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IDE DISCUSSION PAPER No. 717

Love and Hate

Is Militarization Perceived as Sustainable Development for Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT)?: A Case Study on CHT, Bangladesh

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Abstract:

Background: The existence of Bangladesh Army in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) has often been associated and presented as the panacea and mantra of development for CHT Pahari population¹. The ongoing debate whether the Paharis population of CHT perceives the existence of army as the mantra of development or threat to their existence continues to exist. There have not been many ethnographical studies that empirically examine the perception of the Paharis about this relationship and the changing mode of the dialogues over the decades.

Method: With case studies, observations and focus group discussions I undertook a qualitative study on community perceptions of the Paharis, Bengali settlers, and

¹ Lewin in his famous 'wild race' (2004[1870]) invented new terminology to designate and identify the CHT people, which is the category used even today. He collectively termed the CHT people as 'hill-men' (Pahari in Bengali), which is still used to identify CHT people both by themselves and by the majority Bengalis" (Lewin in Uddin 2010: 286). Throughout the research, I will also use the term Pahari to identify these ethnic communities in CHT.

representatives from Bangladesh Army in CHT districts. I conducted interviews of randomly selected Pahari respondents (n=7), Bengali settlers (n=10), Army representatives (n=4) and Academic, Security Expert and Local political leader (n=3) representing the overall catchment area of CHT. I then carried out direct content analysis to identify themes and triangulate findings across methods and informant groups.

Result: Key themes emerged across from the interviews surrounding: (1) militarization and powerlessness and unheard of Pahari people; (2) lack of collective awareness and consciousness among the Pahari people about their rights; (3) militarization as a strategic requirement for giving security to Bengali settlers; (4) development perceived as ‘impossible and less plausible reality’ for the Pahari people. These themes recurred throughout many participants’ narratives and cases and influenced their perception of militarization and development.

Conclusion: As the perceptions of the Pahari people in CHT, which often results in lack of trust between the Bengali settlers and Pahari people, continues to exist, it will be critical to find convincing, effective and sustainable ways of addressing the ongoing perceptions of the Pahari people.

Key words: Army, Bengalis, Paharis, Sustainable Development, Militarization, Peace Accord, CHT.

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Dedicated
to
My Sisters Hamida Banu, Thamina Begum & Zohora Begum
&
Elder brother Nurul Haque

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Professor Md. Reazul Haque, Ph.D.

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Abbreviation

ALRD	Association for Land Reform and Development
BAL	Bangladesh Awami League
BGB	Boarder Guard Bangladesh
BNP	Bangladesh Nationalist Party
BNSB	Bangladesh National Society for Blind
CARE	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere
CI	Congress of India
CHT	Chittagong Hill Tract
CHTDB	Chittagong Hill Track Development Board
DB	Detective Branch
DC	District Commissioner
EU	European Union
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
HQ	Head Quarter
HT	Hill Tract
HWF	Hill Women's Federation
MNDP	Mro National Defense Party
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSI	National Security Intelligence
PCJSS	Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti
SB	Shanti Bahini
SB	Special Branch
SD	Sustainable Development
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SSA	Sammo Adikhar Andolon
UK	United Kingdom
ULFA	United Liberation Front of Assam
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

UNESCO	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UPDF	United People's Democratic Front
USA	United States of America

Chapter One

Introduction: Focusing On the Unfocussed

*Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) is a very complex issue and as long as Bangladesh lives, this problem will not be solved.*¹

1.1. Background and Problem Statement

In Bangladesh, Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) denotes diverse ethnic communities with fractured and suspicious relationships among the Bengalis, civil and military administration. It is significant to mention that CHT borders two neighboring countries of Bangladesh –India and Myanmar and houses eleven ethnic communities² who are collectively known as Paharis³. Of all the ethnic communities, the Chakma, Marma, Tripura, Tanchangya and Mru are numerically dominant whereas the Bawm, Khumi, Chak, Kheyang, Lusai and Pangkhowa are smaller groups⁴(Uddin 2010). Researches on Paharis (Ahamed 2003; Ahsan 1995; Bernot 1964; Bessaignet 1958; Brauns and Loffler 1990; Chakma 1986; Dewan 1990; Grierson 1927; Levi-Strauss 1951, 1952; Lewin 1869, 2004[1870]; Schendel 1992; Uddin 2008b) refers that in terms of socio-cultural, political and economic background, the Paharis are different from the mainstream Bengalis. Physical appearance of the Paharis are different from the Bengalis but closely similar to the Southeast Asian people (Babul 2016). In a similar vein, their language, beliefs and rituals are also different from the Bengalis and mostly analogous to the people living in hills at Seven Sisters in India and Upper Myanmar (Uddin 2010). It is evident from different historical works (Hughes 1881; Hutchinson 1909; Lewin 2004[1870]; Phayre 1841; Schendel 1992, Qanungo 1988; Serajuddin 1971, 1984) that the Paharis were the primordial migrants to CHT from Arakan in Myanmar and Tripura in India (Ibid). Based on this socio-cultural and geo-political situation, the above informations unveil the hidden reality necessary to understand the CHT crisis as a whole. Despite the problems, it is also evident that Government of Bangladesh (GoB) considers the Paharis as citizens, part of the culture, and also promotes tourism in CHT (Nasrin 2017).

¹Brigadier General (Retd) who joined the then Pakistan army in 1960 and later joined the army of independent Bangladesh and was engaged in the service of the country till 1993.

²Panday and Jamil in their paper mentioned 13 ethnic communities and these 13 different Pahari communities include the Chakma, Marma, Pankho, Khumi, Lusai, Murong, Bonojog, Tanchanya, Khyang, Chak, Tripura, Mro, and Ryang (Panday and Jamil 2009).

³ “Lewin in his famous ‘wild race’ (2004[1870]) invented new terminology to designate and identify the CHT people, which is the category used even today. He collectively termed the CHT people as ‘hill-men’ (Pahari in Bengali), which is still used to identify CHT people both by themselves and by the majority Bengalis” (Lewin in Uddin 2010: 286). Throughout the research, I will also use the term Pahari to identify these ethnic communities in CHT.

⁴ The Pahari people in Bangladesh constitute about 1.13% of the total population (Yasmin 2014: 121). For details population distribution see Appendix 2.



