within manageable proportion. Though tribal-Bengali relationship is at times swayed on mutual trust and mistrust but it is not complicated as is portrayed and exploited.

After Peace Accord the security forces are facing a number of challenges including maintenance of a stable security environment, inter-party armed clashes, balancing a communal harmony, lack of integrated approach, influence of media and propaganda

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<sup>160</sup> For more see: Major General Mohammad Ashab Uddin, ndc, psc 2012, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), was spoken a Seminar on “*Evaluation of Current Situation in CHT, Challenges and Way Forward*”, the seminar on: “CHT - Revisiting the Peace Accord” Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS). Dhaka on 2 October 2012

by regional tribal political party. He also suggested that, to maintain a peaceful security situation in the CHT as well as implement the CHT Peace Accord, certain issues need to be addressed like: Capacity building of civil administration, Para military forces, for control over activities of armed groups, Enhancing mainstream politics and activation of land commission, Election of regional and hill district councils, Declaration of 'exclusive development zone', and Regulating the activities of international organizations and NGOs.

The area of the CHT, one tenth of the total landmass of Bangladesh and it has tremendous potential to contribute to the national economy. Only the commitment and concerted efforts of all stakeholders may bring sustainable peace in this area in due course of time. Simultaneously, apart from upholding independence and sovereignty, government should continue employing the security forces in the CHT to promote sustainable peace, harmony and development of the region. Therefore, the aim and goals of stakeholders should be treating them and engage them in development activities that will ultimately help them to join the mainstream line of inhabitants.

## **CHAPTER- 9: The CHT Peace Accord and IDPs Problem in CHT**

- 9.1 A Brief History of CHT Conflict and the CHT Accord 1997**
- 9.2 The Peace Accord Implementation and the Positioning of Bengalis in CHT**
- 9.3 The CHT Peace Accord and Communities Perceptions**
- 9.4 The CHT Peace Accord and Where Bengali Settlers are**
- 9.5 CHT Administration System and Condition of National Institutions**
- 9.6 Rehabilitation of Refugees and the Condition of Bengali settlers**
- 9.7 Overview of the Announced Reintegration Package for Refugees and IDPs of the CHT**
- 9.8 Obstacles for the Rehabilitation of Refugees**
- 9.9 The CHT Refugees Rehabilitation and the Position of PCJSS & RJRWA**
- 9.10 The CHT Refugees Rehabilitation and the Position of Bengali settlers**

### 9.1 A Brief History of CHT Conflict and the CHT Accord 1997

The CHT had the special status of an autonomously administered district during British colonial rule, safeguarded by the CHT Regulation of 1900. The Government of India Act of 1935 declared the CHT a “Totally Excluded Area.” Under this arrangement, the people of the CHT enjoyed relative autonomy under traditional tribal chiefs, administered by the central government. After the Partition of British India in 1947, the CHT were given to Pakistan, losing their special status and autonomy under an amendment to the Pakistani Constitution in 1963. During this period, it had become the target of ill-conceived development initiatives with a master plan adopted for the integrated development of the region based on optimum land use possibilities. In fact, all the development efforts, i.e. establishment of the Karnaphuli Paper Mills<sup>161</sup>, construction of Kaptai Hydroelectric project, commercial and industrial plantation and exploration of natural resources displaced the tribal people and deprived them from their traditional right on land and forest caused them massive sufferings. The construction of the Kaptai dam in 1963 submerged 54,000 acres of settled cultivable land i.e., 40% and 90% of the total acreage of CHT land and displaced 100,000 tribal who were not being properly compensated. The erstwhile Pakistan government spent only 2.6 million of an original US \$51 million for rehabilitation<sup>162</sup>. The land that already was scarce was distributed among the refugees from Tripura further depriving the tribal people of their traditional rights.

After the inception of Bangladesh, the tribal people and their organizations started to mobilize and raise their demand for autonomy for the region. The Bangladeshi period is marked by an augmentation of Bengali-tribal people confrontation. This ultimately led to a constitutional rejection of any nationalities in Bangladesh other than the Bengalis. In fact, the successive governments of Bangladesh viewed the problem from a military and economic perspective rather political and adopted a four-pronged strategy like security, development, demographic and political that only to worsen the

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<sup>161</sup> Karnafuli Paper Mills (KPM) is the biggest paper mill in Bangladesh was established at Chandraghona, Chittagong in 1951 by the Pakistan Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC) at a cost of Rs 67.57 million. At that time, there were 31 enterprises that produced hand-made paper in East Pakistan. These enterprises and an industrial unit that produced carbon paper together had 122 workers, of whom 55 were men, 51 women and 16 children (For more see Banglapedia).

<sup>162</sup> Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission (1991), *Life is not Ours*, A Report presented at Copenhagen, Denmark.

situation over the years<sup>163</sup>. In this pretext, the tribals formed the PCJSS and its armed wing Shanti Bahini with a force of 15,000 fighters and 50,000 trained youths into different militia units within six major territorial sectors of operation and started armed rebellion against the government of Bangladesh (Adnan. 2004, p24). Following such guerrilla and political advancement and to counter the military offences, the military officially took up the issue since 1977 and the Hill Tracts had been turned into an army camp by the government with nineteen infantry battalions, eleven Bangladesh Rifle Battalions, three artillery battalions, one engineer battalion, eighteen Ansar battalions, and four armed police battalions (Adnan, 2004, p25). Numerically, there have been 230 army camps, 100 BDR camps and 80 police camps which make a ratio of one security force member for every fifteen indigenous persons<sup>164</sup>. As a part of demographic strategy, over 4, 00,000 Bengali were in-migrated to the Chittagong hill tracts from other parts of the country under the government protection scheme to counter balance the tribal population. The government sponsored migration programme has been successful to outnumber the tribals in CHT. In 1947, the Bengali population was 2.5 percent only in CHT, but it is now 50 percent<sup>165</sup>. Thus, the conflict that started on the issue of the rights of tribal over land and autonomy took shape of violence and insurgency due to the flawed policies of the past governments and caused lives of more than 8,500 rebels, soldiers and civilians of which 2,500 are civilians and forced 50,000 Chakmas to flee the Indian state of Tripura (Shahabuddin, 2004, p191-195; Jahan, 2009, p2-3).

## 9.2 The Peace Accord Implementation and the Positioning of Bengalis in CHT

The long desired “Peace Accord”<sup>166</sup> signed in 1997 was considered internationally as a successful case of conflict resolution as it had brought an end to the insurgency and created a conducive environment for establishing peace in the entire CHT.

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<sup>163</sup> Chowdhury, Zahid H (2001) Is Ethnic Problem Intractable: Prospects for Success of the Peace Treaty, in *Social Science Review*, Volume 18, No2, Part-D pp87-108.

<sup>164</sup> For more see Jenneke Arens, 1997. "Foreign Aid and Militarization in the Chittagong Hill Tracts", in Subir Bhaumik et al. (ed.). *Living on the Edge: Essays on the Chittagong Hill Tracts Katmandu*: South Asia Forum for Human Rights, pp45-80

<sup>165</sup> Shahabuddin, M. D. 2004, "Human Rights and Good Governance: Ethnic Conflict in Perspective," in Mizanur Rahman (ed.), *Human Rights and Good Governance*, Bangladesh: ELCOP.

<sup>166</sup> The Peace Accord was formally signed on December 2, 1997 between the Government and the *Parbattya Chattagram Jana Sanghanti Samity* (PCJSS).

The Objective of the CHT accord is to elevate political, social, cultural, educational and financial rights and to expedite socio-economic development process of all citizens in CHT.

The provisions which have already been implemented that are one by one mentioned below, at the same time the present study will try to explore Bengali settlers within the CHT peace accord.

1. A separate Ministry named Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs (MoCHTA) was formed in 1998 by appointing a minister from among the tribal groups. Presently Mr. Dipankar Talukdar of Rangamati district is working as the State Minister of the Ministry.

An Advisory Council shall be formed to assist this ministry with the persons stated below:

- a) Minister on Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs
- b) Chairman/representative, Regional Council
- c) Chairman/representative, Rangamati Hill District Council
- d) Chairman/representative, Khagrachari Hill District Council
- e) Chairman/representative, Bandarban Hill District Council
- f) Member of Parliament, Rangamati
- g) Member of Parliament, Khagrachari
- h) Member of Parliament, Bandarban
- i) Chakma Rajah
- j) Bohmang Rajah
- k) Mong Rajah

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The Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord contains four main parts: (a) Part A, under the heading “General”, recognizes the Chittagong Hill Tracts as a tribal inhabited region. It deals with commitments to pass legislation and sets out details of the composition of a committee to oversee the implementation of the Accord;

(b) Part B, entitled “Chittagong Hill Tracts Local Government Council/Hill District Council”, details proposed legal amendments to strengthen the existing powers of the district councils and to extend their jurisdiction to include new subjects;

(c) Part C, entitled “Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council”, lays down the composition of a new unit of regional authority to be constituted as a regional council incorporating the three districts of the area. In the case of both the regional and the district councils, the chairperson and two thirds of the seats are to be reserved for indigenous peoples;

(d) Part D, entitled “Rehabilitation, General amnesty and other matters”, addresses a wide range of issues, including the rehabilitation of international refugees, internally displaced persons and indigenous fighters, and the granting of amnesty to the guerrillas and other people involved in the armed struggle. The issue of land and settlement of land disputes is mentioned both in part D and part B. (For more see: Annexure II of this study)

Three members will be added from the non-tribal permanent residents of hilly areas, nominated by the government from three Hill Districts. However, there has been no Bengali settler's representative within the framework of this ministry, though they are more or less one-fourth of the total population of the CHT.

2. The Regional Council (RC) has been formed in 1998 under Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma and President of the Parbattya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS).

A Regional Council shall be formed in coordination with the 3 Hill District Local Government Councils provided that various sections of the Hill District Local Government Council Act 1989 (Act No. 19, 20 and 21 of 1989) shall be amended with an aim to make the three Hill District Local Government Councils more powerful and effective. Chairman of this Council shall be elected indirectly by the elected members of the Hill District Councils, his status shall be equivalent to that of a State Minister and he must be a tribal. The Council shall be formed with 22(twenty-two) members including the Chairman. Two-thirds of the members shall be elected from among the tribals. The Council shall determine its procedure of functioning.

**Composition of the Council shall be as follows:**

Chairman	1
Members Tribal	12
Members Tribal (women)	2
Members non-tribal	6
Members non-tribal (women)	1

Among the tribal members 5 persons shall be elected from the Chakma tribe, 3 persons from the Marma tribe, 2 persons from the Tripura tribe, 1 person from the Murung and Tanchangya tribes and 1 person from the Lusai, Bawm, Pankho, Khumi, Chak and Khiyang tribes. Among the non-tribal members 2 persons shall be elected from each district. Among the tribal women members 1 woman shall be elected from the Chakma tribe and 1 woman from other tribes. Three seats shall be reserved for women in the Council, one-third of which will be non tribal.

3. Hill District Council established in three Hill District- Khagrachari, Rangamati, and Bandarban.

The constitution of the council shall be as follows:

a) Chairman	— one person
b) Members (tribal males)	— twelve people
c) Members (tribal females)	— two people
d) Members (non-tribal males)	— six people
e) Member (non-tribal female)	— one person



4. Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board (CHTDB) The government shall give preference to the eligible tribal candidates in appointing the chairman of the Development Board. Presently, Naba Bikram Kishore Tripura is working as the Chairman of CHTDB.
5. General amnesty was offered to all insurgents including withdrawal of all cases. The 999 cases placed JSS before the government for withdrawal or dismissal, 461 were withdrawn. But cases under the military court have not yet been taken up for withdrawal or dismissal by the government.
6. Purpose of rehabilitating the returning 1989 members of the Jana Samhiti Samiti, Tk. 50,000 per family has given at a time. Those members who were in jails were also granted Tk. 50,000 each.
7. A total of 705 surrendered Shanti Bahini members were recruited in the national police force and 11 JSS members in traffic sergeants.
8. 325 seats in different higher educational institutions are kept reserved for the tribal students.
9. Education facilities shall be provided to the children of the members of the Jana Samhiti Samiti (JSS), and their certificates obtained from foreign academic institutions shall be treated as valid. Now, the certificates are being treated as valid.
10. The loans, which were taken out by members of the Jana Samhiti Samiti from government banks and establishments, but could not be utilized properly on account of the state of belligerency, shall be remitted with interest. (The stated position of the government is that the matter is under process).
11. By now 238 security forces camps have been withdrawn with one Infantry Brigade. District Judge Courts have been established in 3 Hill Districts.
12. Tribals are given priority for jobs to all posts of officers and employees at all levels of government, semi-government, council offices, and autonomous bodies in the CHT.
13. A total of 12,222 tribal families repatriated from the Indian state of Tripura almost have been rehabilitated. A Task Force has been formed to ensure proper rehabilitation of the refugees and IDPs in CHT. Presently Mr. Jotindra Lal Tripura is working as chairman of the taskforce.

(Sources: United Nations Economic and Social Council, Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues Tenth session, New York, 16-27 May 2011, Statement by Bangladesh delegation Honorable Iqbal Ahmed, First Secretary, Bangladesh Mission to United Nations; Salam and Hajera, 2014)

### 9.3 The CHT Peace Accord and Communities Perceptions

Under the framework of the Constitution of Bangladesh and keeping full and firm confidence in the sovereignty and integrity of Bangladesh, to uphold the political, social, cultural, educational and economic rights of all the people of Chittagong Hill Tracts region and to expedite socio-economic development process and to preserve and respect the rights of all the citizens of Bangladesh and their development, the National Committee on Chittagong Hill Tracts, on behalf of the government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, and Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity, (PCJSS) on behalf of the inhabitants of Chittagong Hill Tracts, have reached the agreement (CHT Peace Accord 1997). The accord has recognize the CHT as a 'Tribal inhabited' area. The table 9.1 presents the communities' perception about the CHT peace accord in terms of its magnitude to keeping sustainable peace. It is clearly shown most of the respondents mentioned that, after peace accord the CHT conflict is reduced than before. Above 40 percent of the total respondents informed that the CHT conflict is reduced due to peace accord. At the same time, above 35 percent respondents informed that the CHT peace accord has increased disputes than before.

Table-9.1: Communities Perceptions about CHT Peace Accord

After Peace Accord	Ethnic Groups					Total
	Chakma	Marma	Tripura	Bengali	Bengali Settlers	
<b>Dispute is Reduced</b>	47.6	26.3	60.0	50.0	30.0	40.8 (49)
<b>Dispute is Increased</b>	28.6	47.4	20	35	42.5	35.8 (43)
<b>Created new problems</b>	23.8	26.3	20	15	27.5	23.3 (28)
<b>Total</b>	100	100	100	100	100	100 (120)

Source: Fieldwork data 2017

On the contrary, almost 23 percent respondents said, the CHT accord created new problems in the CHT. The Phahari respondents mentioned, there was only one local political organization where all the tribals stood under that umbrella. Phaharis were united regarding their unique rituals, customs, cultural practices, languages and rules but after CHT accord they were divided into two major political groups. They are becoming a political enemy to each others. The PCJSS and UPDF have opposed each other and even involved in fratricidal killings and human rights violations by both groups.