Photo: Pahari Peoples of Bangladesh in Stamps⁵

In 1776, it was the British who started a military campaign in the Hill Tract (HT). They divided HT from Chittagong as a separate district called the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) and appointed a superintendent. It was 1900 when CHT manual was passed and so CHT was officially considered as an 'excluded area' to protect culture and traditions of the Paharis (Ibid). The Government of India Act was passed in 1935 and according to the act, CHT was regarded as a "totally excluded area outside the provinces of Bengal and Assam" (Karim 1998: 306, Ahmed 2014). In 1947, the Indian subcontinent was divided into two countries named India and Pakistan. There is evidence that Indian flag was hoisted in different places of Rangamati and Burmese (presently known as Myanmar) flag was raised in Bandarban even after two to three day to the partition (Barua 2001, Mey 1984, Ahmed 2014). Due to the dual loyalties evident in them, the then Pakistan government considered them as anti-Pakistan groups. It was well known that the emergence of India and Pakistan as separate countries was based on religious identity. The CHT Pahari communities by religion are non-Muslims and thus the Chakma elites and other Pahari leaders wanted the CHT to be a part of India (Uddin 2010).⁶

⁵ https://www.google.co.jp/search?q=indigenous+in+Bangladesh+stamps&rlz=1C1CHBD_enBD765BD765&tbm=isch&source=iu&ictx=1&fir=S63_W0K7dgSBSM%253A%252CcSMPo6KoUOiNwM%252C_&usg=_kRAkhx-btmojHu-gWjllWxpZhpQ%3D&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiO94OJgJnZAhUEhrwKHb6rACoQ9QEIMDAB#imgsrc=cE_l4iMATq75AM (Last viewed on 10th February 2018).

⁶ Shelley opines thus: "Therefore in 1946, the tribal chiefs formed 'The Hill Men Association' and proposed a princely state status for CHT as per with neighboring Tripura, Koochbihar and Khasia; and with which they also proposed a confederation to be under the administrative control of central government of India. But this move failed and by 16 August, CHT became the part of Pakistan...Sneha Kumar Chakma...had hoisted the Indian flag at Rangamati on August 14. At the same time, the Marma, who claimed descent from the same stock of people as those inhabiting Burma had hoisted the Burmese flag at Bandarban" (Shelley 1992: 29).

In 1956, the first Constitution of Pakistan had classified CHT as an 'Exclusive area' (Yasmin 2014) and then CHT lost its special status and autonomy under the amendment of the Pakistan Constitution in 1963. Significantly, this amendment removed immigration barriers and gave the Bengalis access to large scale migration⁷ to CHT region (Panday and Jamil 2009). In addition to that, the Paharis became irate when Pakistan Government built the 'Kaptai Hydro-Electric Dam' in 1962. The amplitude of the project area was 218 KM which was 40% of the cultivable land in CHT. This project also created 100,000 development refugees who were mostly the Chakma. That is why the Paharis addressed this dam as a 'death trap' and 'development disaster'(ibid). In a similar way, another development project in CHT, the Chandraghona Paper Mill evicted the Marma villages and again produced dissatisfaction and anger (Choudhury, Islam & Durrat in Chowdhury ed. 2017).

In 1971, when Bangladesh was struggling and fighting for independence from West Pakistan, a number of Chakma and Marma chiefs "advertised their hostility by allowing themselves to be recruited as *rajakars*- irregulars-on the side of Pakistani military" (Levene 1999: 349; Karim 1998). The Chakma leaders, just after independence, demanded autonomy for CHT and was again granted status of 'excluded area' in the new Constitution of Bangladesh (Karim 1998)⁸. It was on the 23rd January 1974 when the Parliament passed a bill and declared "Bangladesh as a uni-culture and uni-linguistic nation state" (Ibid: 307)⁹. In 15th August 1975, father of the nation, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was brutally killed and soon after that, the army took over the power in Bangladesh. It should be noted that the relation between India and Bangladesh deteriorated post-1975. During the tense, heated situation, the aggrieved the Pahari people, within and outside the country, decided to form Shanti Bahini (SB), the armed wing of Parbatya Chattagram Jana Shanhati Shamiti (PCJSS) to achieve autonomy and ensure the rights of the Pahari people over the region. In 1977, the SB launched an insurgency against Bangladesh (Adnan 2007:2) and significantly, some women joined SB too. The Pahari women not only faced problem due to displacement but also incidences of rape and harassment were not uncommon by security forces. Additionally, it has also created more female headed household as male members had to leave due to military insurgency (Nasrin 2017).

The then army ruler, President Ziaur Rahman followed hegemonic approach and imposed ban on PCJSS and deployed army¹⁰ in the conflicted region under counter insurgency program named 'Operation Dabanol'(Adnan 2008:33). Bangladesh claimed that Indian agents are providing training and arms to fighters of SB in the Indian States of Mizoram and Assam (Adnan 2008: 33; Mohshin 2002: 67; Levene 1999: 350)¹¹. Indian Government denied the accusation and

⁷ In 1947, Bengalis were 2% of the total population of CHT whereas it became 49% in 2003 (Panday and Jamil 2009).

⁸ At the time of drafting of the Constitution of Bangladesh, former member of Parliament Manabendra N Larma from CHT opined "I am a Chakma. A Marma can never be a Chakma, a Chakma can never be a Bengali. I am a citizen of Bangladesh-Bangladeshi. You are also Bangladeshi but your national identity is Bengali ... they (tribals) can never be Bengalis" (Karim 1998: 307; Ahmed 2014).

⁹ In 2011 the National Parliament enacted the 15th Amendment to the Constitution of Bangladesh denying recognition of indigenous people as full citizens of this country. Article 6(2) of our Constitution states, "The people of Bangladesh shall be known as Bengalese as a nation and the citizens of Bangladesh shall be known as Bangladeshis" (The Daily Observer, 10th August 2017).

¹⁰GoB deployed about 115,000 military personnel in CHT (Chakma 2010 in Ahmed 2014).

¹¹Headquarter of SB was in Tripura State of India (Yasmin 2014:123).

counterclaimed that Bangladeshi army was providing training and sanctuary to Assamese and Mizo separatists¹².

In 1979, the army government began a project of ‘demographic engineering’ in the CHT and about 100,000 Bengalis from plain land were transferred to the CHT in the formal phase of the project (Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission 1994). GoB presented these migrants with not only cultivable plots and rations but also *Khas*¹³ Lands in army protected cluster villages and in the process, forcefully ousted the Paharis. As a reaction, PCJSS adopted the policy of terrorizing the new migrants and as a result, settlers were put into cluster villages near army camps (Choudhury, Islam & Durrat in Chowdhury ed. 2017). In addition, the GoB had undertaken different economic projects as a part of the counter insurgency program. The army took over the civil administration of CHT and handled most of the development fund that came through CHT Development Board (CHTDB). It supervised civilian activities, infrastructure building and employment generation (Adnan and Dastidar 2011: 77). Thus, three decades of insurgency and counter insurgency adversely affected day-to-day lives and livelihoods of people living in the region. This gave birth to the ‘love and hate’ relationship as the outcome of an almost fractured relationship.

In CHT, there was a continued war between the Bangladeshi military and Paharis for more than 25 years. In 1996, Shiekh Hasina, daughter of the father of the nation, took over the power in Bangladesh. Historically, the two political parties of the adjacent countries, Bangladesh Awami League (BAL) and Congress of India (CI), have good understanding. This factor did produce positive outcomes (Author’s interview, January 2018). For example, when the number of army camps and security forces were increased in CHT by the GoB, India withdrew its support, persuaded the fighters of SB to reach an understanding with the GoB, and thus the signing of the CHT Peace Accord happened in 1997. The then prime minister, Sheikh Hasina Government signed the agreement with the introduction of infinite courage and prudence. By signing the treaty, the leader of Paharis, Jatirindra Bodhipriya Larma (Santu Larma) declared the full allegiance to Bangladesh which was a responsible and wise act. Thousands of rebels gave up their arms in a grand ceremony on 2nd December 1997¹⁴. But the role of Pahari women during insurgency were neither nationally rewarded nor received any formal recognition from their own communities (Halim 2003:5 in Nasrin 2017)¹⁵. An important fact worth mentioning is that not all the Pahari groups have accepted this treaty. Some remained unhappy and considered the accord as a ‘defeat’ (Ahmed 2014).

¹² E.g. ULFA - United Liberation Front of Assam

¹³ Land owned by GoB

¹⁴ “Among other things, the Accord called for dismantling of all temporary military camps, transferring administrative power to local institutions and the settling of land disputes. The overall purpose of the Accord was to recognize the CHT as a Tribal inhabited region and so maintain a certain level to regional autonomy, different from the governance system operating the rest of the country” (Ahmed 2014: 7). For details see Appendix 1

¹⁵ Hill Women’s Federation (HWF) is a representative organization of the Pahari women in the CHT. It was founded on 8 March 1988 by some female Pahari students of Chittagong University. http://updfcht.com/?page_id=40 (Last viewed on 10th 2018).



Photo: Shantu Larma is handing over their arms to PM Shiekh Hasina on 2nd December 1997¹⁶

The armed war ended with the agreement between the Jana Sanghati Samity (JSS) and the GoB on the 2nd December 1997. Present Government celebrated 20 years of Peace Accord in 2017 and claims that they have successfully completed all the tasks mentioned in the treaty. In contrast, the Pahari leaders blame the GoB of treachery and express their dissatisfaction not yet satisfied. Recently, in a press briefing, JSS president Santu Larma claimed that they are dashed against the wall. He threatened the GoB of greater movement unless the Peace Accord is fully implemented stressing the greater movement to be the only way left for them. The government is responsible for the 'untimely situation' created in CHT.

In order to bring peace to the hilly region, on the 2nd December 1997, the GoB signed the agreement with the Pahari representatives led by Santu Larma and JSS. 48 of the 72 provisions of the treaty have been implemented, the rest are still unimplemented, according to the claim made by JSS president Santu Larma. His claim, "Twenty years, the two-thirds of the basic issues of the contract have not been implemented", has been rejected by the government. In the press conference, he complained that the GoB did not take any effective initiative to implement the basic provisions of the agreement such as the settlement of the land dispute, the return of Paharis land, rehabilitation, full-fledged regional council, the formation of the elected Hill District Council etc. The regional council has been void. Responding to a question, Santu Larma grumbled, "The intelligence agencies, law-enforcers and armed forces personnel engaged in the Hill Tracts are playing the biased role in favor of the ruling party and also taking anti-indigenous roles." The conditions for the withdrawal of all military installations except six permanent cantonments in the hill area were conditional. According to the estimates of a private organization, only 105 of the 500 temporary army camps have been withdrawn. Santu Larma said, "There are still four hundred camps in the

¹⁶ <http://www.weeklyholiday.net/Homepage/Pages/UserHome.aspx?ID=2&date=12/02/2011> (Last viewed on 4th March 2018)

mountainous region”. The undeclared army activities are going on in three districts of CHT. There are ongoing military operations, detention, and repression of Pahari people in the name of inspection. They are interfering in the constitutional rights of their freedom of speech and gathering. Under the agreement, there are conditions to transfer 33 activities from the government to the CHT Regional Council and three Zilla Parishads. According to the CHT Citizen Committee, till now the power of 5 to 12 activities has been partially handed over to the local government. Santu Larma also made the same complaint. He said, 'important activities were not handed over. The administration of three hill districts, law and order, police, land and land management, forest and environment, tourism, secondary education was not yet assigned to the Hill District Council. CHT Regional Council law has not been implemented'. 'Due to the implementation delay of the contract, the demography in the region is changing for the last 20 years', JSS chief claimed. Santu Larma also complained that the Paharis are becoming the minority in their land. The plot is going to turn Chittagong into a Muslim majority area. On the basis of this situation, Santu Larma announced the continuation of the non-cooperation movement at a press conference to prevent the Paharis "anti-interest activities" (The Daily Somokal, 30th November 2017).

In these circumstances, this research aims to deal with the presence of Bangladesh army in CHT which has often been associated and presented as the mantra of development for CHT Paharis as well as Bengali population. The debate whether the Bengali and Pahari population of CHT perceives the army presence as the mantra of development or threat to their existence continues to exist. There have not been many studies that empirically examine the perception of the Pahari population about this relationship. For the first time, this research has incorporated voices of Bangladesh army officials regarding their activities and reasons of being in CHT for the wellbeing of both the Paharis and Bengalis and overall, for sustainable peace, security and Sustainable Development (SD) of the region.