#### **9.4 The CHT Peace Accord and Where the Bengali Settlers are**

The Peace Accord introduced a special governance system for the CHT with a CHT Regional Council (CHTRC) as the apex body of three Hill District Councils (HDCs) under a special Ministry for Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs (MOCHTA). Two-thirds of the seats in the CHTRC and HDCs, including the positions of chairs, are reserved for tribal (Phahari) people and one-third for permanent Bengali residents. So far, out of 32 subjects of different ministries, on average 18 subjects were handed over<sup>167</sup> to the Hill District Council (HDCs) in line with the provision of the CHT Peace Accord. The traditional institutions are also an important feature of the CHT. The CHT is divided into three circles headed by a Circle Chief known as the Raja. The Rajas are traditional leaders; they help the government to collect revenue, particularly from Jhum land, and settle small civil and criminal disputes. Each circle is divided into several Mouza (a geographic and revenue unit) each headed by a headman, who is a key person in land administration.

As above mentioned, the HDCs constituted Chairman and two third members from among the tribal groups. The Bengalis demanded at least one Vice Chairman Post for them to raise their voice in the HDCs and other relevant organizations. In the present study, during the fieldwork many Bengali respondents mentioned that, there is no post for Bengali settlers or no option to participate in any level of CHT decision making. Almost all the offices headed by Phahari with two-third reserved seats and also they are enjoying all the local level official power in the CHT. According to the Population Census of 2001, the total population of the CHT is around 1.35 million. Phahari-Bengali population ratio is 51:49 (Population Census of 2011) of these, tribal people comprise around 700,000 and Bengali settlers around 650,000 (Panday and Jamil 2009). In the light of the above statement Bengali settlers are almost near to the Phaharis, however the present study differs with above statement while present study has presented a calculation of total Bengali settlers population in Khagrachari district that it was almost one fourth of the total population of this district (for more details see chapter 8 of this thesis). Anyway, whatever the total population of Bengali settlers in the CHT hence they have no official power at all, they are only demographic figure

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<sup>167</sup> Iqbal Ahmed, 2011. United Nations Economic and Social Council, Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues Tenth session, New York, 16-27 May 2011, First Secretary, Bangladesh Mission to United Nations

of CHT. One of the Adi Bengali respondents (Masum Ahmed, elected commissioner of Khagrachari Sadar Paurashova from Bengali community) stated that, “there has no Quota for the Bengalis, on the other hand Phaharis are also getting this facility in all level. For example, 325 seats in different higher educational institutions are keeping reserved for the tribal students on the contrary, no reserved seat for the Bengali settler and even for adi Bengalis, though we are living in a same territory and ecological boundary. From the beginning of Peace treaty, we are demanding ‘CHT Quota’ instated of ‘Tribal Quota’ where all the people in the CHT will get equal opportunity in all level but unfortunately only Phaharis are getting these facilities Bengalis are not. We don’t know how long it will continue because there is no actual data or survey about how many Bengali and Phahari people of the CHT are getting higher educational opportunity since 1998. As a result, one day Bengali settlers will be the most backward community by that process”. According to the CHT accord (Part D, clause 10), “Quota reservation and scholarships: Until development equals that of other regions of the country the government shall continue reservation of quota system in government services and educational institutions for the tribals. For this purpose, the government shall grant more scholarships for the tribal students in the educational institutions. The government shall provide necessary scholarships for research works and higher education abroad”.

On the contrary, one of the Phahari respondents, her pseudo name is Rakhi Chakma, (22) student of Chittagong University and permanent resident of *Upali Para* of Khagrachari sadar) said that, it’s true that now tribals are getting more facilities on account of Peace Accord, along with it is also true that during the two decades of insurgency *Jumma* people were more depreciated than others. So it is a proper time to promote the backward people like CHT tribals.

However, on the ground of the above arguments to be fair it is veritable that, Bengali settler are luckless people on account of all aspects of the CHT. Adi Bengalis are in better position against Bengali settlers because there has many opportunities for them to gain socio-economic benefits. Nevertheless Bengali settlers are going to be marginalized from a vulnerable condition and they don’t have any alternatives except CHT because Bengali settlers came to the CHT bag and baggage. If they wish to move anywhere it is not possible because it’s their beyond capacities to do so. Hence, it is needed to assist the Bengali settlers like other backward communities of the CHT.

**In the line of Peace Accord the CHT Administrative Systems and National Institutions that all are headed by Phaharis (Tribals)**

### CHT Local Power Structure

CHT Institutions	Headed by	Member of the Institutions		Decision Making
		Tribals	Non Tribals	
<b>Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs (MoCHTA)</b>	A minister from among the tribal groups	11 Advisory Council	3 Advisory Council	As per ministry rule
<b>Regional Council</b>	Tribals/Phahari	32	10	By the majority
<b>Hill District Council</b>	Tribals/Phahari	14	7	By the majority
<b>Hill Tracts Development Board</b>	Tribals/Phahari			By the majority
<b>King System</b>				
<b>Circle Chief</b>	Tribals/Phahari	3	0	
<b>Headman</b>	Tribals/Phahari	389 Muuza	0	
<b>Karbari</b>	Tribals/Phahari	4426 Para	0	

Note: According to the CHT accord (Part C, clause 10), The Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board shall discharge its responsibilities under general and overall supervision of the Regional Council. In case of appointment of Chairman of the Development Board, the government shall give priority to competent tribal candidates.

### **9.5 The CHT Administration System and Condition of National Institutions**

The Chittagong Hill Tracts are composed of three hill districts. There are 25 Upazilas, 111 unions, 389 Mouzas and 4,426 Paras in the CHT. The Para in CHT on an average consists of about 46 households and a population of around 240 persons. 77% of the Paras are inhabited by only one or more indigenous communities and 16% Paras are inhabited by only Bengalese and 7% are mixed Paras (Dhaka Ahsania Mission, 2000). There are three different types of Government administrative systems in the CHT, which are often overlapping or conflicting in day to day operations. These are: 1) The *Self Rule Government System*, comprised of the CHT Regional Council (CHTRC) and Hill District Councils (HDCs) 2) *General Administrative Governmental Organs*, the Office of the Deputy Commissioner (DC), Upazila Parishad/Thana, Union Parishad, Pourasova and 3) the *Traditional Administrative Structure*, the Chief (Raja), Chief of Circle, Headman – Head of Mouza, Karbari-Head of Village (Para). Among the administrative systems, Self Rule Government System and Traditional Administrative Structure are almost under the controlling of tribals by the CHT accord. In anthropologically speaking the aforesaid system is clearly emerging discrimination and unequal rights and livelihood of the others, e.g. Bengali and Bengali settlers as well as cognitive perception against Phaharis. It is not to help to made or harmonious society in the CHT.

### **9.6 Rehabilitation of Refugees and the Condition of Bengali settlers**

In December 1997, the government of Bangladesh signed a peace accord that ended a 25-year conflict with the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samity (PCJSS) a CHT solidarity movement and it's now defunct armed insurgent wing, the Shanti Bahini, composed primarily of ethnic Chakma. The accord allowed limited regional autonomy in the CHT. Subsequently, the entire refugee population returned from India. However, the situation of the more than 60,000 internally displaced Chakma remained unsolved at the end of 2002, despite provisions in the accord for the "rehabilitation" of both the refugees and the internally displaced<sup>168</sup>. People displaced between August 1975 and August 1992 are considered IDPs. Almost 60,000 tribal people were internally displaced during this period. They include people whose villages were attacked, whose neighbors were butchered and whose homes were burnt

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<sup>168</sup> U.S. Committee for Refugees (USCR), 2003, World Refugee Survey 2003, Bangladesh

during army operations. They left everything behind for safer areas moving to neighboring villages, to relatives or started anew in the forest interior. The settlers confiscated their land and in many instances obtained official certificates of ownership. Internally displaced tribals represent a significant portion of the tribal population and their rehabilitation will continue to be a major task<sup>169</sup>.

About 43,000 Jumma refugees returned to CHTs from Tripura State of India after the signing of the Peace Accord. In addition, about 60,000 indigenous peoples were internally displaced between 1992 and 1997. They include people whose neighbors were massacred and whose homes were burnt down during military operations (AITPN, September 2003)<sup>170</sup>.

There was considerable controversy over a decision to consider Bengali settlers who had to move due to repatriation of Jumma refugees as internally displaced persons:

Article 1 of section D of the Peace Accord provides "The internal refugees of the three hill districts will be rehabilitated through their proper identification by a task force". However, the accord does not provide any definition of the IDPs. It remained silent about the modalities of their rehabilitation and the terms of reference of the Task Force<sup>171</sup>. Of the 64,609 refugees who returned, nearly 50% of them have been unable to return to their own homesteads and native villages because they are still "occupied" by Bengali settlers. Complicating the problem is the reality that the Bengali settlers have nowhere to go<sup>172</sup>. The non-tribal internal refugees were scrutinized from among those living in CHT between the periods of 1975 to 1992<sup>173</sup>. The Task Force has sent to the Ministry a list of 128,364 families (or approximately 500,000 individuals) of internally displaced persons to be rehabilitated, comprising 90,208 Jumma families and 38,156 nonpermanent settler families. The number of internally displaced refugees identified by the Task Force is huge if one takes into

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<sup>169</sup> Amnesty International (AI) 2000, Amnesty International Annual Report 2000, section 5.3

<sup>170</sup> Asian Indigenous & Tribal Peoples Network (AITPN), 2003, *Indigenous Issues: The Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord: Squandering the Peace and Human Rights Dividends*

<sup>171</sup> Hill Watch Human Rights Forum (HWHRF), 2004, *Chittagong Hill Tracts: Cruel Games with Peoples' Human Rights*,

Internet: [http://www.unpo.org/news\\_detail.php?arg=16&par=1397](http://www.unpo.org/news_detail.php?arg=16&par=1397)

<sup>172</sup> South Asia Forum for Human Rights (SAFHR), 2000, "Jumma People in Bangladesh", e-mail brief Volume 1 Issue 2, April, 2000, Internet : <http://www.safhr.org/e-brief2.htm>

<sup>173</sup> For more see the Daily Star, May 16, 2000

consideration the total population of roughly 600,000 Jummas and 500,000 Bengalis in the CHT. This means that about half of the population of the CHT has been designated as displaced by the 25 year-long conflict<sup>174</sup>. A part of the rehabilitation work of the repatriated *Jumma* refugees and the internally displaced people of CHT, a nine-member Task Force Committee was formed by Representatives from JSS, RJRWA, Members of the three Hill District Councils, Member of the Parliament from the CHT region, representative of the twenty-fourth Infantry Division of the Bangladesh Army and Divisional Commissioner of Chittagong Division. There were reports of serious controversy over the identification of internally displaced persons among the members of the Task Force Committee. Ironically, it was reported that the ruling party members of parliament from CHT and some other members of the committee wanted to include the non-tribal people of the settlers' families in the internally displaced people's list as they were also displaced because of prevailing disturbed situations. The logic behind this could be that due to repatriation of Chakma refugees in CHT, the Bengali settlers were also displaced. But, the JSS and RJRWA members opposed this stance and held that it went against the terms and spirit of the accord. The committee could not reach any decision on the issue even after several meetings being held, which ultimately led to a stalemate situation with regard to rehabilitation activities of the repatriated refugees and the internally displaced people. The government unilaterally made a list of the internally displaced people that shows now that there are at least 1,28,364 internally displaced families in the CHT of which 90,208 families are 'tribal' and 38,156 are 'non-tribal'<sup>175</sup>.

According to the Peace Accord, the internally displaced refugees will be rehabilitated by the Task Force. One of the most contentious issues in connection with the rehabilitation of these internally displaced refugees is over the role of the Task Force. Not only is their rehabilitation still pending, but a major conflict erupted between the government and the JSS leadership over the mandate of the Task Force, or more concretely, over the question whether Bengali settlers should also be considered internally displaced people. The Task Force has sent to the Ministry a list of 128,364

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<sup>174</sup> The Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission (CHTC), 2000, *Life Is Not Ours: Land and Human Rights in the Chittagong Hill Tracts*, Bangladesh

<sup>175</sup> Kharat, Rajesh. 2003, *From Internal Displacement to Refugees: the Trauma of Chakmas in Bangladesh*, Internet:[http://www.idp.ntnu.no/Register/UpLoadFiles/Rajesh\\_Kharat\\_idp-ref.pdf](http://www.idp.ntnu.no/Register/UpLoadFiles/Rajesh_Kharat_idp-ref.pdf)



families (or approximately 500,000 individuals) of internally displaced persons to be rehabilitated, comprising 90,208 tribal families and 38,156 non-permanent settler families<sup>176</sup>. Task Force chairman Dipankar Talukdar (MP for Rangamati district) has given instruction to include Bengali settlers, but the JSS vehemently opposes this, fearing that this may lead to the legal recognition of settlers as permanent residents of the CHT and thereby as legal owners of the land.

### **Formation of Government Task Force on the Hill Tracts Region**

The Task Force was constituted on January 20, 1998, after then Kalparanjan Chakma, Dipankar Talukdar and Shamiran Dewan served as chairman of the Task Force at different tenures since 1998. Recently, Jatindra Lal Tripura has been appointed chairman and a 10-member committee was reconstituted. The committee members are : Khagrachari hill district council chairman, Khagrachari deputy commissioner, Chittagong division assistant commissioner, Bandarban deputy commissioner, Bandarban hill district council member, Rangamati additional deputy commissioner, Khagrachari army headquarters zonal representative, Khagrachari district Awami League leader and India-repatriated refugees welfare committee secretary. The taskforce chairman Jatindra Lal Tripura said invitation had been sent to all the 10 members of the Committee. The task force, mandated by Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord, was constituted on January 20, 1998 to address refugee problems. The Task Force has sent to the Ministry a list of 128,364 families (or approximately 500,000 individuals) of internally displaced persons to be rehabilitated, comprising 90,208 tribal families and 38,156 Bengali settler families. The number of internally displaced refugees identified by the Task Force is huge if one takes into consideration the total population of roughly 600,000 tribals and 500,000 Bengalis in the CHT. This means that about half of the population of the CHT has been designated as displaced by the 25 year-long conflict.

### **9.7 Announced Reintegration Package for Refugees and IDPs of the CHT**

All the 12,222 CHT Jumma refugee families numbering 64,609 persons have returned to CHT from Tripura, India. The state of Bangladesh constitutionally guarantees the safety of life and property of all the returnees and their family members.

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<sup>176</sup> The Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission (CHTC), 2000, *Life Is Not Ours: Land and Human Rights in the Chittagong Hill Tracts*, Bangladesh

The following facilities are given to the returnees:

1. Every family will be paid a cash grant of Taka 15,000.00 (US \$ 335)
2. Every family will be provided free ration at the following rates of entitlement:  
Adult member/5 kilogram of soybean oil, 4 kg. of lentils, 2kg. of salt.
3. Corrugated sheets worth 2 bundles per family
4. Taka 8,000.00 per family of cash transfers for those families owning arable land and a pair of bullock for tilling the land
5. The landless will be provided with land grant and a cash transfer to Taka 3,000.00 per family
6. Debt. Forgiveness of up to Taka 5,000.00 per family in respect of agricultural loans
7. Similar loan forgiveness would be considered, on a case by case basis, for non-agricultural loans
8. Loans taken in the past from the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board Would be written off
9. General Amnesty for the insurgents announced earlier shall remain in force. This amnesty shall be applicable in respect of cases registered during the state of emergency (when insurgency was on)
10. Land will be returned to their original owners and they will not be rehabilitated in the cluster villages
11. Reinstatement in government service for those who were employed there prior to becoming internal and external refugees would be considered most sympathetically
12. Arrangements would be made for holding special examinations for High School and College Diplomas for those who had studied in neighboring countries
13. Create opportunities for the returnee students in schools in order that they could complete their courses of studies
14. According priority to the tribal youth in recruitment's for vacant positions in different offices of the districts and elsewhere.
15. A general amnesty for those convicted in different criminal cases during insurgency All returnee 'Headmen' (of village councils) to be reinstated in their previous positions. (SAFHR April 2000)

The CHT Returnee *Jumma* Refugee Welfare Association, headed by Upendra Lal Chakma, conducted a survey among all the repatriated refugees concerning their rehabilitation. According to the survey, 3,055 families (or 25 percent of all repatriated families) have not yet received their lands back as promised, while 40 entire villages have not been returned to the refugees at all because the villages are still completely occupied by Bengali settlers. Complaints have been lodged with the authorities concerning all these cases (CHTC, 2000, pp.45-46). The survey stated that the commitment given by the government regarding rehabilitation of repatriated refugees is not fulfilled yet.

### **9.8 Obstacles to the Rehabilitation of CHT Refugees**

One of the major obstacles to their rehabilitation is disagreement over who qualifies as an internally displaced person. In 2000, the Task Force on Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons compiled a list, identifying 90,208 indigenous families and 38,156 Bengali settler families as internally displaced families and recommending a package programme to resolve the situation. The inclusion of Bengali settlers who were brought into the region under the transmigration programme carried out between 1979 and 1984 in the list was denounced by PCJSS and the *Jumma* Refugees Welfare Association, which boycotted subsequent meetings of the Task Force (United Nations, 2011). The Government is yet to deliver the announced compensation package for the internally displaced. On the contrary, though a Task Force has been formed to ensure proper rehabilitation of the refugees and IDPs in CHT nevertheless it is not properly functioning for non cooperation PCJSS and RJRWA.

### **9.9 The CHT Refugees Rehabilitation and Position of the PCJSS & RJRWA**

There was considerable controversy over a decision to consider Bengali settlers, where Parbattya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samity (PCJSS) and Returnee *Jumma* Refugee Welfare (RJRWA)<sup>177</sup> didn't agree to confess that depreciated Bengali settlers also belong to refugees. Consequently, association representatives of the tribal population boycott the Task Force on Internal Displacement in the CHT because of plans to repatriate non-tribal people to the CHT. The two representatives - Sudasindu Khisa of PCJSS and Bakul Chakma of TRWA boycotted the meeting protesting the Task Force move to repatriate internal non-tribal refugees in CHT.

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<sup>177</sup> The CHT Returnee Jumma Refugee Welfare Association (RJRWA) was formed to assist the proper rehabilitation of Jummas/Phahari headed by Upendra Lal Chakma.

The former chairman of the Government Task Force Dipankar Talukder, MP, states that, the list of 1,28,364 families of internal refugees was finalized for repatriation and the list included 90,208 families of tribal and 38,156 families of non-tribals. The rehabilitation would start on receipt of order from the ministries concerned. The non-tribal internal refugees were scrutinized from among those living in CHT between the periods of 1975 to 1992 (Daily Star, 2000). The task force chairman also mentioned that, the peace accord provides for equal treatment of tribal and non-tribal refugees. It was nowhere written in the peace accord that non-tribal refugees should not be rehabilitated in CHT. Both tribal and non-tribal should get equal treatment in the CHT to establish peace. The internal refugees would be provided with BDT 15,000 per family in cash in addition to other supports.

#### **9.10 The CHT Refugees Rehabilitation and the Position of Bengali settlers**

The rehabilitation of internally displaced remains problematic because it has not been decided whether Bengali settlers who have lost their land and housesteads should be defined as internally displaced or not. In the present study, when I facilitated FGD with depreciated Bengali settlers at *Ultachari* and *Zia Nagar* of the Khagrachari district, they mentioned as:

“We have no power to execute any decision regarding the rehabilitation of refugees; we just observe what are going on and hopeful for the better thing. We couldn't understand that, are not we the citizen of this country? and Are we living in the CHT like Rohingya refugees? We have lost our family members, lands, houses and mainly ‘prospects of the life’, we lost everything... someone was crying in that time. They said again, our voice is unheard; no one comes to listen our native life story to reveal it to the nation. After all in these circumstances, if the government rehabilitated us in the name of refugees then we could be surviving as the citizen of Bangladesh. Unfortunately it is still pending only for the JSS antagonistic mentality. Nevertheless, we haven't any reservation to the Phaharis regarding their rehabilitations. We want; all the people of CHT will get equal opportunities whatever it is”.

One of the Bengali respondents has pseudo name Abdul Latif (50), who have been living with his family in the *Comilla Tila* of Khagrachari Sadar Upazila since 1975. He mentioned that, The CHT Refugees Rehabilitation is unresolved due to hold back of Phaharis. Bengali settlers are really suffering on account of economic hardship and there are no job opportunities for them. They are living in the *Cluster Village* without

sufficient basic amenities. Their livelihood is basically dependent on ration. The depreciated Bengali settlers are seriously waiting for rehabilitates in their land the government allocated for them. The Task Force on Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons recommended that 38,156 Bengali settler families will get opportunity for rehabilitation as refugees. If they will get this facility, then little more peace will be rebuilt in the settler's community. On the contrary, without implementing the rehabilitation initiative the both groups (Phahari-Bengali settlers) will be loser, ultimately CHT will be deprived of such kind of peace keeping and huge monetary development initiative.

On the other hand, a respondent (54) (unwilling to disclose name) from Tripura community living in the *Haduk Par* of Khagrachari Sadar, has given different opinions regarding this matter. He stated that, according to Task Force, a total of 90,208 *Jumma* Refugees and 38,156 Bengali settler families were listed as refugees so, if it will not be executed then the *Jumma* families will be more loser than the Bengali settlers because there are more *Jumma* families in the Task Force list than settlers. Moreover, we are observing that, Bengalis are not disagreed to *Jummas* rehabilitation and the Task Force chairman Dipankar Talukder was seriously trying to implement the project. Unfortunately, due to noncooperation of Parbattya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samity (PCJSS) and Returnee *Jumma* Refugee Welfare (RJRWA) the CHT refugees' rehabilitation still remain unresolved. In this context, the rehabilitation process and their aim is going to be stall and steady.

The settler came to the CHT through a government resettlement program. After bringing the Bengali people in CHT the government allocated 100 kg of rice or wheat, 1000 taka, baby milk powder, oil etc. After six months, everything is closed except 84/85 k.g rice or wheat. Now it is the only help from the Government. Some of them have heard that the government has taken many programs for the Bengali settlers but they do not come across this in reality. Only the government has taken some initiatives for the refugees of the CHT but no resettlement programme has been taken for the displaced persons and they are not getting any ration for the reason of their displacement. Moreover, after the CHT peace accord there are more than 70 NGOs are working in the Khagrachari alone, nevertheless they have not taken any initiative for the depreciated and displaced persons of the CHT (Nasreen 2005).

### Case Study: Understanding of Internally Displaced person in the CHT

This is the case of Sayed Ahmed (pseudo name) (58), has been living in the Shalban Gucha Gram (Shalban Cluster Village) under the Khagrachari Sadar Upazila since 1986 to onward. First time he was settled with his family by the government initiative in the Aambagan area. During the settlement he was given 4 acres of land, ration, and house building assistance with others. When the turmoil situation and conflict between Shanti Bahini and military continued in CHT, many Phahari People and Bengali settlers had to displace from their lands and Sayed Ahmed's family is one of them. He mentioned that, it was April of 1988 the Shanti Bahini attacked the Aambagan area on Bengali settler's houses and started firing the Bengalis, as a result many Bengali settlers died due to gun firing. Luckily my whole family was safe, then we left the Aambagan area to find shelter at Shalban Gucha Gram with the help of army. Sayed further said that he has got a ration card from the government as an 'Internally Displaced Person' and still getting 35kg of rice and 49 kg of wheat per month. He has no land in the Shalban, where his family is now living. He has no legal paper but still using some land in his present settlement. His main land (given by Govt.) was in the Aambagan area and now he has no control over them because even after the settlement project the land disputes are not solve yet.

"We have heard that the government has taken an initiative that is the Internally Displaced Persons (both Phahari and Bengali) will be rehabilitated properly with some basic amenities. It is very unfortunate that, after such a long period of time we have to suffer for not having proper rehabilitation in a better place. The overall condition of the Cluster Villages is unimaginably pathetic. He said how long we will have to stay in a congested area without minimal facilities! There are almost 35,000 Bengali settler households waiting for rehabilitation from the CHT Peace Accord of 1997". Sayed Ahmed also mentioned they don't know why the Phahari political parties are preventing rehabilitation of Bengalis, whereas they never opposed them as same process. Nevertheless, they want rehabilitation on far all who had been displaced during the insurgency period of 1979 to 1996, whatever he is Bengali or Phahari.

However, on the basis of the above arguments it is transparent that, these depreciated refugees (including Phahari and Bengali settlers) are wistfully waiting for a better life.

The peace could be rebuilt in the CHT by the rehabilitation of repatriated and internally displaced refugees. Moreover, if it is smoothly completed, thereby the inhabitants of the CHT will be gainer as a whole. Anthropologically speaking, this antagonistic view is immensely harmful in settling peaceful condition for the settlers. Mutual understanding is necessary to avoid unexpected socio-political unrest among the settlers of the CHT.

## CHAPTER- 10: CONCLUSION

	<b>10.1</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
		<b>Bibliography</b>
<b>Annexure</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>Checklist</b>
<b>Annexure</b>	<b>II</b>	<b>Questionnaire</b>
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<b>Annexure</b>	<b>IV</b>	<b>The Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation, 1900</b>
<b>Annexure</b>	<b>V</b>	<b>Secret Memos of</b> <b>Govt. of the People's Republic of Bangladesh</b>
<b>Annexure</b>	<b>VI</b>	<b>List of Khagrachari Local NGOs</b>



## Conclusion

An entitled “The Positioning of Bengali Settlers in the Chittagong Hill Tracts: A Development Understanding” has been conducted on anthropological insightness and determine the actual positioning of Bengali settlers within the development dynamics of the CHT. The present study has categorized the people of the CHT into three broad categories; one of them is minor ethnic groups, popularly known as Phahari, Second one is Adi Bengalis, who have been living in the CHT by natural process before the huge migration of Bengali families took place and third one is Bengali settlers, who migrated from plain land as a part of Government policy and sponsorship. During 1979 to 1984 there are around 400,000 Bengalis were said to have been settled in the CHT. Each family was given five acres of land, BDT 3600 in cash and provision to support them for the first few months. As a result of Bengali settlement, the population ratio of Phahari and Bengali in the CHT became nearly equal as of now. However, by the government settlement processes most of the Bengali settlers came to CHT from the Chittagong, Noakhali, Comilla, Sylhet and Mymensing district. The issues of Bengali settlement and the real conditions and situations of Bengali settlers in CHT have not been studied earlier. Unfortunately there is a dearth of information about Bengali settlers in the CHT. There is no specific research work was found on the Bengali settlers. Moreover, shortage of attention trained in this regard, lack of resources for conducting research, and similar other reasons might have been responsible for an inadequate number of studies on the Bengali settlers of the CHT. Researchers and development practitioners’ attention has not received a lot in this regard. Due to that with a proper anthropological investigation into the different dimensions of Bengalis migration and development dynamics, certain facts have been carried out to understand the actual scenarios of Bengali settlers positioning in the CHT.

The Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) of Bangladesh- is a unique territory with mountains and beautiful landscapes. While most of the country is flat and a few feet above the sea level, the CHTs in the South-eastern is completely different in physical shapes, landscapes, agricultural practices and soil conditions from the rest of Bangladesh (Gain, ed., 2000: 1). The geographical features of the CHTs with the mixture of hill and valley densely covered with forest and luxurious vegetation have the spectacular

scenic beauty to attract people to the life and nature this area. Once part of the Chittagong administrative district, the three districts of the CHTs- Rangamati, Khagrachari and Bandarban- are surrounded by the Chittagong and Cox's Bazar plains stretching along the Bay of Bengal on the West, by the Indian states of Tripura and Mizoram on the North and East and by the Arakan region of Myanmar (Burma) on the South and Southeast. The main rivers of the CHTs- the Feni River in the North, the Karnaphuli River in the central region and the Sangu and Matamuhuri rivers- are found respectively in the central and extreme South (Ibid, 2000: 2). Although 96 persons live per sq. kilometer in the CHTs compared to the national average of 827 persons, there is a myth that there exists a vast amount of land in the region that is not in use. Apart from the plain land, the cultivation process in the region is based on the slash-burn cultivation, locally known as the *Jhum* cultivation. However, the CHT is also the place for the inhabitants of some of the major ethnic communities along with the Bengali population in Bangladesh which has further made the region a platform for the people of diversified cultural origins.

To understand the history of 'Bengali settlers' settlement it was known that in 1980s the government announced settlement programme for the poor and landless Bengalis to the CHT. Then most of the Bengali settlers wanted to lead a better and stress free life as they were facing serious economic hardship in the plain land. When the Bengalis (settlers) being settled in the CHT the government gave them land, cash money, help for house building, and rice & wheat as a ration. Therefore, it is evidently true that there has a clear-cut difference between 'Adi Bengali' and Bengali settler in terms of their settlement process in the CHT. Documentary and historically evidence indicates that the Adi Bengalis from Chittagong made their appearance in the CHT officially as early as 1715, on being invited by the Chakma chief to supply some of their daily necessities not produced by the Phaharis. In the wake of the division of British India in 1947 on religious lines, the refugees from India were settled in higher proportion in the CHT. After then the government of Pakistan set up a number of industrial plants (e.g. Karnaphuli Paper Mill) in the region without considering their downsides. Many Bengali from outside the region were hired to run the plants. As a result of these policies the period experienced a substantial increase in Bengali migration to the CHT. On the other hand, an obvious question that arises is when did the Phaharis settled in the CHT?. The CHT was known to Phaharis speaking

the Kuki-Chin language (Lushei, Pangkhua, Bawm, Mro, Khayang, and Khuki) in the remote past as they used to visit the origin for hunting regularly (Tanchanga, 1997). It is believed that those Phaharis were the first settlers of the region. Over time, a section of the hunters settled in the region. These settlers were later joined by their group mates who immigrated to the region (Rafi and Chowdhury, 2001). Most of the Phaharis moved into the the region between the 15<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century. Around 1780, internal migration, consolidation of power by overlords of the region, formation of alliances, and empowerment of some of ethnic groups in Tripura and Mizoram of India made the provinces politically unstable. Consequently, some or a part of the groups living the those provinces of India were forced to move out and settle in the northern part of CHT.

This anthropological study has been conducted using different types of anthropological research methods and techniques followed by the objectives of the study. An integrated approach (qualitative and quantitative) has been taken for the purpose of the study. In this study the information has been gathered through micro-scale empirical study and intensive fieldwork. In this anthropological research on the proposed theme and for a comprehensive understanding, different methods have been applied for collecting and interpreting data. Both primary and secondary data was collected from several sources using both qualitative and quantitative techniques. Data was also obtained through participant and non-participant observation method. Primary data has been collected from different individuals as well as from key informants who have knowledge about Bengali settlers and other ethnic groups of the CHT. Specific information gathered through case studies to supplement the data obtained from other sources. Therefore, the methodological tools and techniques of this study was primarily based on qualitative one, on the other hand, quantitative methods have been used wherever needed and this has brought strength and made this study comprehensive. However, as an anthropologists and researcher the long term training in this field has helped to develop an understanding for applying anthropological methods. Which appears to be most important is that there are few things that helped generating the base of the methodological understanding and these are settlement processes, cultural assimilation, development dynamics, behavioral understanding, cultural diversity and ethical consideration during the field study.