1.2. Justification

Ruling Bangladesh Awami League (BAL) Government wants to achieve their “VISION 2041” and the dream of ‘Digital Bangladesh’ through Sustainable Development (SD). Uncertainty, mistrust, the fractured and ambiguous perception among different stakeholders in CHT are the blocks which may hinder the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)¹⁷. Like the rest of the nations worldwide, Bangladesh is also working out to adopt SDG focused policies and integrate SDG goals into actions, plans etc. We are enacting SDG oriented laws, policies, projects so on (Abdin, 2017). In a similar vein, Gender is also a significant part of SD and SDGs. Due to three decades of unrest, girls and women are the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in the area. The contributions by these hard-working Pahari women and girls are rarely acknowledged. Moreover, they face gender disparity, inequality and deprivation of human rights, food insecurity and malnutrition, violence against them (Babul 2016). This issue of gender construction and gender relation has rarely been focused on academic work too. If we know the exact problems and

¹⁷ Goal 1: No poverty; Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being; Goal 4: Quality Education; Goal 5: Gender Equality; Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation; Goal 9: Industry Innovation and Infrastructure; Goal 10: Reduced Inequality; Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities; Goal 15: Life on Land; Goal 16: Peace Justice and Strong Institution

solutions to those, the path towards SD for Bangladesh will become smoother. Thus Bangladesh could start its journey towards the achievement of SDGs by 2030 and ensure its optimum result (Abdin, 2017). Additionally, it will also assist stopping the communal unrest in the region. The significance of this study is colossal in the sphere of reducing conflict and rapid SD of the CHT which is one of the most important parts of Bangladesh. Thus this study will contribute in the field of behavioral psychology, peace, conflict and security studies, area studies, gender and development studies.

1.3.Objective

1. To identify the perceptions of both the Paharis and Bengalis regarding militarization at CHT region after 20 years of the peace treaty;
2. To identify the causal relation between the presence of army, modernization and sustainable development of CHT;
3. To identify the perceptions towards the role of formal local administration in ensuring security as well as mediating and solving disputes in CHT;
4. To identify the gender dimension due to insurgency and presence of the army in CHT.

1.4. Research Question

1.4.1. Main Question

Is the presence of army perceived as a step towards SD for CHT region? What is the role of Bangladesh army at CHT region? How the presence of army is being perceived by both Paharis and Bengalis fe/male at CHT?

1.4.2. Sub-Question

- i. Is there any gender dimension regarding the presence of the army in CHT?
- ii. Have Paharis' organizations (JSS and UPDF) influence over the creation of prescribed perception?
- iii. Is the power play between two rival parties (JSS and UPDF) suppressing the human rights of common Paharis as well as Bengalis?

1.5.Research Process

This research is mainly qualitative in nature. The qualitative approach is chosen for this study based on the justification that the language and expression of the respondents are necessary for gaining insight into their experiences and emotions while generating rich data (Newton, 2010: 2). Methodologically, a qualitative approach is used because the goal of the research is best achieved through qualitative research tools. In addition, qualitative data collection allows gathering

profound insights through detailed personal un-structured face to face in-depth interviews which is not possible in the other way around. This research used ‘standardized’ open-ended questionnaire as primary technique for data collection that involved very structured wording of the interview questions while allowing the responses to be open-ended (Turner, III, 2010: 756). The advantage of using standardized open ended interviews is that respondents are allowed to express their experiences and viewpoints as much detail as they want to while it is also likely to have difficulty in coding the collected data (Cresswell, 2007). Both Primary and Secondary data were collected. Details are described below:

1.5.1. Research Area

This research covers three districts of CHT- Khagrachari, Rangamati, and Bandarban in Bangladesh. Three districts cover about 13,184 sq km which is approximately one-tenth of the total area of Bangladesh and 10 percent population of the country¹⁸.

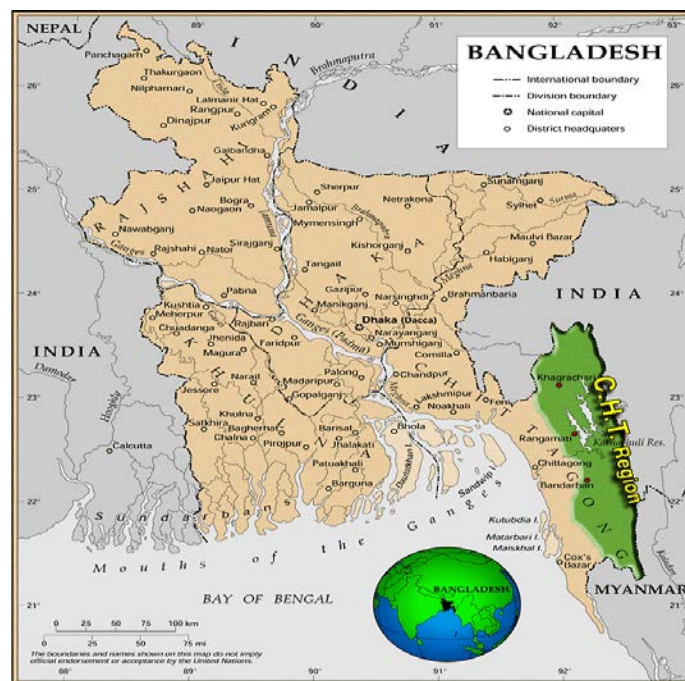


Fig: Location of Bangladesh and CHT¹⁹

1.5.2. Primary Data

¹⁸[http://en.banglapedia.org/index.php?title=Chittagong Hill Tracts](http://en.banglapedia.org/index.php?title=Chittagong_Hill_Tracts) (Last viewed on 6th January 2018)

¹⁹https://www.google.co.jp/search?q=location+of+Bangladesh+chittagong+hill+tracts+map&rlz=1C1CHBD_enBD765BD765&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwj8t436-QZrZAhULIZQKHV1hCHsQsAQINw&biw=1396&bih=690#imgsrc=SbphQiEQL8snIM: (Last viewed on 10th February 2018).

For selection of respondents, purposive sampling techniques were followed to ensure the availability of respondents. Purposive techniques involve identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with the phenomenon of interest (Casewell & Clark in Palinkas et al, 2013). The main goal of purposive sampling is to focus on particular characteristics of a population that are of interest which will best enable researcher to answer the research questions²⁰. Among the various purposive sampling techniques, snowball sampling²¹ and homogeneous sampling²² are the most emphasized in this study. The following table shows the categories:

Table 1: Sample Frame

Types of Respondent	Number
Army Officials	4
Bengalis male and female	8+2
Paharis male and female(Chakma, Marma, Tripura, Tanchangya, Khisa)	5+2
Academic, Security Expert	1+1
Local Leader (Paharis)	1
Total	Male 20+ Female 4= 24

1.5.3. Secondary Data

Relevant Articles, Books, Documentary, Internet, Journals, and publications from the concerned organizations helped me to collect information for my research.

1.5.4. Research Process and Ethics

During field work, I did not use any tape recorder rather I used close verbatim method. From my previous experiences as a researcher, I knew that using tape-recorder makes the respondents uncomfortable and suspicious. I strongly maintained the issue of 'ethics' during field work. I took permission from the respondents before interviews from them. Before starting the interview with respondents, I disclosed the purpose to them. I ensured them that their information would be used anonymously only for academic research. While conducting an interview, respondents had full right not to answer any question or to withdraw her/him if s/he wanted during the interview process. I did not ask any sensitive or personal questions irrelevant to my research paper. I maintained a field note book where I wrote relevant information during field work. All the respondents are kept anonymous and I used pseudonymous in this research.

²⁰ <http://dissertation.laerd.com/purposive-sampling.php> (Last viewed on date 3rd January 2018).

²¹ To identify cases of interest from sampling people who know people that generally have similar characteristics who, in turn know people, also with similar characteristics (Palinkas et al, 2013).

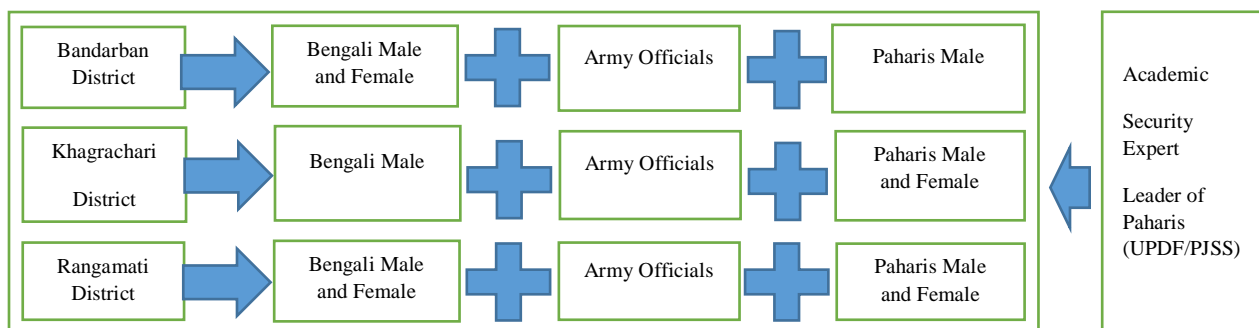
²² To describe a particular subgroup in depth, to reduce variation, simplify analysis and facilitate group interviewing (Ibid).

1.5.5. Case Studies, Unstructured Interviews and Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

Case Study: Case study has been one of the most widely used qualitative research method. The case records have been used to construct each case study (Kothari, 1990). For a detailed and good understanding of reality, researchers take out several cases from research field. This helps them to focus on the subject intensively and understand the reality. When a case is taken, then the researcher could also select the data collection and analyzing techniques suitable for the case. Moreover, it is evident from literature that, "A case study enables the researcher to analyze interactions not only as the sum of their parts, but in a realistically whole manner"(Yin, 2003). In addition, case studies are conducted to evaluate individualized client outcomes. Sometimes researchers are puzzled by particular cases - unusual successes, unusual failures or dropouts. Detailed case studies of these unusual cases may generate particularly useful information (Patton, 1990). I collected detailed case studies to portray the situation from different perspectives.

Unstructured Questionnaire: Unstructured Questionnaire provides a qualitative depth by allowing interviewees to talk about the subject in terms of their own frames of reference (May, 2001). Significantly, Open-ended questions are questions that allow someone to give a free-form answer (Farrell, 2016). Similarly, the Unstructured (open ended questionnaire were used) interview was taken from respondents.

Focus Group Discussion (FGD): Mosse's (1994) article sheds light on the complexities of participation and the dynamics of space that elicit true participation. In this research, I used FGD. I was aware that certain public spaces may inhibit participatory discussion. The issue of 'comfort' was taken seriously during FGD because group discussions are to be held in an open and comfortable space in which people feel safe to speak freely. To me, it appeared the best to separate opinions by gender as women and men are not two homogenous groups within a community. Discussions with women were held in a space they felt comfortable.



1.5.6. Processing of Data

In order to conduct interview with the Paharis, I took help of local educated interpreters to understand the local dialect. The transcription of qualitative data was made manually. The interviews were conducted in Bengali and so the relevant information was translated into English.

1.5.7. Validity & Reliability of Data Collection & Analysis

Validity in research is concerned with the accuracy and truthfulness of scientific findings (Le Compe and Goetz in Brink, 1993). A valid research should demonstrate what actually exists and a valid instrument or measure should actually measure what it is supposed to measure. When planning and conducting the steps of the study, sources of error were handled carefully. Reliability is concerned with the consistency, stability and repeatability of the informant's accounts as well as the investigators' ability to collect and record information accurately (Selltitz et al in Brink, 1993). Many of the risks in data collection pertain to the situation, respondents and social context and have already been dealt with concern.

1.5.8. Triangulation of Multiple Data Sources

Secondary information of the research has been collected through triangulation of multiple data sources (Yin 2012:12). It makes data sound and robust the data collection process. Triangulation merges the various sources of the available data collected from various sources. It is useful to keep data alive, interpret information and writing the main findings.

1.6. Layout of the Research

This research constitutes of four chapters. The first chapter describes about the problem statement, justification, objectives, research question and methodology along with ethical issues. The second chapter illustrates the concepts related to the research along with review of selected academic work to find out the gap and thus draws the theoretical framework to connect the context from theoretical perspectives. Chapter three outlines the data analysis from different stakeholders and chapter four deals with finding and recommendations along with conclusion of the research.