The present study has been made a combination of theoretical frameworks. For the theoretical framework and conceptual understanding of this study a substantial literature on the integration, internal migration or settlement, and development issues in the context of CHT has appeared, and on this the present review focuses. This literature encompasses theoretical contributions. Study of internal migration and new settlement is a key importance in social sciences as well as economics and it emerges not only the movement of people from one locality to another for new settlement inside the country but also influences on livelihoods and betterment of life. There are some perspectives on integration of different groups confront themselves in the social sciences such as assimilation theory, multiculturalism, and structuralism theory. Not only is each framework useful in its own right in addressing of the study problem, the all complements one another, giving rise to a more dialogical and interdisciplinary tool in understanding oppression in the context of the Bengali settlement and their positioning in the CHT. More importantly, these frameworks help to contextualize the development paradigm in the context of CHT. To summarize, assimilation theory, multiculturalism, and structuralism provide different views of the same phenomenon. The focus of assimilation theorists is on immigrants' succeeding generations gradually moving away from their original culture. Multiculturalists acknowledge that the cultural characteristics of immigrants are constantly reshaped along the integration process and therefore may never completely disappear. Structuralists emphasize the effects of the social and economic structure of the host country on the ability of immigrants to integrate into its cultural attitudes and to share its economic benefits.

For the purpose of the study some literary works have been reviewed circumstantially which are relevant to this study. The comprehensive reviewing of the literatures was an important segment of this study. Because it provided an up-to-date data for understanding of the subject and identified the methods used in previous research on the different aspects. Moreover the literary works provided information to corresponding and comparisons to the present study findings. The reviewed literatures acted as a stepping-stone towards achievement of the study objectives. Nevertheless, the literatures reviews provided a solid background to back one's investigation and helped to understand the nature of 'Bengali settlers' settlement and development dynamics in the CHT.

The present study has described the Bengali settler and other ethnic groups' households in terms of getting basic amenities of the CHT. Access to basic amenities such as safe drinking water, electricity, sanitation, health care and communication is imperative for a decent quality of life. The need for these basic amenities has been universally recognized. Belongings always considered as essential to make life easier and more pleasant. Presence of the communication facilities within the villages (Paras) indicates that the Chakma villages received more attention from the International Donor Agencies (IOs) and NGOs for their development compared to Phaharis belonging to other ethnic groups. One possible reason for this was that after the CHT Peace Accord of 1997 Phahari communities were received more attention from IOs and NGOs, whereas Bengali settlers are not getting well communication facilities from both IOs and NGOs compared to other groups of the CHT. From the very beginning the Bengali settlers' paras (Cluster Villages) were neglected in terms of getting 'common para facilities' like good road communications.

Living conditions are the most important factor in people's lives. Housing is often viewed as a barometer for the households of the economy, and this is certainly the case at the moment. Housing represents the household's economy and raises some concern in family level development, also becomes a direct factor of household's social status. Housing conditions must be considered as one of the mechanisms through which social inequality translates into ethnic group inequality. As different financial capacities or social determinants in general - may lead to different housing conditions, they can be a potential source of inequalities. In this regards the present study has unfold that the Bengali settlers are living in substandard houses and it supposes to expose that their social and household financial conditions are weaker than other counterparts.

Water is an essential element for life. It is a fundamental human need. Many households in the CHT confront daily the situation of an inadequate supply of safe drinking water and the very serious resulting consequences. Many people living in poverty, particularly in the CHT, daily face enormous hardship because water supplies are neither sufficient nor safe. However, the present study has observed that overall, majority of the households were getting safe drinking water in Khagrachari district of the CHT. Most of them used tap/tube well water for drinking. Adi Bengalis

were highest position in terms of getting safe drinking water. Almost 95 percent of adi Bengali households, 80.2 percent of Chakma households, 69.5 percent of Marma households, 80 percent of Tripura households and 75 percent of Bengali settler households had safe drinking water facilities.

The health system of the CHT is a multisided system with some key actors that they are playing vital role for functioning of the system, such as the government, private sector, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and International Agencies (IOs). International Donor Agencies are the first key actor who constantly providing comprehensive health services, including financing and employment of health staff. The UNDP has provided basic health services enabled and improved for over half a million CHT people especially in remote areas following creation of a network of 1,000 skilled local health workers. There are 16 mobile medical teams and 80 weekly satellite clinics have been established for the Phaharis throughout CHT. However, majority of the Bengali settlers' households were depending on 'self treatment' while they are feeling sick at their home. Overall most of the Tripura and Bengali settlers were treated as 'self treatment'. But on an average majority of the people (49.2%) were seeking treatment facility from their near hospitals. Fifty five percent each of the sick persons from the Bengali settlers and Tripura, forty five percent of the sick persons from the Bengalis, more than thirty six percent of sick person from the Marma, and thirty three percent sick person from the Chakma were seeking treatment by himself inside their home. The present study has observed that, on an average Phaharis were getting more health benefits from the International Organizations against the Bengali settlers.

For understanding the relationship between Phahari and Bengali the present study has tried to explore relationship among the ethnic groups including Bengali settlers in the CHT. Different dimensions were observed in terms of their relationship. Usually Phaharis have good relationship with Adi Bengalis but relations with Bengali settlers are quite different. Most of the Phaharis think that, Bengali settlers were the creator of harmful life and destroyed their natural peaceful life in the CHT. Adi Bengalis have been peacefully living inside and beside their *Paras* (Villages) and their relationships with Bengali households are usual. On the contrary, major portion of Bengali settlers informed that the Shanti Bahini (SB) burnt their houses, occupied lands and killing

them. However, there are different types of relationship existing among the studied groups of the CHT. Some relationships have been described in this research. It is revealed that the relationship between Bengali settlers and Phaharis were not concentrated. Almost two third Bengali settler households informed that their relation with Phaharis is bad. Only 7.5 percent Bengali settler households mentioned their relationship was good to each other (see table 5.1 in chapter 5). On the contrary, majority of Phahari households mentioned that, the relationship between Phahari and adi Bengali were good or as usual but relations with Bengali settlers not good and even not as usual. On an average adi Bengali and Bengali settler relations were good in condition. Therefore, it is clear that most of the Phaharis and Bengali settlers distrusted each other. So, considering all the circumstances it is very clear that, long after the ceasefire and the peace accord, distrust and suspicion still exist and previous bitter experiences are reflected in their relationship. However, due to lack of mutual trust between Bengali settler and Phahari could not become cordial dwellers of the CHT.

This study deals with economic activities of household members both Phahari and Bengalis with special attention to the Bengali settlers, reasons for that it was assumed, Bengali settlers are going through economic hardship and have very limited access to income generating activities in the CHT. The presence of Phaharis in trade and business in the CHT and their status in this regard is very poor. Though there are many industries that are contributing to the economy of CHT, where most of the businesses under the controlling of Adi Bengalis, nevertheless there had some traditional small industries and hand looming, bamboo and wooden craft industries were running under the ownership of Phaharis. On the contrary, Bengali settlers' position is very poor regarding their presence in the business sector. Bengali settlers are doing business within very limited space like- tea stall owner, vending goods from door to door, small shopkeeper, etc.

However, once the Phahari people were backwarded in terms of getting services in the CHT but now they are in onwards in this particular sector. The present study shows that, 42.9 percent of Chakma, 26.3 percent of Marma, and 30 percent of Tripura respondents were observed those who involved in the service category (see table 6.1 in chapter 6). It could be a positive outcome of the CHT Peace Accord. Because in the

CHT Peace Accord, Section: D, Provision 18, stated that “the permanent residents of Chittagong Hill Tracts with priority to the tribals shall be given appointment to all categories of officers and employees of all government, semi government, councils and autonomous bodies of Chittagong Hill Tracts. It was observed that 15 percent of Bengali and only 2.5 percent of Bengali settlers were involved in services. It is also observed that Bengali settlers are very few in the service category compared to their other contemporaries. However insignificant number (2.5%) of Bengali settlers were doing job in a lower levels and most of the middle and higher level jobs in the CHT were under the positioning of Paharis, mainly Chakma and Adi Bengalis.

This study has tried to understand the households’ income, expenditure, and savings which are revealed in the table 6.5. When the monthly income value is in higher position, it is sometimes difficult to relate it to real life. Here, first see at average household income then the average gives us the monthly income of one household. On an average, Adi Bengali households stood first in position followed by Chakma households in terms of income, expenditure, and savings. The Marma and Tripura household’s income, expenditure, and savings were almost same, though Tripura households were little bit ahead than Marma. It is very interesting that the Bengali settler household’s monthly deficit was 416.67 Tk. and there were no similarity between their income and expenditure, as a result monthly balance was defaulted. However, after adding total ration value 2205 TK with Bengali settler households’ income then their monthly savings is BDT 1788.33. Bengali settlers are large part of the population which economically dependent on government rations, the gap in living standards between Bengali settlers and other inhabitants of CHT has been widening in course of time. However, after CHT peace accord, not only new development initiatives have been taken by the national and international NGOs. Moreover, innovative and income generating activities were introduced for improving livelihood of ethnic groups, particularly for those who were not Bengali settlers. This, in turn, is likely to make them more and more leg-behind.

According to the objectives, the present research has tried to unfold the development features of the CHT. However, it was also needed to explore the actual positioning of Bengali settlers within the development dynamics in the CHT. It is indepthly observed that after the CHT peace accord Paharis are getting more facilities from



both International Organizations (IOs) and non government organization (NGOs) than Bengali settlers, though the Bengali settlers are as marginalized as ethnic minorities. The development initiatives of the IOs and NGOs which is mostly in favor of Phaharis. No Bengali settlers' issues were found in the index of International Donor Agencies and NGOs. On the contrary, from the government side there has not mentionable development initiatives have been observed in the field during the fieldwork but at the same time it is apprehensible that the government provides rations and has intention to do something for the betterment of Bengali settlers. Unfortunately most of the time it was not be possible due to opposition of Phahari political groups especially for PCJSS, which is elaborately explained in the chapter ten of this study.

Therefore, it is evidentially proven that Bengali settlers in CHT are backward in position that there has very limited space or option for them to gain socio-economic benefits thereby without boosting from both GOs and NGOs position it would be more difficult to go equally with other groups of CHT. Nevertheless, no Bengali settler's Para (Cluster Village) was found where the UNDP operating their development activities for them, while the UNDP operates their development activities in all 3 districts of CHT, 20 Upazilas (out of 25) and 3,257 Paras/ Villages (out of 6,087), prioritizing remote and underserved areas. Currently more than one hundred NGOs are working in the CHT. On account of inequal distribution of wealth and financial benefits provided by the International Organizations (IOs) is one of the major causes of crisis in the CHT. Most projects related to the development of the CHT people by the IOs and NGOs are intangible. NGOs should work in a way that ensures transparency. Uneven allocation of economic benefits provided by the IOs should be controlled. There the international and local organizations are working with community development projects but their activities raise controversy. However, considering all these issues it is observed that, these migrated Bengali settlers have been going through various forms of struggles ranging from economic hardship to the politics of existence in the CHT. Though the Phahari-Bengali population ratio (51:49% national census in 1991) is nearly about the same nonetheless development initiatives were not taken equally for all.

It is evidently proved that on an average Phaharis own more land than both types of Bengalis of the CHT where they (*Phahari*) had least number of registered ownership documents. Most of the Phaharis lands fall under the category of traditional-customary property. Whereas, on an average Bengali settlers were getting 406.18 decimals of lands from the government but during the insurgency period they left their land and relocated in the Cluster Villages and after CHT peace accord they did not get back their lands that's why now their under controlling land is 39.60 decimals though they process documents for their allocated land but they are still unable to use them because of illegal usurpation. Most of the Bengali settler respondents informed that, in general "Phahari's has lands without documents and Bengali settler's has documents but no lands" this is the main climax of the CHT land problems.

In the eighties the government dispatched several thousand landless Bengali families to settle in CHT. The Government allotted 5 to 3 acres of land for every Bengali family, which the Phaharis (tribals) consider unduly given. In the wake of heightened insurgency, the situation deteriorated and the Bengalis relocated themselves in and around secured zones. The Phaharis (tribal) then took hold of the lands left by the Bengali settlers. That is how the land dispute kept on getting complicated (Hossain, 2013). The Chittagong Hill Tracts Land Dispute Resolution Commission (Amendment) Act, 2016 added a provision that "No appeal shall be maintainable against the judgment of this commission and the decision of this commission shall be deemed to be final". The Bengalis are protesting against this clause because they seemed to be deprived without appeal provision. In the Land Commission there is no representative from Bengali Settlers, whereas most of the land dispute cases were pit Bengali settlers against Phahari people. The Bengali settlers worried for that, if once the Land Commission gives decision against them then there will be no alternative place to put up their land documents for reviewing again. Almost all the Bengali settlers have legal documents against their land from the government during their settlement and Bengalis; those who bought land from others they also had registered documents. On the contrary, most of the Phahari has no legal paper regarding their land. Phaharis seemed that, if a tribal household uses part of para common property as homestead or as cultivated land, all members from his/her Para traditionally honor his/her usufruct right of ownership on that part of common property.

The ethnic groups are also divided in terms of local politics in the CHT. The Phaharis are mainly divided into two parties, one of them is Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS) and another is The United Peoples Democratic Front (UPDF). Factually, these two local political parties have been controlling the CHT since 1997. There had been only one (PCJSS) local political party for the Phaharis after independence of Bangladesh and before signing CHT peace accord in 1997. On the contrary, there is no local political organization for the Bengali settlers except Equal Rights Movement, popularly known as *Sama Odhikar Andolan* in the CHT. In reality, the *Sama Odhikar Andolan* is not a local political party; it is a platform where Bengalis tried to gather for getting equal opportunities of CHT but due to acquiescent to the national political organization, Bengalis got separated into many groups like BNP, Awami League (AL), etc. The *Sama Odhikar Andolan* was not able to fulfill Bengalis' demands on account of national political equation. The Bengalis couldn't stand on such kind of platform where they raise their voice for getting equal rights and opportunities. For more than two decades of political troubles the people of CHT now concentrated to the development for themselves. Nevertheless, there have some tensions due to lack of confidence and mistrust with each others. Previous records of the CHT show that, there was no conflict between Hill People and Bengali People before the government initiated Bengali settlement. Adi Bengalis and Phaharis used to enjoy a healthy mutual relationship in the past, but the Bengali settlers caused a breach in this state of relationship.