1.7. Limitations of the Research

The nature of this research is sensitive in Bangladesh context. Therefore, it was difficult to get respondents for case studies. There were respondents from the Army officials, Bengali and Pahari female who reside there and expressed their fear to be respondents of this research. Duration of this research was only five months and this kind of research needs ethnographic intensive field work which was not possible and that is why participant observation which is an important tool for qualitative research is missing in this research.

Chapter Two

Underpinning the Concepts & Contexts from Previous Studies

2.1. Introduction

CHT for its persisting complex situation is a controversial issue and has been widely debated and contested. The overall human rights questions, both of the arms and non- arms conflict, the rise of nationalism and identity discourse are the major concerns in the region. This chapter examines the magnitudes of the existing military and Bengali settler's presence in collaboration with the GoB against the ethnic groups and their legal rights. It also engages in the debates on the administrative power exercises by the GoB (as the main concern). Similarly, this chapter reviews some of the recent research work on CHT from the diverse literature of human rights and argument presented by academics, army, Paharis, Bengalis and human right activists. This chapter is divided into three sections where section one considers definitions and terms of major concepts. The second section, also the focal one, is the segment where I critically review academic attempts to address the issue of CHT from human rights perspectives and also identify different perceptions by different actor/stakeholders of the region. In the third section, this chapter offers a theoretical framework.

2.2. Section A: Concepts

Section A deals with the concepts as it is necessary to theorize or conceptualize related key concepts to make the research more admissible. The key concepts of this research are modernization, perception, institution, identity, vulnerability, human security and power and authority.

2.2.1. Modernization

Modernization became a buzzword after the end of the Second World War to rebuild war inflicted Europe and the Third World. The term modernization refers to a development theory that describes the process of modernization itself. A nation needs to follow certain preconditions to transform its traditional society to a modern and advance one (Rostow, 1960). It is the process of transmitting backward societies towards progressive alliances and demands the idea of homogenous development followed by the First World. The Paharis are considered less advanced and residents of traditional society compared to non-Paharis. Because of the ethnocentrism, the Pahari development is not the development which is expected by the superior one. It functions according to its methods which not applicable to coin the term 'development'.

2.2.2. Perception

Simply, perception is the ability and quality to see or become aware of any individual or organization through the senses (Cambridge Advance Learner's Dictionary, 2008). It is also the way of understanding or interpreting the organic or given meaning of that individual or organization. There is a belief that the presence of army in CHT is more helpful for the Pahari communities. This superficial state dominated narrative has developed over time. Practically the Paharis have different perceptions towards the army and other institutions at CHT. Perception of being in line with both of the stakeholders' interest is the affectation performed by the state machinery. The army perception on CHT suppresses the Pahari narratives irrespective of their collective resistance.

2.2.3. Institution

Commonly, the institution is the outcome of legal or customary practices (Ibid). It abides by the rules and regulations corrected and rescheduled by its superior authorities. The army as an institution follows particular law and functions according to its limits. Institution involves negotiations and exercises its legitimate power through law and order. Compare to other areas of Bangladesh, CHT has more institutional setup for example Regional Council, Hill District Council, the army and the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board (CHTDB). As an institution, the army exercises power in CHT. But the Paharis have low-level of confidence in army and other law enforcement institutions maintained by the GoB. From the peace accord implementation point of view, the army presence is considered negative. The people in CHT overlook their presence and army is considered as block hindering their natural citizenship rights.

2.2.4. Identity

This idea of a collaborative identity presents “an image of how movement activists challenge the dominant cultural order through the process of constructing their individual and collective identities where several third parties take part in the construction process” (Chowdhury 2006: 336). According to Mellucci:

Collective identity [links] personal change with external action, collective action functions as a new medium which illuminates the silent and arbitrary elements of the dominant codes as well as publicizes new alternatives (Mellucci in Haque 2015: 254).

It is clear that the identity politics in Bangladesh is emphasizing only on Bengali 'identity' and thus giving 'positional dominance' to majority Bengalis of the country over the Paharis in CHT (Yasmin 2014).

2.2.5. Human Security

Human security is not a new idea, but it has had a remarkable revival (Sen, 2002). It has become a central concern to many countries, institutions, social actors, intellectuals and researchers searching for innovative ways and means for tackling the non-military threats to peace and security. The concept of human security was first proposed in the 1994 Human Development Report by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Thus, since the publication of the Human Development

Report on new dimensions of human security, major efforts have been undertaken to refine the very concept of human security through research and expert meetings to put human security at the core of the political agenda, at both national and regional levels, to respond to the needs and concerns of the most vulnerable populations (Tabyshalieva, 2006). It is important to note that the efficacy of this concept lies in its deviation from classical notions of security that implies military power based on state actors to a more inclusive and multifaceted notion of security based on the individual. According to Amartya Sen (2002), human security can be understood as the protection and preservation of human “survival” and “daily life” (presumably against premature death, avoidable ill-health, the massive handicap of illiteracy etc.) and also the avoidance of various indignities that can shower injury, insult and contempt on our lives (related, for example, to destitution, penury, incarceration, exclusion, or - again - illiteracy or innumeracy). This is expressed in the UNDP report as follows:

For too long, security has been equated with threats to a country’s borders. For too long, nations have sought arms to protect their security. For most people today, a feeling of insecurity arises more from worries about daily life than from the dread of a cataclysmic world event. Job security, income security, health security, environmental security, security from crime, these are the emerging concerns of human security all over the world (HDR, 1994: 3)²³.

In order to provide security to both the Bengalis and Paharis in CHT, government has deployed the army over there to control the situation.

2.2.6. Vulnerability

The Vulnerability is the possibility of being affected by the adverse situation. The word has emerged as a central concept for understanding what it is about the condition of people that enables a hazard to become a disaster (Tapsell, et.al, 2010). To Robert Chambers:

The exposure to contingencies and stress is difficulty in coping with them. Vulnerability thus has two sides: an external side of risks, shocks and stress to which an individual or household is subject and an internal side which is defencelessness, meaning a lack of means to cope without damaging loss (Chambers, 1989).

The asset vulnerability framework is based on the work of Caroline O. N. Moser where vulnerability is being defined under some frameworks. According to her, it should be the policy to identify what the poor have (asset), rather than what they do not have to cope up with vulnerability (Moser, 1988:23 in Hoque & Haque 2013). She defines assets of poor in two groups: tangible assets such as labor and human capital and productive assets such as housing as well as intangible assets such as household relations. In her framework, the concept of vulnerability is being linked and schematized under five categories and then she ends in a conclusion that asset management may reduce the household vulnerability. Although the concept of vulnerability is often used as a synonym for poverty, it is not the same. Because poverty measures are generally fixed in time but poverty is

²³ <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-report-1994> (Last viewed on 28th February 2018).

essentially a static concept (Ibid). In contrast, vulnerability is more dynamic and better captures change processes as ‘people move in and out of poverty’ (Lipton & Maxwell, 1992:10).

It is true that poor people are usually among the most vulnerable group but not all vulnerable people are poor. It is a distinction which facilitates differentiation among lower-income populations. Again vulnerability does not always mean the disaster to poor rather vulnerability stands for the possibility to fall a victim to disaster. It has been found that hazard by itself is not a disaster unless there are vulnerable populations who do not have the capacity to absorb it and who are unable to cope with it (O’Neil et. al 2010 in Hoque & Haque 2013). In CHT, it is not uncommon that without any prior notice, GoB (e.g army, Bengalis) is grabbing the land of the Paharis and make them vulnerable in the process in terms of assets forced them into a vulnerable situation.

2.2.7. Power and Authority

Max Weber defines power as the ability to have one’s will to be carried out despite the resistance of others (Weber, 1978). Power is exercise through collective consensus and mostly legitimately elected authorities. Authority shapes common characteristics of using power over any sovereign territory and it is the part of establishing hegemonic and relationship with its stakeholders. As an important part and parcel of Bangladesh constitution, the army exercise power as a functional and legitimate authority. Its legal authority is considered just and appropriate by those over whom the power is exercised. The army, as an institute, exercises power over the Paharis because of its legal supremacy. To exercise its power, they use ideological and repressive state apparatuses developed by Luis Althusser (1970). Authority permits to use both of the apparatuses in the country like Bangladesh.

In social sciences, when we talk about ‘power’ and ‘authority’, we start with the classic definition given by famous sociologist Max Weber. According to Weber (1948), power is the “probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests” whereas authority is the “probability that a command with a given content will be obeyed by a given group of persons.” The key difference between power and authority is that power is basically linked with the personal features of individuals or groups while authority is linked with social positions and roles. To Weber, power is simply real relation whereas authority is a valid relation of domination and subjection. According to Weber, authority is legitimate power (Weber in John and Coleman 1997: 31-32) and so physical power to the possession of Bangladesh army has both the legal power and authority over the Paharis at CHT.

2.3. Section B: Review of Literature

Section B deals with the review of academic literature on CHT issue to identify the gap existed in the field of research. The literatures are discussed later with the idea of ethnic presence and daily lives of the ethnic groups in the CHT. Moreover, the presented literature focused on the issues available in the mainstream media. Then the researcher went beyond the narratives. To do this, a group of academic articles are considered in the context of CHT.

Yasmin initiated her discussion of nationalism in the study titled “The Tyranny of the Majority in Bangladesh: The Case of the Chittagong Hill Tracts” published by the Journal of Nationalism and Ethnic Politics in 2014. In the paper, she developed some consequences of Bangladeshi national ideology claiming that it has created binaries like the majority and minority status by positional political dominance over the decades. Based on the superficial idea of Bangladeshi identity, indigenous groups are treated as aliens in the country. Bangladesh, the country once fought and struggled vigilantly, has now created the situation for the “others”. The author argued that there is a tendency to suppress the tribal identity as the history of western colonialism followed earlier in the history. Looking into the idea of nation-building without considering homogeneity offers a big challenge for the tribal communities in Bangladesh. By mentioning the tyranny of the majority, the author pointed out “the dilemma that postcolonial countries create for themselves when they attempt to replicate a flawed conception of modern nationhood that leads them to attempt to force homogeneity on the entire population” (Yasmin, 2014). Furthermore, the author conceptualized the idea of the nation, Bangladeshi identity creation with little to no focus on ethnicity. She claimed that there is an attempt to replace place-based bonds with a homogenized national identity as opposed to its promises. As Bangladesh emerged as an independent nation in 1971, it developed some elusive ideas to demark its people on the banner of Bangladeshi nationalism. In the post-independence period of Bangladesh, tribal people have experienced many state-sponsored initiatives not only in the name of development but also based on the idea of majority versus minority. Here, the author categorized several incidences which are remarkable to uproot the entire tribal communities from their ancestral land. Once the peace accord was considered the primary focus while trying to transforming an indigenous society to a mainstream Bangladeshi society but sadly it has failed. The tension to create a Bangladeshi nationalistic society within the paradigm of similarity is a joke to the Pahari communities. Her study gives more historical narratives although it lacks ethnographic works. Secondary data used in the study is not fit to understand the day to day lives of the Pahari people. The study also needs to consider the role by the Pahari communities in the formation of Bangladesh. Both of the stakeholders, to some extent, are responsible for the existing crisis. The study is incomplete in ways as it gives us a history which is highly biased.

Panday and Jamil (2009) interestingly put forward the historicity and ongoing conflicts on the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) areas in their joint study titled “Conflict in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh: An Unimplemented Accord and Continued Violence” published in 2009 by Asian Survey. Their study showed that Bangladesh tried to impose a unitary and hegemonic conceptualization of national identity over the CHT region. To settle down the historical crisis, GoB negotiated with the CHT leaders and succeeded in forming an unanimously agreed peace accord in 1997. But the authors claimed that GoB did not implement the peace accord clauses. In the name of development projects, CHT areas were also occupied which has also been mentioned in the paper. There were severe tendencies to eliminate the Pahari people through not only the development projects but also the governmental decision to settle Bangladeshi commoners in the region. These practices were seen as “subjected to harassment by law enforcement agencies and government-sponsored armed groups of Bengali settlers, resulting in the systematic abuse of their human rights” (Panday and Jamil, 2009). The authors also categorized several points to highlight the causes of conflict in the CHT which has addressed their poor political negotiations among and within the groups. On the one hand, it is true that Bangladeshi identity had been imposed over their folk narratives and this part had been played by the political elites. On the other hand, it is also true that Bangladesh tried to settle by exercising its power which is not very much democratic. So, the authors

pointed out the peace accord as another symbol of negligence. Moreover, militarization causes invariable harm to the CTH people. Due to the presence of the military, Bengali settlers are becoming powerful and using muscle power. Authors suggested implementing the peace accord following a bottom-up approach. The study questioned certain development models and suggested their alternatives. But their critiques and suggestions are not beyond limitations. Bangladesh does not need to follow the European model. Europe itself is in dilemmas.