The Peace Accord introduced a special governance system for the CHT with a CHT Regional Council (CHTRC) as the apex body of three Hill District Councils (HDCs) under a special Ministry for Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs (MOCHTA). Two-thirds of the seats in the CHTRC and HDCs, including the positions of chairs, are reserved for Phahari people and one-third for permanent Bengali residents. So far, out of 32 subjects of different ministries, on average 18 subjects were handed over to the Hill District Council (HDCs) in line with the provision of the CHT Peace Accord. The traditional institutions are also an important feature of the CHT. The CHT is divided into three circles headed by a Circle Chief known as the Raja. The Rajas are traditional leaders; they help the government to collect revenue, particularly from Jhum land, and settle small civil and criminal disputes. Each circle is divided into several *Mouza* (a geographic and revenue unit) each headed by a headman. The HDCs

constituted Chairman and two third members from among the Phahari groups. The Bengalis demanded at least one Vice Chairman Post for them to raise their voice in the HDCs and other relevant organizations. In the present study, many Bengali respondents mentioned that, there has no post for Bengali settlers or no option to participate in any level of CHT decision making. All most all the offices headed by Phahari with two-third reserved seats and also they are enjoying all the local level official power in the CHT. Whatever the total population of Bengali settlers in the CHT hence they have no official power at all, they are only demographic figure of CHT.

According to the Peace Accord, the internally displaced refugees will be rehabilitated by the Task Force. One of the most contentious issues in connection with the rehabilitation of these internally displaced refugees is over the role of the Task Force. Not only is their rehabilitation still pending, but a major conflict erupted between the government and the JSS leadership over the mandate of the Task Force, or more concretely over the question whether Bengali settlers should also be considered internally displaced people. Task Force chairman Dipankar Talukdar (MP for Rangamati district) has given instruction to include Bengali settlers, but the JSS vehemently opposes this, fearing that this may lead to the legal recognition of settlers as permanent residents of the CHT and thereby as legal owners of the land. One of the major obstacles to their rehabilitation is disagreement over who qualifies as an internally displaced person. In 2000, the Task Force on Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons compiled a list, identifying 90,208 indigenous families and 38,156 Bengali settler families as internally displaced families and recommending a package programme to resolve the situation. The inclusion of Bengali settlers who were brought into the region under the transmigration programme carried out between 1979 and 1984 in the list was denounced by PCJSS and the Jumma Refugees Welfare Association, which boycotted subsequent meetings of the Task Force (United Nations, 2011). The Government has yet to deliver the announced compensation package for the internally displaced. On the contrary, though a Task Force has been formed to ensure proper rehabilitation of the refugees and IDPs in CHT nevertheless it was not properly functioning for non cooperation PCJSS and RJRWA.

A part of the rehabilitation work of the repatriated refugees and the internally displaced people of CHT, a nine-member Task Force Committee was formed by Representatives from JSS, RJRWA, Members of the three Hill District Councils, Member of the Parliament from the CHT region, representative of the twenty-fourth Infantry Division of the Bangladesh Army and Divisional Commissioner of Chittagong Division. There were reports of serious controversy over the identification of internally displaced persons among the members of the Task Force Committee. Ironically, it was reported that the ruling party members of parliament from CHT and some other members of the committee wanted to include the non-tribal people of the settlers' families in the internally displaced people's list as they were also displaced because of prevailing disturbed situations. The logic behind this could be that due to repatriation of Chakma refugees in CHT, the Bengali settlers were also displaced. But, the JSS and RJRWA members opposed this stance and held that it went against the terms and spirit of the accord. The committee could not reach any decision on the issue even after several meetings being held, which ultimately led to a stalemate situation with regard to rehabilitation activities of the repatriated refugees and the internally displaced people. The government unilaterally made a list of the internally displaced people nevertheless these depreciated people (including Phahari and Bengali settlers) are wistfully waiting for a better life. The peace could be rebuilt in the CHT by the rehabilitation of repatriated and internally displaced refugees. Moreover, if it will be smoothly completed thereby inhabitants of the CHT gainer as a whole.

However, the area of the CHT, one tenth of the total landmass of Bangladesh and it has tremendous potentials to contribute to the national economy. Only the commitment and concerted efforts of all stakeholders may bring sustainable peace in this area in due course of time. Simultaneously, apart from upholding independence and sovereignty, the government should continue employing the security forces in the CHT to promote sustainable peace, harmony and participatory development of the region. Therefore, the aim and goals of stakeholders as treated human being, living in the CHT as well as participating in the development process which brings them with mainstream people. Notwithstanding, to be fair the Bengali settlers are luckless people on account of all aspects of the CHT. There has no alternative shelter remaining in the plain land for the Bengali settlers. They came to the CHT bag and

baggage. If they wish to move to anywhere it is not possible because it will prove a white elephant for them. Most of the Bengali settlers have been alienated from their land thrice in their lifetime; firstly they have been alienated from their lands due to natural disasters like river erosion, flood, drought, etc, secondly, they have put away their dwelling for getting settlement opportunity in the CHT, thirdly they have been alienated from their homestead on account of insurgency between Shanti Bahini and state troops. Now these depreciated settlers are eagerly waiting for getting rehabilitated in their homestead where they had been settled first in the CHT. So, it's an iron necessity to assist the Bengali settlers in their rehabilitation like other backward communities of the CHT. As a whole, the present study has to be constructed on the dynamics and developments as created inequality, social discriminations, human rights and social injustice within the CHT as well as the world. As a result, the process of the development has to made and formulated new dimension in the name of 'inclusion and exclusion' and contextualize on simple to complex rather than peacefulness.

# ANNEXURE- I

## Checklist

## Checklist

1. Understanding the historical context of Bengali settlement in the Chittagong Hill Tracts
2. Process of Bengalis settlement and other ethnic groups migration to the Chittagong Hill Tracts
3. Reasons of CHT settlements were popular to the Bengalis
4. Bengali settlement and the reactions of minor ethnic groups of the CHT
5. Social relationship between the Phahari and Bengali
6. The Phaharis perception about Bengali settlers and Bengali settler's perception towards other ethnic groups.
7. Economic conditions of Bengali settlers compared to other ethnic groups of the CHT.
8. Status of trades and business of the CHT and identifying the group who control majority of the trades and business in CHT
9. Bengali settlers' condition in the context of land-disputes in the Chittagong Hill Tracts
10. The nature and background of ethnic conflicts and condition of the Bengali settlers within the ethnic conflicts in CHT.
11. Political dynamics and the role of local political groups and Bengali settlers position in the context of local politics in the CHT
12. Determining the local power structure (after and before peace accord) in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.
13. Identifying the role of NGOs and international donor agencies to the CHT and the participation of Bengali settlers in development of local and national level policies.
14. Status of Bengali settlers within the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord of 1997
15. Understanding the development dynamics of the CHT and which group is the more beneficiary from the development initiatives of International Donor Agencies and NGOs.
16. Overall condition of Bengali settlers for getting settlement opportunities in the CHT



**ANNEXURE- II**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Declaration:** This interview is having conducted as a part of Ph.D Research and the given information will not been used without academic- teaching, learning, and research purpose. All personal information will keep hidden except name. Though, the information will be used for making dissertation, thereby you will not been trace out by this process.

### Household Information and Settlement Related Questions

- 1.1 Name:
- 1.2 Age:
- 1.3 Sex: 1. Male 2. Female 3. Others
- 1.4 Head of the household:
  1. Male 2. Female
- 1.5 Decision makers in the family:
  1. Husband 2. Wife 3. Both
- 1.6 Which ethnicity do you belong to?
  1. Chakma 2. Marma 3. Tripura 4. Bengali 5. Bengali Settlers
- 1.7 Up to which class have you studied?
  1. Illiterate 2. Specific class 3. Others
- 1.8 Highest educational attainment of you or you family?
  1. Primary 2. SSC 3. HSC 4. Degree/Master 5. Others
- 1.9 Marital Status:
  1. Married 2. Unmarried 3. Widowed 4. Divorced 5. Others
- 1.10 Your former district where you lived in?
  1. Chittagong 2. Noakhali 3. Comilla 4. Sylhet 5. Others
- 1.11 In which year or how many years before did you come here?  
Mention .....
- 1.12 Which type of sanitation do your family members
  1. Pacca latrine 2. Kacha latrine 3. Bowling in place 4. Ring latrine
- 1.13 What type of power facilities do you have in your household?
  1. Electricity 2. Solar 3. Both 4. None
- 1.14 What type of road communication facilities do you have from your house?
  1. Mud 2. Metal road 3. Little road 4. Others
- 1.15 In which generation you are in?
  1. 1<sup>st</sup> generation 2. 2<sup>nd</sup> generation (father) 3. 3<sup>rd</sup> generation (Grandfather) 4. More
- 1.16 Type of house at present
  1. House with mud 2. Thatched house 3. Tin shed house 4. building
- 1.17 Sources of drinking water:
  1. Tube well 2. Jharna 3. Rain water 4. Water under land 5. Others
- 1.18 Ages of your family members:
  1. 0.5 years
  2. 6-18 years
  3. More than 18 years
- 1.19 How many school going children are between the years 6-18 years?
  1. Go to go school 2. Do not go to school
- 1.20 What are the causes of not going to school in the age group 6-18 years?
  1. Financial hardship 2. Lack of social security 3. Far distance of the house from the school 4. Others

- 1.21 Did you have any land in your previous place?
  1. Yes
  2. No
- 1.22 Which type of housing did you have in the past place?
  1. House made of mud
  2. Thatched house
  3. Tin sled house
  4. Building
  5. No house at all
- 1.23 How did your household members come to hill tracts?
  1. Through govt.
  2. Through relatives
  3. Through service
  4. Others
- 1.24 What was the purpose for coming to hill tracts from the previous area?
  1. For leading improved life
  2. Due to landlessness
  3. due to govt. facilities
  4. Natural disaster
  5. Others
- 1.25 What type of govt. facilities did you have during the time of coming here?
  1. land
  2. cash money
  3. House building help
  4. Others
- 1.26 Do you get any allowance/ ration how?
  1. Yes
  2. No
- 1.27 Did you get any allowance/ration before?
  1. Yes
  2. No
- 1.28 What type of allowance do you get?
  1. Rice
  2. whet
  3. Oil
  4. Others
- 1.29 Did you get any destruction?
  1. Looser compared to before
  2. Good from previous time
  3. As before
- 1.30 Do you think that you remained good in the previous district?
  1. Yes
  2. No
- 1.31 Do you want to return to the previous district?
  1. Yes
  2. No
- 1.32 Why do you want to return to the previous district?
  1. lack of solvency in the family
  2. lack of security
  3. lack of education facilities for the children
  4. Others
- 1.33 Why do not you want to return to your previous district?
  1. No shelter in the previous place
  2. Will be financially Looser
  3. Destruction of studies of the children

### Questions about: Social Life and Social Relationship among the Ethnic Groups

- 2.1 What is the social relation between you and the Phahari people?
  1. Good
  2. Medium
  3. Bad
- 2.2 Do you invite Phahari during any social ceremony like marriage, Eid, birthday?
  1. Yes
  2. No
- 2.3 Do you go to any social program in the Phahari marriages puja, birthday?
  1. Yes
  2. No
- 2.4 Do you have any Phahari friends?
  1. Yes
  2. No
- 2.5 What are the causes?
  1. No mutual trust
  2. Ethnic problem
  3. Phahari are not interested
  4. Social restriction
  5. Others
- 2.6 Is there any programme Where Bengali and Phahari participate together?
  1. Yes
  2. No
- 2.7 How often do you go to each others house?

1. Often 2. Very rare 3. Never 4. Social restriction
- 2.8 How do you exchange meals with each other?  
1. Do not eat the foods of Phahari 2. Phahari people do not eat your foods  
3. Eating each other foods 4. Religious and culturally prohibited
- 2.9 Are the Bengali settlers treated as second class citizen (socially/economically weak/poor) in the CHT?  
1. Yes 2. No
- 2.10 Why the Bengali settlers treated as second class citizen in the CHT?  
1. Their economic and social conditions are bad compared to others  
2. Economic condition was bad 3. Shafted shelter from other place  
4. Others
- 2.11 What is your perception about the Phahari?  
1. You think hill people outsiders 2. You seemed to be land grabbers  
3. Thought to be opposition 4. Seems to be cordial 5. Others

**Questions about: Household Economy and Economic Conditions of Ethnic Groups**

- 3.1 Your main occupation?  
1. Agriculture 2. Jum cultivation 3. Business 4. Service 5. Day laborer  
6. No profession 7. Others
- 3.2 How many members in your family are financially involved?  
Please Mention,.....
- 3.3 Annual income of your family?  
Please Mention,.....
- 3.4 Monthly expenditure of your family?  
Please Mention,.....
- 3.5 What type of job facilities do you have here?  
1. There was job facilities in the previous place 2. Job facilities are more here 3. Same
- 3.6 What was your occupation in the previous district?  
1. Agriculture 2. Business 3. Service 4. Day laborer 5. Household  
6. No occupation
- 3.7 Is there any improvement of your family in term of economic condition than before?  
1. Much better than before 2. Medium than before  
3. Same as before 4. Worse than before
- 3.8 How is your children's education facility than before?  
1. Good is the previous district 2. Good here 3. Same
- 3.9 How is your and your families social security?  
1. Good is the previous district 2. Good here 3. Same 4. bad here
- 3.10 What kind of your participation in the local development?  
1. Participation in the construction of roads, bridge, school-college, mosque-temple 2. Improvement for standard of living of social co-operative 3. Maintain social discipline 4. Combined farm 5. Others

- 3.11 Your participation in the national development:  
1. Making development planning 2. Becoming member in the development board 3. Becoming member of the national policy making 4. Others
- 3.12 Has there any separate development project for you?  
1. Taken project 2. No 3. you don't know
- 3.13 Has there any separate development project for others?  
1. Yes 2. No 3. Do not know
- 3.14 In which areas the govt. development projects are being implemented?  
1. For Bengali 2. For Bengali settlers 3. For hilly people 4. Same for all
- 3.15 Who controls the development projects?  
1. Bengalis 2. Hilly people 3. Govt. 4. Both Bengali and Hill people
- 3.16 Do you think that peace is necessary for the development of hill tracts area?  
1. Yes 2. No
- 3.17 Do you have any land?  
1. Yes 2. No
- 3.18 How do you become land owner?  
1. By Govt. 2. By purchasing 3. By inheritance 4. Others
- 3.19 Do you get any facilities for the production of crops?  
1. Yes 2. No
- 3.20 From where do you get?  
1. From govt. 2. From N.G.O 3. Local social organization 4. Others
- 3.21 Do you give any local subscription (*Chaada*) in buying and selling of the produced goods?  
1. Yes 2. No
- 3.22 Who takes subscription?  
1. Bengalis 2. Bengalis settlers 3. Phahari people/organization 4. Govt. people 5. Others
- 3.23 Who controls majority of the trade in CHT?  
1. Phahari people 2. Bengali 3. Settler Bengali 4. Others
- 3.24 Do you have any domestic animals?  
1. Yes 2. No
- 3.28 Who is the 1<sup>st</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> here in terms of economic condition?  
1. Bengali 2. Phahari people 3. Settler Bengali

### Questions about: land disputes in the CHT

- 4.1 Do you have any dispute regarding land in your family?  
1. Yes 2. No
- 4.2 With whom you have land dispute?  
1. Settler Bengali 2. Bengali 3. With govt. 4. Hilly people
- 4.3 What type of land dispute you have?  
1. Regarding ownership of the land 2. regarding occupant 3. regarding evacuation 4. Others
- 4.4 Do you have any case regarding land dispute?  
1. Yes 2. No

- 4.5 Mention the amount of land before and now?  
1. Before 2. Now
- 4.6 Did you loose any land due to land dispute?  
1. Yes 2. No
- 4.7 What are the causes for loosing land?  
1. Due to legal papers 2. Forced occupant 3. Phahari-Bengali land dispute 4. Govt. took the land
- 4.8 Do you think that there should be permanent settlement of land by govt.-  
1. Yes 2. No
- 4.9 How can you make permanent settlement of land dispute?  
Please mention.....
- 4.10 What type of papers do you have for your land?  
1. Registry document 2. Oral commitment 3. Khash land 4. No papers
- 4.11 Do you think that the land occupied by bangli settler is owned by hilly people?  
1. Yes 2. No
- 4.12 What type of damage did you face due to land dispute?  
1. Physically assault 2. Harassed by case 3. Damage of house 4. Others
- 4.13 How long the dispute is being continued?  
1. 1-5 years 2. 5-10 years 3. Above 10 years 4. Please mention....
- 4.14 Did you loose residence due to land dispute?  
1. Yes 2. No
- 4.15 Do you think that the main problem of Bengali settler with the hilly people is land dispute?  
1. Yes 2. No
- 4.16 Do you think that peace in hill tracts area can be retained by settling the land dispute?  
1. Yes 2. No

### Questions about: Ethnic Conflict in CHT

- 5.1 Do you have any ethnic conflict with your family?  
1. Yes 2. No
- 5.2 What type of damage did you face due to ethnic conflict?  
1. Setting fire in house 2. Physically assault 3. destruction of business 4. Some in the family dies 5. Started case 6. Others
- 5.3 Did your family face any problem due to lack of social security?  
1. Stopping of students education 2. Stopping of movement of any member outside home 3. Others
- 5.4 What are the problems when you reside in hilly areas?  
1. Problem of residence 2. Problem of land dispute 3. Problem of security 4. Problem of food 5. Political problem 6. Ethnic conflict 7. Others
- 5.5 Do you feel secured in hilly area?  
1. Yes 2. No
- 5.6 Who are getting more security by govt.?  
1. Bengali 2. Hilly people 3. All are equal

- 5.7 Did the army give security before?  
1. Yes 2. No
- 5.8 Do the army give you security now?  
1. Yes 2. No
- 5.9 Do you are facing any problem for not getting security of the army?  
1. Yes 2. No
- 5.10 Do you have any restriction in observing social and religious program?  
1. Yes 2. No
- 5.11 What type of restriction?  
1. Obstruction by hilly people 2. Obstruction by Bengali 3. Wanted subscription by others 4. None obstructs 5. Others
- 5.12 What are the main causes of problem between Bengali and hilly people?  
1. Mistrust with each other 2. Land dispute 3. Political 4. Discrimination in development 5. Others
- 5.13 Do you think that Phahari-Bengali discord is reduced by peace accord?  
1. dispute is reduced than before 2. Increased than before  
3. Same as before 4. Created new problem
- 5.14 How can you improve the relation between Bengali and Phahari?  
Please mention.....
- 5.15 Do you believe the Phahari people in socio-economic activities?  
1. Yes 2. No

### Questions about: GOs and NGOs Development Dynamics in CHT

- 6.1 Are you involved with any organization?  
1. Yes 2. No
- 6.2 What types of organization it is?  
1. Co-operative 2. N.G.O 3. Socio-cultural 4. Others
- 6.3 Who in your family represents in the organization?  
1. Male 2. Female 3. Both
- 6.4 What is the main cause for involving with the organization?  
1. For economic development 2. For social security 3. Tackling the opposition 4. Others
- 6.5 Are you involved with any NGOs?  
1. Yes 2. No
- 6.6 What type of activities do you get from NGOs?  
1. Loan distribution 2. Shop, tailoring/Handicraft/poultry farm  
3. Corn production 4. Cultivation 5. Providing health facilities  
6. Others
- 6.7 Do you have any economic or loan distribution institution in your area?  
1. Yes 2. No
- 6.8 Did your family member take loan for NGO?  
1. Yes 2. No
- 6.9 Did you improve standard of living by taking loan?  
1. Improved 2. Disproved 3. Not profit no loss

- 6.10 What type of assistance do you get by Govt.?  
1. House building help 2. Regarding agriculture 3. Regarding business 4. No help 5. Others
- 6.11 What type of facilities you are enjoying as Bengali settles?  
1. *Cota* in school admission 2. Monthly educational help 3. No help at all 4. Others
- 6.12 Do you have any *cota* facility in job for Bengali/settler Bengali?  
1. Yes 2. No
- 6.13 What type of help did you get from NGO?  
1. Health and treatment facilities 2. educational development 3. House building 4. construction of religions institution 5. Cash money help 6. No help at all
- 6.14 With whom do the NGO's generally work?  
1. With Bengali 2. With Phahari people 3. Equal for Phahari-Bengali
- 6.15 Do you have any involvement with foreign downer agencies in development project?  
1. Yes 2. No
- 6.16 Is there any NGOs who work for the development of socio-economic condition of Bengali/Settles Bengali?  
1. Yes 2. No
- 6.17 Is there any govt. project for the development of socio-economic condition of Bengali Settles?  
1. Yes 2. No

### Questions about: Local Politics and Political Conflicts

- 7.1 What type of local political parties your family is involved?  
1. UPDF 2. PCJSJ 3. Equal rights movement 4. None
- 7.2 Is there any discord between Phahari-Bengali people politically?  
1. Yes 2. No
- 7.3 Do you give any subscription (*Chaada*) for local political social organization?  
1. Yes 2. No
- 7.4 What types of effect do you face in economic life for giving subscription (*Chaada*) to local political or social organization?  
1. Hardship in family maintenance 2. Problem in running business 3. Problem in service 4. Problem in land cultivation 5. Others

### Questions about: Tourism and Hospitality

- 8.1 What type of tourism business do you have in Khagrachari?  
1. Handicraft 2. Recreation 3. Transport 4. Hotel 5. Selling goods 6. Tourist Guide 7. Others
- 8.2 Who owns majority of the tourism business?  
1. Local Bengali 2. Bengali settler 3. Hilly people 4. Outsiders 5. Others
- 8.3 How many members in your family are involved in tourism business?



1. Yes            2. No
- 8.4    What type of activities they are involved in tourism?  
1.Transport business   2. Tourist guide   3. Selling goods   4. Goods provider to the tourist   5. Others
- 8.5    How does your family get benefit from tourism?  
Please mention.....

### Questions about: Health and Medical Facilities

- 9.1    How far is your hospital from your locality?  
Please mention.....
- 9.2    Do you family get health benefit easily?  
1. Yes            2. No
- 9.3    From where did you get primary treatment when you are ill?  
1. Self            2. Local hospital       3. Others

ANNEXURE-III:

**The Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT)  
Peace Accord 1997**

The Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Peace Accord was signed on December 2, 1997 in Dhaka at the Prime Minister's office between the Government and Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma, President of the Parbattya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS)

Under the framework of the Constitution of Bangladesh and keeping full and firm confidence in the sovereignty and integrity of Bangladesh, to uphold the political, social, cultural, educational and economic rights of all the people of Chittagong Hill Tracts region and to expedite socio-economic development process and to preserve and respect the rights of all the citizens of Bangladesh and their development, the National Committee on Chittagong Hill Tracts, on behalf of the government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, and Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samity, on behalf of the inhabitants of Chittagong Hill Tracts, have reached the following agreement in four parts (A, B, C, D) as bellow:

#### **A) (Ka) General**

1. Both the sides have recognized the need for protecting the characteristics and attaining overall development of the region considering Chittagong Hill Tracts as a tribal inhabited region.
2. Both the parties have decided to formulate, change, amend and incorporate concerned acts, rules and regulations as soon as possible according to the consensus and responsibility expressed in different sections of the agreement.
3. An Implementation Committee shall be formed to monitor the implementation process of the agreement with the following members:
  - a) A member nominated by the Prime Minister: Convenor
  - b) Chairman of the Task Force formed under the purview of the agreement: Member
  - c) President of Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti: Member
4. The agreement shall come into effect from the date of the signing and execution by both the sides. This agreement shall remain valid from the date of its effect until all the steps are executed as per the agreement.

## **B) (Kha): Chittagong Hill Tracts Local Government Council/ Hill District Council**

Both sides have reached agreement with regard to changing, amending, incorporating and omitting the Hill District Local Government Council Acts 1989 (Rangamati Hill District Local Government Council Act 1989, Bandarban Hill District Local Government Council Act 1989, Khagrachhari Hill District Local Government Council Act 1989) and its different sections which were in existence before this agreement came into being, as below:

1. The word “tribal” used in different sections of the Council Acts shall stay.
2. The name “Hill District Local Government Council” shall be amended and the name of council shall be “Hill District Council.”
3. “Non-tribal permanent residents” shall mean a person who is not a tribal but has legal land in the hill district and generally lives in the hill district at a specific address.
4.
  - a) There shall be 3 (three) seats for women in each of the Hill District Councils. One third (1/3) of these seats shall be for non-tribals.
  - b) Sub-sections 1,2,3 and 4 of section 4 shall remain in force as per the original act.
  - c) The words “deputy commissioner” and “deputy commissioner’s in the second line of sub-section (5) of section 5 shall be replaced by “circle chief” and “circle chief’s”.
  - d) Following sub-section shall be added in section 4:

Whether a person is a non-tribal shall be determined, along with the identity of non-tribal community to which he belongs, by the concerned Circle Chief on the provision of submission of certificate from concerned Headman/Pourasabha chairman/Union Parishad chairman and no person can be a candidate for the office of the non-tribal member without a certificate from the concerned Circle Chief in this regard.
5. It is narrated in section 7 that a person elected chairman or member shall make an oath or announcement before the Divisional Commissioner of Chittagong. By amendment of it there shall be incorporated that the members shall make

oath or announcement before “a Justice of High Court Division” instead of “Divisional Commissioner of Chittagong”.

6. The words “to Divisional Commissioner of Chittagong” will be replaced by “as per election rules” in the fourth line of section 8.
7. The words “three years” shall be replaced by “five years” in the second line of section 10.
8. There shall be a provision in section 14 that if the office of the Chairman falls vacant or in absence of the Chairman, a tribal member elected by other members of the Council shall preside and perform other responsibilities.
9. The existing section 17 shall be replaced with the sentences as mentioned below:

A person shall, under the law, be eligible to be enrolled in the electoral roll, if

  - (1) he is a citizen of Bangladesh;
  - (2) he age is not less than 18 years;
  - (3) he is not declared mentally unsound by any competent court;
  - (4) he is a permanent resident of Hill District.
10. The words “determination of electoral constituency” shall be added in the sub-section (2) of section 20.
11. There shall be a provision in sub-section (2) of section 25 stating that the chairman and in his absence a tribal member elected by other members shall preside over all the meetings of the council.
12. As the entire region of Khagrachhari district is not included in the Maung circle, the words “Khagrachhari Maung Chief” in section number 26 of Khagrachhari Hill District Council Act shall be replaced by the words “Maung Circle Chief and Chakma Circle Chief.” Similarly, there shall be scope for the presence of Bomang Chief in the meeting of Rangamati Hill District Council. In the same way, there shall be provision that the Bomang Circle Chief can attend the meetings of Bandarban Hill District Council meetings if he wishes or is invited to join.
13. In sub-section (1) and sub-section (2) of section 31 there shall be a provision that a chief executive officer equivalent to the status of a deputy secretary shall be the secretary in the Council and there shall be provision that the tribal officials would be given priority for this post.

14. a) There shall be a provision in sub-section (1) of section 32 that for the proper conduct of its affairs the Council may, with the approval of the government, create posts of various categories of officers and employees.  
b) Sub-section (2) of section 32 shall, by amendment, be made as follows:  
The Council can, in accordance with regulations, appoint class three and class four employees, and can transfer, suspend, dismiss, remove or can impose any other punitive action on them. But provided that the priority of the tribal inhabitants must be maintained in case of the said appointments.  
c) There shall be provision in the sub-section (3) of section 32 stating that:  
The government can, in consultation with the Council, appoint other officers as per regulation and can transfer, suspend, dismiss, remove or can impose any other punitive action on them.
15. In sub-section (3) of section 33 “as per regulation” shall be mentioned.
16. The words “or any other way determined by the government” placed in the third line sub-section (1) of section 36 shall be omitted.
17. a) The original law shall be in force in the fourth paragraph of sub-section (1) of section 37.  
b) “As per rules” will be included in Sub-section (2), sub-sub-section (d), of section 37.
18. Sub-section (3) of section 38 shall be repealed and by amendment, the sub-section (4) shall be framed as follows:  
At any time before the expiry of the financial year, if deemed necessary, budget may be formulated and sanctioned.
19. In section 42 the following sub-section shall be added:  
The Council with the fund received from the government shall formulate, initiate and implement development projects on the subjects transferred and all the development works initiated at the national level shall be implemented by the concerned ministry/department through the Council.
20. The word “government” placed in the second line of sub-section (2) of section 45 shall be replaced with the word “Council”
21. By repealing the sections 50, 51 and 52, the following section shall be made:  
The government, if deemed necessary, may advise or order the Council, in order to ensure conformity with the purpose of this Act. If the government is

satisfied with definite proof that anything done or intended to be done by the Council, or on behalf of the

Council, is not in conformity with law, or contrary to public interest, the government may seek information and clarification and give advice or instruction to the Council on the concerned matters in writing.

22. In sub-section (3) of section 53, the words “if the period of super session is completed” shall be repealed and “within ninety days of super session” shall be incorporated before the words “this Act”.
23. The words “of the government” in the third and fourth lines of section 61 shall be replaced with the words “of the ministry”
24. a) By amendment, sub-section (1) of section 62 shall be made as follows:  
Notwithstanding anything contained in any Act for the time being in force, all members of the rank of Sub-Inspector and below of Hill District Police shall be appointed by the Council in manner laid down by regulations, and the Council may transfer and take disciplinary action against them as per procedure laid down by regulations; provided that in the manner of such appointment tribals shall be given priority.  
b) The words “subject to the provision of all other laws for the time being in force” placed in the second line of sub-section (3) of section 62 shall be repealed and substituted by the words “as per rules and regulation”.
25. The words “providing assistance” will remain in third line in section 63.
26. Section 64 shall be amended as follows:  
a) Notwithstanding anything contained in any law for the time being in force, no land, including those land suitable for giving settlement, within the boundaries of Hill District shall be given in settlement including giving lease, purchased, sold and transferred without prior approval of the Council; provided that this provision shall not be applicable in case of areas within the reserved forests, Kaptai Hydroelectricity Project, Bethbunia Earth Satellite Station, State-owned industries and factories and lands recorded in the name of government.  
b) Notwithstanding anything contained in any law for the being in force, no lands, hills and forests within the control and jurisdiction of the Hill District Council shall be acquired or transferred by the government without consultation and consent of the Hill District Council.

- c) The council can supervise and control functions of Headman, Chainman, Amin, Surveyor, Kanungo and Assistant Commissioner (land).
  - d) Fringe land in Kaptai Lake shall be given settlement on priority basis to original owners.
27. Section 65 shall be amended as follows:  
Notwithstanding anything contained in any other law of for the time being in force, responsibility of collecting land development tax shall be entrusted in the Council and the said tax collected in the District shall remain in the account of the Council.
28. By amendment of section 67 it shall be made as follows:  
If deemed necessary for coordination of activities between the Council and government authorities, government or the Council shall put specific proposal on certain matter(s) and functions may be coordinated by mutual correspondence between the Council and the government.
29. By amendment of sub-section (1) it shall be made as follows:  
The government in consultation with the Council can, by notification in the official gazette, make rules for carrying out the purposes of this Act and even after the rules had been made, the Council shall have special right to file petition for reconsideration of the rules.
30. a) In the first and second paragraphs of sub-section (1) of Section 69, the words “prior approval of the government” shall be omitted and the following part shall be added after the words “can do” in the third Para: “Provided that if the government differs with any part of the regulation made by the Hill District Council then the government can give advice or instruction for amendment of the said regulation”.
- b) The words “transfer of power of Chairman to any officer” mentioned in the (h) of subsection (2) of section 69 shall be omitted.
31. Section 70 shall be omitted.
32. Section 79 shall be amended as follows:  
If in the opinion of the Council any law applicable to Hill District, passed by the national parliament or any other authority, is found to be hurtful to the district or objectionable to the tribal people, the Council may file petition in writing, for the purpose of amendment or relaxation of its application, to the government stating the reasons for which the law is being hurtful or



objectionable and the government shall in the light of the petition, adopt necessary remedial measures.

33.
  - a) The word “supervision” shall be added after the word “order” in the No. 1 of the functions of the Council in the First Schedule.
  - b) The following subjects shall be added in the No. 3 of the functions of the Council: Vocational training; Primary education in mother tongue; Secondary education.
  - c) The words “or reserved” placed in sub-section 6(b) of the function of the Council in the First Schedule shall be omitted.
34. The following subjects shall be added in the functions and responsibilities of the Hill District Council:
  - a) Land and land management
  - b) Police (local)
  - c) Tribal law and social justice
  - d) Youth Welfare
  - e) Environment preservation and development
  - f) Local tourism
  - g) Improvement trust and other local government institutions except Pourasabha and Union Councils
  - h) Licensing for local trade and business
  - i) Proper utilization of water resources of rivulets, canals, ponds and irrigation except Kaptai lake
  - j) Preservation of death and birth and other statistics
  - k) Money lending and trade
  - l) Jhum Cultivation.
35. The following sectors and sources shall be included in the taxes, rates, tolls and fees to be imposed by the Council as stated in the second schedule:
  - a) Registration fee from non-mechanical transports
  - b) Tax on sale and purchase of goods
  - c) Holding tax from land and buildings
  - d) Tax on sale of domestic animals
  - e) Fees from cases of social justice
  - f) Holding tax on government and non-government industries
  - g) Part of royalty from forest resources

- h) Supplementary tax from cinema, theatre and circus, etc.
- i) Part of royalty from license or lease given by the government for exploration and extraction of mineral resources
- j) Tax from business
- k) Tax from lottery
- l) Tax from fishing

### **C) (Ga): The Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council**

1. A Regional Council shall be formed in coordination with the 3 Hill District Local Government Councils provided that various sections of the Hill District Local Government Council Act 1989 (Act No. 19,20 and 21 of 1989) shall be amended with an aim to make the three Hill District Local Government Councils more powerful and effective.

2. Chairman of this Council shall be elected indirectly by the elected members of the Hill District Councils, his status shall be equivalent to that of a State Minister and he must be a tribal.

3. The Council shall be formed with 22 (twenty-two) members including the Chairman. Two-thirds of the members shall be elected from among the tribals. The Council shall determine its procedure of functioning.

Composition of the Council shall be as follows:

Chairman	1
Members Tribal	12
Members Tribal (women)	2
Members non-tribal	6
Members non-tribal (women)	1

Among the tribal members 5 persons shall be elected from the Chakma tribe, 3 persons from the Marma tribe, 2 persons from the Tripura tribe, 1 person from the Murung and Tanchangya tribes and 1 person from the Lusai, Bawm, Pankho, Khumi, Chak and Khiyang tribes.

Among the non-tribal members 2 persons shall be elected from each district.

Among the tribal women members 1 woman shall be elected from the Chakma tribe and 1 woman from other tribes.

4. Three seats shall be reserved for women in the Council, one-third of which will be non-tribal.
5. The members of the Council shall be elected indirectly by the elected members of the Hill District Councils. Chairman of three Hill District Councils shall be ex-officio members of the Council and they shall have voting rights. Eligibility and non-eligibility of the members of the Council shall be similar to that of the Hill District Councils.
6. The tenure of the council shall be five years. Budget preparation and its approval, dissolution of council, formulation of council's regulation, appointment of and control over officers and employees and matters related to concerned subjects and procedures shall be similar to the subjects and procedures given in favour of and applicable for the Hill District Council.
7. A chief executive officer equivalent to the rank of a Joint Secretary of the government shall be appointed in the council and tribal candidates would be given priority in the appointment for the post.
8.
  - a) If the office of the Chairman of the Councils falls vacant then a member from among the tribal members would be indirectly elected as Chairman by the members of Hill District Councils for an interim period.
  - b) If any office of a member of the Council falls vacant for any reason then that shall be filled through by-election.
9.
  - a) The Council, including coordination of all development activities conducted under the three Hill District Councils, shall supervise and coordinate the subjects vested upon the Hill District Councils. Besides these, if any lack of coordination and inconsistency is found among the Hill District Councils in discharging their responsibilities the decision of the Regional Council shall be taken as final.
  - b) The Council shall supervise and coordinate local councils including the municipalities.
  - c) Regional Council can coordinate and supervise in the matters of general administration, law and order and development of the three Hill Districts.
  - d) The Council can conduct programmes related to disaster management and relief, and also coordinate the activities of the NGOs.
  - e) Tribal laws and social justice shall be under the jurisdiction of the Council.
  - f) The Council can issue license for heavy industry.

10. The Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board shall discharge its responsibilities under general and overall supervision of the Council. In case of appointment of Chairman of the Development Board, the government shall give priority to competent tribal candidates.
11. If the Regional Council finds any rule of the 1900 CHT Regulations and other related laws, rules and ordinances as contradictory to the 1989 Hill District Council Acts, then the government shall remove that inconsistency in law according to recommendation of and in consultation with the Regional Council.
12. Until Regional Council is constituted through direct and indirect election the government may, by constituting an interim Regional Council, entrust the responsibilities of the Council on it.
13. If the government wants to formulate any law regarding CHT, it shall do so in consultation with and according to the recommendation of the Regional Council. If there arises the necessity to amend any law that may be harmful for development of the three Hill Districts or for the welfare of the tribals, or to make any new law, the Councils may file a petition or put recommendation before the government.
14. The fund of the Council shall be created from the following sources:
  - a) Fund received from the Hill District Councils' fund;
  - b) Money or profits from all properties vested in and managed by the Regional Council;
  - c) Grant and loan from the government or any other authority;
  - d) Grant from any institution or individual;
  - e) Profit accruing from investment by Regional Council;
  - f) Any other moneys received by the Regional Council;
  - g) Money received from such sources of incomes as the government may direct to be placed at the disposal of the Regional Council.

## **D) (Gha) Rehabilitation, General Amnesty and Other Matters**

Both sides have reached the following position and agreement to take programmes for restoring normal situation in Chittagong Hill Tracts area and to this end on the matters of rehabilitation, general amnesty and others related issues and activities:

1. An agreement has been signed between the government and the refugee leaders on March 9, 1997 with an aim to take back the tribal refugees from India's Tripura State based on the 20-point Facilities Package. In accordance with the said agreement repatriation of the refugees started since March 28, 1997. This process shall continue and with this in view, the Jana Sanghati Samiti shall provide all kinds of possible cooperation. The Task Force shall, after determination, rehabilitate the internally displaced tribal people of three districts.
2. After signing and implementation of the agreement between the government and the Jana Samhati Samiti, and after rehabilitation of the tribal refugees and internally displaced tribal people, the government, in consultation with the Regional Council to be formed as per this agreement, shall start cadastral survey in CHT as soon as possible and after finalization of land ownership of tribal people by settlement of land dispute through proper verification, shall record their land and ensure their land rights.
3. The government, to ensure the land rights of the tribal families which are landless or possess less than 2 acres of land, shall provide two acres of land to each such family, provided that lands are available in the locality. If requisite lands are not available then grove land shall be provided.
4. A commission (Land Commission) headed by a retired justice shall be formed for settling land disputes. This commission, in addition to settling disputes of lands of the rehabilitated tribal refugees, shall have full power for cancellation of ownership of those lands and hills which have been so far illegally settled and occupied. No appeal can be made against the judgment of this commission and decision of this commission shall be final. This shall also be applicable in case of fringe land.
5. This commission shall be set up with the following members:

Retired justice;

Circle chief (concerned);

Chairman of Regional Council/representative;

Divisional Commissioner/Additional Commissioner

Hill District Council Chairman (concerned)

6. a) The term of the commission shall be three years. But its term can be extended in consultation with the Regional Council.  
b) The Commission shall settle disputes according to the existing rules, customs and practices of Chittagong Hill Tracts.
7. The tribal refugees who received loans from the government but could not utilize them properly due to conflicting situation shall be exempted from repayment of loans and interests.
8. Allotment of lands for rubber plantation and other purposes: Settlement of land, of those non-tribals and non-locals who were given settlement of lands for rubber plantation and other purposes but had not undertake project within the past 10 years or had not utilized their lands properly, shall be cancelled.
9. The government shall allot additional funds on priority basis for implementation of increased number of projects in CHT. New projects formulated with an aim to make necessary infrastructures for facilitating development in the area shall be implemented on priority basis and the government shall provide funds for these purposes. The government shall, considering the state of environment in the region, encourage developing tourism for tourists from within the country and abroad.
10. Quota reservation and scholarships: Until development equals that of other regions of the country the government shall continue reservation of quota system in government services and educational institutions for the tribals. For this purpose, the government shall grant more scholarships for the tribal students in the educational institutions. The government shall provide necessary scholarships for research works and higher education abroad.
11. The government and the elected representatives shall be active to preserve the distinctiveness of the tribal culture and heritage. The government in order to develop the tribal cultural activities at the national level shall provide necessary patronization and assistance.

12. The Jana Samhati Samiti shall submit to the government the lists of all its members including the armed ones and the arms and ammunition under its possession and control within 45 days of signing this agreement.
13. The government and the Jana Samhati Samiti shall jointly determine the date and place for depositing arms within the 45 days of signing this agreement. After determination of date and place for depositing arms by the members included in the list of the Jana Samhati Samiti the government shall ensure security for return of JSS members and their family members to normal life.
14. The government shall declare amnesty for the members who shall deposit their arms and ammunition on the scheduled date. The government shall withdraw the cases against whom cases have been lodged.
15. If anyone fails to deposit arms on the scheduled date the government shall take lawful measures against him.
16. After the return of all JSS members to normal life general amnesty shall be given to them and to the permanent residents who were involved in the activities of the Jana Samhati Samiti.
  - a) In order to provide rehabilitation to all returnee JSS members a lump sum of Taka 50,000/- shall be given to each family.
  - b) All cases, warrants of arrest, held against any armed member or general member of the Jana Samhati Samiti shall be withdrawn and punishment given after trial in absentia shall be exempted after surrender of arms and coming back to normal life as soon as possible. Any member of the Jana Samhati Samiti in jail shall be released.
  - c) Similarly, after surrendering arms and coming back to normal life, no case can be filed or no punishment can be given to any person for merely being a member of the Jana Samhati Samiti.
  - d) The loans obtained by the members of the Jana Samhati Samity from different government banks or other agencies but could not be utilized owing to conflicting situation would be exempted with interest.
  - e) Those members of the PCJSS who were employed in various government jobs shall be absorbed in their respective posts and the eligible members of their family shall be given jobs as per their qualifications. In such cases, the government principles regarding relaxation of age would be followed.

- f) Bank loans of soft terms shall be given to the members of the PCJSS for cottage industry and horticulture and other such self-employment generating activities.
- g) Educational facilities shall be provided for the children of the Jana Samhati Samity members and the certificates obtained from foreign board and educational institutions shall be considered as valid.
17. a) After signing of the agreement between the government and the Jana Samhati Samiti and immediately after the return of the JSS members to normal life, all the temporary camps of military, Ansar and Village Defence Party shall be taken back to permanent installations except the border security force (BDR) and permanent cantonments (three at the three District Headquarters and Alikadam, Ruma and Dighinala) by phases and with this in view, the time limit shall be determined. In case of deterioration of the law and order situation, natural calamity and such other works the army can be deployed under the civil administration like all other parts of the country as per relevant laws and rules. In this case, the Regional Council may, according to the necessity or time, request the proper authority for the purpose of getting assistance.
- b) The lands of camps and cantonments to be abandoned by military or para-military forces shall be either returned to the original owners or to the Hill District Councils.
18. The permanent residents of Chittagong Hill Tracts with priority to the tribals shall be given appointment to all categories of officers and employees of all government, semi-government, councils and autonomous bodies of Chittagong Hill Tracts. In case of non-availability of eligible persons from among the permanent residents of Chittagong Hill Tracts for a particular post, the government may give appointment on lien or for a definite period to such posts.
19. A ministry on Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs shall be established by appointing a Minister from among the tribals. An Advisory Council shall be formed to assist this ministry with the persons stated below:
- a) Minister on CHT Affairs
- b) Chairman/representative, Regional Council;
- c) Chairman/representative, Rangamati Hill District Council;



- d) Chairman/representative, Bandarban Hill District Council;
- e) Chairman/representative, Khagrachari Hill District Council;
- f) Member of Parliament, Rangamati;
- g) Member of Parliament, Bandarban;
- h) Member of Parliament, Khagrachari;
- i) Chakma Raja;
- j) Bohmang Raja;
- k) Mong Raja;
- i) Three members from non-tribal permanent residents of hilly areas nominated by the government from three Hill Districts.

This agreement is framed as above in Bengali language and is done and signed in Dhaka on the date of 02 December, 1997 A.D., 18 Agrahayan 1404 Bengali year.

On behalf of the inhabitants of  
the  
Chittagong Hill Tracts  
SD/-  
(Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma)  
President  
Parbattya Chattagram Jana  
Samhati Samiti

On behalf of the government of  
Peoples Republic of Bangladesh  
SD/-  
(Abul Hasanat Abdullah)  
Convener  
Hill Tracts Affairs,  
Government of Peoples Republic  
of Bangladesh Bangladesh

ANNEXURE-IV:

**The Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation, 1900**

**The Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation, 1900:** A regulation to declare the law applicable in, and provide for the Administration of, the Chittagong Hill Tracts in

Bengal. (Received the assent of the Governor- General on the 6th Jan, 1900; published in the Gazette of India on the 13th idem; and in the Calcutta Gazette on the 17th idem) Whereas it is expedient to declare the law applicable in, and provide for the administration of, the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bengal, it is hereby enacted as follows:-

## Chapter I – PRELIMINARY

### Short title, extent and component:

1. This Regulation may be called the Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation, 1900.
2. It extends to the Chittagong Hill Tracts
3. It shall come into force on such date as the Local Government may, by notification in the Calcutta Gazette, appoint.

### Definition:

In this Regulation- (a) the expression ‘Chittagong Hill Tracts’ means the area known by that name as existing on the first day of January 1936; and (b) ‘Commissioner’ means the Commissioner of the Chittagong Division .

## CHAPTER II – LAWS

3. **Chittagong Hill Tracts how to be administrated:** Subject to the provisions of this Regulation, the administration of the C. H. Ts. shall be carried on in accordance with the rules for the time being in force under section 18.
4. **Enactments applicable in Chittagong Hill Tracts:**
  - (1) The enactments specified in the Schedule, to the extent and with the notifications therein set forth and so far as they are not inconsistent with this Regulation or the Rules for the time being in force there under, are hereby declared to be in force in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.
    - (a) No other enactment here to force or hereafter passed shall be demand to apply in the Chittagong Hill Tracts: Provided that the Local Government may , by notification in the Calcutta Gazette – (a) declare that any other enactment shall apply in the said Tracts, either wholly or to the extent or with the modifications which may be set forth in the notification : or (b) declare that any enactment which is specified in the schedule or which has been declared to apply by a notification under clause (a) of this subsection, shall cease to apply in the said Tracts.

## CHAPTER- III APPOINTMENT AND POWERS OF CERTAIN OFFICERS

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

6. **Investment of Deputy Magistrate and Deputy Collector or Sub-Deputy Magistrate and Sub- Deputy Collector.** As amended by the Devolution Act XXVIII of 1920 and the Govt. of India (Adaptation of Indian Laws) order, 1937 with powers of Deputy Commissioner – the Local Government may, by notification in the Calcutta Gazette, invest any Deputy Magistrate and Deputy Collector or Sub- Deputy Magistrate and Sub- Deputy Collector with all or any of the powers of the Deputy Commissioner: under this Regulation or the rules for the time being in force there under , and define the local limits of his jurisdiction
7. **Chittagong Hill Tracts to be A District under The Deputy Commissioner:** The Chittagong Hill Tracts shall constitute a District for the purpose of criminal and Civil Jurisdiction and for revenue and general purposes, The Deputy Commissioner shall be District Magistrate, and subject to any others passed by the Local Government under section 6, The General Administration of the said Tracts, in Criminal, civil, revenue and all others matters, shall be vested in the Deputy Commissioner.
8. **Chittagong Hill Tracts to be a sessions Division under the Commissioner:**
  - (1) The Chittagong Hill Tracts shall constitute a sessions Division and the Commissioner shall be sessions Judge.
  - (2) As sessions Judge the Commissioner may take cognizance of any offence as a court of original Jurisdictions, without the accused being committed to him by the Magistrate for trial, and when so taking cognizance, shall follow the procedure proscribed by the code of Criminal Procedure, 1893(Act V Of 1998), for the trial of warrant – cases by magistrates .
9. **HIGH COURT:** The Local government shall exercise the powers of a High Court for the purpose of the submission of sentences of death for confirmation under the Code of Criminal Procedure,1898 (Act V of 1998) and the Commissioner shall exercise the powers of a High Court for all other purposes of the said Code.
10. **POWER TO WITHDRAW CASES:** The Deputy Commissioner may withdraw any criminal or civil case pending before any officer or court in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, and may either try it himself or refer it for trial to some other officer or court.

#### CHAPTER IV- ARMS, AMMUNITION, DRUGS AND LIQUOR

11. Possession of firearms and ammunition, and manufacture of Gun powder- (1) The Deputy Commissioner may fix the number of firearms and the quantity and description of ammunition which may be possessed by the inhabitants of any village, and may grant permission, either to such inhabitant; collectively or to any of them individually, to possess such firearms and ammunition as he may think fit. (2) All firearms for the possession of which permission is given under sub-section (1), shall be marked and entered in a Register. (3) Any permission granted under sub-section (1) to possess firearms and ammunition may be withdrawn by the Deputy Commissioner and

thereupon all firearms and Ammunitions referred to in such permission shall be delivered to the Deputy Commissioner or one of his subordinates. (4) The Deputy Commissioner may grant permission to any person to manufacture gun powder, and may withdraw such permission. (5) Whoever, without the permission of the Deputy Commissioner possesses or exports from the Chittagong Hill Tracts any firearms or ammunition, or manufactures any gun powder shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years or with fine, or with both. (6) The Deputy Commissioner may, with the previous sanction of the Central Government by order in writing, direct their Sub-Section (1), (2), (4) and (5), or any of them, shall not apply in any village specified in the order.

12. **“Daos”, spears and bows and arrows:** (1) The Deputy Commissioner may, with the previous sanction of the Commissioner, by order in writing, prohibit all or any of the inhabitants of any village from carrying *daos*, spears, bows and arrows, or any of those weapons, in any tract to be defined in the order, if he is of opinion that such prohibition is necessary to the peace of such tract. (2) Every order made under sub-section (1) shall specify the length of time during which it shall remain in force. (3) Whoever disobeys an order made under sub-section (1) shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months, or with fine or with both.
13. **Intoxicating Drugs:** (1) Whoever, except under and in accordance with a license granted by the Deputy Commissioner, imports, exports, manufactures, possesses or sells opium, ganja or *charas*, or any preparation thereof, or cultivates any plant from which opium, ganja or *charas* can be produced, shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years in the case of a person who has not been previously convicted of an offence under this section or to five years in the case of a person who has been so convicted, or with fine or with both. (2) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (1) any person may without a license granted by the Deputy Commissioner- (a) possess, for domestic use, one *tola* of *charas* or of any preparation thereof or three *tolas* of ganja, or of any preparation thereof; and (b) if such person is registered under the provision of the rules made under this Regulation as a habitual consumer of opium, possesses such amount of opium or of any preparation thereof not exceeding five *tolas* in weight as he may be allowed to have in his possession at one time under the said rules.
14. **Foreign Spirit and Fermented Liquor:** (1) Whoever, except under and in accordance with a license granted by the Deputy Commissioner imports or sells foreign spirit or fermented liquor, shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three months, or with fine or with both. (2) Nothing in this section applies-(a) to the import by any person, for his private use and consumption, and not for sale of any foreign spirit or fermented liquor on which duty has been paid; or (b) to the sale of any such spirit or liquor legally procured by any person for his private use and consumption and sold by him, or any auction on his behalf, or on behalf of his representatives in interest, upon his quitting station or after his decease. **Explanation-** For the

purpose of this section, the expression “Foreign” spirit or “Fermented liquor” means any spirit or fermented liquor not manufactured or produced in the Ctg. Hill Tracts.

15. **Locally Made Spirit and Fermented Liquor:** Whoever, except under and in accordance with a license granted by the deputy commissioner, Chittagong Hill Tracts exports or sells spirit or fermented liquor manufactured or produced in the Ctg. Hill tracts, shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three months, or with fine, or with both.

## CHAPTER V-Miscellaneous

16. POLICE-the Chittagong Hill Tracts shall be deemed to be a general police districts within the meaning of the Police Act ,1861 (V of 1861) and Bengal act VII of1869 ( an act to amend the constitution of the police Force in Bengal ) , and the I .G .of police , East Bengal shall exercise there in all the powers an authority conferred on an Inspector – General of police .
17. **CONTROL AND REVISION:** (1) All officers in the Chittagong Hill Tracts shall be subordinate to the Deputy Commissioner, who may revise any order made by any such officer including a Deputy Magistrate and Deputy Collector or a Sub-Deputy Magistrate, and Sub-Deputy Collector under section 6. (2)The Commissioner may revise any order made under this Regulation by the Deputy Commissioner or any other officer in the Chittagong Hill tracts, except any order made in the matter of land Administration and land reforms. (3) The Local Government may revise any order made under this Regulation.
18. **POWER TO MAKE RULES:** (1) The Local government may make rules for carrying into effect the objects and purpose of this Regulation. (2) In particular and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power, such rules may- (a) provide for the administration of the civil justice in the Chittagong Hill Tracts; (b) prohibit, restrict, or regulate the appearance of Legal practitioners in cases arising in the said tracts; (c) provide for the registration of documents in the said tracts; (d) regulate or restrict the transfer of land in the said tracts; (e)Provide for the subdivision of the said Tracts into circles, and those circles into *mouzas*; (f) provide for the collection of the rents and the administration of the revenue generally in the said circles ad *mouzas* through the chiefs and Headmen; (g)Define the powers and jurisdiction of the Chiefs and Headmen, and regulate the exercise by them of such powers and jurisdiction; (h)Regulate the appointment and dismissal of Headmen; (i)provide for the remuneration of chiefs, headmen and village officers generally by the assignment of lands for the purpose or otherwise as may be thought desirable; (j) prohibit, restrict or regulate the migration of the cultivating *rayats* from one circle to another; (k) Regulate the acquisition by Government of land required for public purposes; (k) provide for compulsory vaccination into side Tracts; (L) provide for the Levy of taxes in the side Tracts; and (m) Regulate the procedure to be observed by officers acting under this Regulation or

the rules for the time being in force there under; (3) All rules made by the Local Govt. under this Section shall be published in the Calcutta Gazette and, on such publication, shall have effect as if enacted by this Regulation.

19. **Bar jurisdiction of civil and Criminal Courts:** Except as provided in this Regulation or in any other enactment for the time being in force, a decision passed, act done or order made under this Regulation or the rules there under, shall not be called in question in any Civil or Criminal Court.
20. **Repeal of certain enactments:** Act XXII of 1860 (an Act to remove certain tracts on the eastern border of the Chittagong district from the jurisdiction of the tribunals established under the general Regulations and Acts), Bengal Act IV of 1863 (on act to amend Act XXII of 1860) and so much of the second schedule to the Scheduled Districts Act, 1874 (XIV of 1874 ), and of the Repealing and Amending Act, 1891 (XII of 1891 ), as relates to either of the enactment aforesaid, are hereby repealed.

ANNEXURE-V:

**Secret Memos of  
Govt. of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh**



## Secret Memos of the Bangladesh Government

President Ziaur Rahman presided at a secret, mid-1979 meeting during which it was decided to settle thousands of Bangladeshi families in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) during the following year. The Commissioner of Chittagong Division and the Deputy Commissioner of the CHT sent the following two secret memorandums to the government officers of the Bangladeshi districts to implement the scheme.

### **SECRET**

#### **Secret Memorandum**

**Commissioner  
Chittagong Division**

Memo No. 665-C

To: Mr.

It has been decided that landless/river erosion affected people from your district will be settled in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHTs). The settlement will be done in selected Zones and each family will be given *Khas* land free of cost according to the following scale:-

Plain land	2.5 acres
Plain and bumpy mixed	4 acres
Hilly land	5 acres

It has been decided that you will send 5,000 families.

You are requested to collect particulars of intending and suitable families from the Chairman of the concerned Union Parishads sought them out and furnish list to the Deputy Commissioner, CHTs through special messenger by the 30th of Sept./80 at the latest. To keep paper record of the selected settlers, group leaders and issue of Identity card in all districts in an uniform manner, detail guidelines have been prepared (copy enclosed) so that you can ensure strict compliance of the concerned Union Parishad Chairman. It is the desire of the Govt. that the concerned Deputy Commissioner will give top priority to this work and make the programme a success. You are requested to immediately call a meeting of the concerned Chairman, Union Parishads and give them detailed instructions in the matter.

I would like to have a report about the action taken by you in the matter by 15.9.80 positively for information of the Govt.

Sd/Saifuddin Ahamed,  
5-9-80  
Commissioner  
Chittagong Division

**SECRET**

**Govt. of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh,  
Office of the Deputy Commissioner, CHTs.**

**Memo No.1025(9)C**

**Dt. Rangamati, 15th Sept./80**

**From: Mr. Ali Haider Khan,  
Deputy Commissioner,  
Chittagong Hill Tracts.**

To: Mr.

Sub: Settlement of landless non-tribal families in CHTs -2nd Phase With reference to our discussion in Dacca on 21-8-80 and reference to Commissioner. Chittagong Division's letter No. 66(9)/C dt.4-9-80 on the above noted subject, I furnish below a guideline regarding the programme of settlement of landless non-tribal families from other districts in CHTs:-

1. Selection of families should be completed by 15th Oct. 80
2. The Chairman of the Union Parishads concerned will issue identity cards to the selected families in the forma enclosed an Annexure (A)
3. Names of families group wise should be sent to us by 22nd October/80. On the receipt of these lists we shall decide as to where they will be rehabilitated and shall indicate to you on which dates the groups should report to the reception centre at the Haji camp (pilgrimage camp), Chittagong.
4. At the reception centre an officer will take care of the settlers and will make arrangements for their journeys to the rehabilitation blocks. The settlers will however, arrange their own food.
5. At the reception centre settlers will be given taka 200/- per family and on their arrival at their rehabilitation blocks they will be paid another installment of taka 500/-. After that, each family will be given further grants(C) taka-200/- per month for five more months. In addition for 6 months the settlers will be given 12 seers of wheat per family per week under Food For Work Programme for construction of their own houses, reclaiming their lands, making village roads for them and for digging tanks in their own Paras (areas). For another six months there will be provision for wheat under strict Food For Work Progamme.
6. In rehabilitation blocks each family will be settled with Khas land at the following rate:
  1. 5 acre hilly land
  2. 4 acres mixed land
  3. 2.5 acres paddy land

I enclose here with an annexure 'B' an instruction for the Chairman of the Union Parishad where from the families will be sected.

Sd/Ali Haider Khan

D.C. Chittagong Hill Tracts

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Sources: Chittagong Hill Tracts: Militarization, Oppression and the Hill Tribes (London: Anti Slavery Society, 1984): 23-29

## ANNEXURE-VI:

### List of Khagrachari Local NGOs

## List of Khagrachari Local NGOs

Sl. No.	Name of NGO	Address	Reg. No.	Reg. Dated	Renewed on	Valid till
01	Assistance for the Livelihood of the Origins (ALO)	Pankhaiapara Khagrachari Sadar, Dist: Khagrachari.	2225	18- Apr 07		18-Apr 12
02	Borgang Foundation	House- P-341, PanKhiyapara, Khagrachari-4400	2371	02-Jul-08		02-Jul 13
03	Humanity Welfare Association	Golabari (New Women College) Khagrachari Sadar, Khagrachari.	1714	11-May 02	11-May 07	11-May 12
04	Integrated Development Initiatives (IDI)	Shishu Kallyan Songa Residential School Bhaban, Uttar Khabong Paria,	2362	21 May 08		21 May 13
05	JUMOFUL	Narankhaya, Khagrachari Sadar,	2495	13- Oct 09		13- Oct-14
06	Kabidang	Pankhaiapara, Khagrachari Sadar	2092	30-Apr 06		30-Apr 16
07	Khagrapur Mohila Kalyan Samity	Khagrapur, Khagrachari Sadar,	1894	13-Dec 03		13-Dec 13
08	Parbattya Jumia Punarbashan O Paribesh Sangrakhan Sangstha	College para, Khagrachari Sadar,	1587	28- Nov 00		28- Nov- 05
09	Parbatya Bouddha Mission	Kamalchari, Sadar,	0997	09-Jan-96		09-Jan- 16
10	Rurowa Laue Tathang (RLT)	Pankhaiapara, Khagrachari Sadar	1830	17-May 03		17-May 08
11	Survival	Mohajanpara, Khagrachari	1536	18-Jun 00		18-Jun 05
12	Trinamul Unnayan Sangstha	Marma Samsad Building, Pankhaiyapara,	1860	22-Jul-03		22-Jul 13
13	Zabarang Kalyan Samity	Khagrapur Khagrapur Dighinala Road, Khagrachari	1461	27- Dec-99		27- Dec-14

Source: <https://chtlaws.wordpress.com/2011/05/24/list-of-khagrachari-local-ngos-2/>



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