In his most notable study titled “The Chittagong Hill Tracts: A Case Study in the Political Economy of Creeping Genocide” published in 1999 by Third World Quarterly, Levene broke the silence on political economy of Bangladesh in the association to understanding genocide in the post-independence era to eliminate tribal people. Without considering the types of genocide, the author prioritized conflicts among the stakeholders to validate his analysis. One important issue is what the author claimed about problems in the CTH emphasizing that they can’t be seen as isolation ones. It, directly or indirectly, is correlated with the other actors associated with its demanded autonomy or direct rule over the region. By mentioning some international agencies, the author argued that GoB had committed genocide against the *Jummas* [Paharis]. But he did not clarify what types of genocide had happened in CHT. Internationally, there are ten types genocide found in the world. One aspect of this study is to link the political movement of Jummas with Indian counterpart as referred to ‘a foreign power’ which is created due to the development projects. What is popularly believed that India joined the local discourses later when they had to deal with the ‘development refugees’ caused by Kaptai Dam. The Author was right to point out that Jumma guerrillas were involved in destroying the political consolidation and they were responsible for victim creation in their local areas. The author divided his analysis into five sections. In the first part of his analysis, he discussed about the genocide comparing it to the Holocaust in Europe which is a vast generalization. Then he targeted guerrillas as the initiators of instability and then argued for genocide, even if it had happened, surely did not happen overnight. It is not clear whether he is claiming that GoB committed genocide against its CHT or genocide happened due to the clashes occurring from the fight against by the guerrillas supported by the local Pahari groups. He also claimed that the Pahari people are threatening for the existence of Bangladesh or vice versa. Then the author mentioned the study of Harff and Gurr, claiming the word ‘genocide’ coined by Raphael Lemkin, where they pointed out that “the necessary evidence for a prima facie case of genocide requires a sustained pattern of killing over a given period of weeks or months” (Levene 1999). He also raised some points here to determine genocidal process or genocidal tendencies only, not the whole of it. But he warned that militarization is the key aspect of sustaining illegal supports and patronize Bengali settlers over the region. In the second line, the author criticized the policies of GoB regarding CHT. Because of the pre-historical doctrine and the political participation of tribal groups, he made some general observations based on its development grid. CTH as an important geo-political zone cannot be treated as an isolation. Whatever did happen in the colonial period, it is not the same now. Moreover, the author recognized a crucial fact about the CHT’s treatment being the same as it was in the colonial period. But this statement may be considered true by an outsider. Once again, we have to remember that what had happened in the Pakistani era was not repeated in the post-independence Bangladesh. Today Rohingya communities in Myanmar are facing political discrimination because once they wanted to be a part of East Pakistan (present Bangladesh). Due to these historical dilemmas, this entire group now is under genocide threat. To oppose the claim of genocide by the author, it can be said that the Pahari people in CHT was not marked by the GoB for mass killing or ethnic cleansing. But the SB was responsible for collaborating with India and committed crimes against the Bengali settlers. Consequently, the

third pillar of his argument is related to Bangladesh and its weaknesses in CHT. Typically, this is an important area for natural resources. But the problem is that, according to the author, Bangladesh took this entire part to expand its market economy. To establish economic bases, GoB, by using the military, maintained structural violence in the territory. This happened due to the factional and extremely fractious party politics, a lack of democracy, lawlessness and endemic violence, governments which have repeatedly polluted their office through corruption and nepotism, bloody coups and, above all, between 1975 and 1989, dictatorial military rule, first under General Zia and then, after his assassination, under General Ershad (Levene 1999). But the situation changed after 1990. In the 1990s, The GoB negotiated, agreed and signed the peace accord but its clauses are not met yet. Again, military supervision is there. Coming to the fourth section, the author mentioned the role of the Western development agencies and their aid. In this section, author was not much critical. We need to remember that in the contemporary world, international development is the root of socio-economic and political unrest. In the name of development, donor agencies trigger the political mobilization regardless of its impact on an independent country. In the final section, the author took account of the Paharis. The statement made by Sheikh Mujib and the Bengali settlement done by President Zia are considered as the intentions to make Paharis the minority in their own land. As the Pahari people denied the proceedings, they formed regular guerrilla unit and started to march against local administration. Later, the term genocide is discussed in the form of atrocities faced by the Pahari communities. Yes, again, the author depended on the secondary data which insufficient to claim valid statement in favour of the Pahari communities or against Bangladeshi counterpart. The study has some serious problems regarding the authenticity of the sources. It is also not clear whether the author proposed the GoB committed genocide against the Paharis or Pahari guerrillas initiated the process. How author has reached the decision is not properly clarified. Besides, the author did not mention what kind of nationalism was in practice. To understand political mobilization, the issue of nationalism needs to be considered and both the stakeholders need to be presented in the entire discussion.

Binary opposition is an important distinction to understand cultural differences of the people. It helps to categorize people according to their existing race, colour, caste, religion, gender, and ethnic identity. Uddin (2010) attempted to use binary opposition as an integral instrument to separate upland people from lowland used by the British Empire, then Pakistani rulers and later by the Bangladesh and its government. Three particular forms of era used Pahari identity to marginalize the Paharis from the entire population. They used different terms over the period of time. The only idea was to separate them from Bangladeshi low land people. It is essential for the rulers to implement certain policies which are practically beneficial for them. The Author devoted much of the study discussing the issue where it is found that they (Pahari) are distinct from Bengalis in terms of socio-cultural organizations, politico-economic settings and ethnic background (Uddin 2010). But one important reminder for us is that Pahari people were the earliest to migrate to the CHT from the neighbouring regions of Arakan in Myanmar and Tripura in India. The post-independence Bangladesh emphasized on forming a homogenous nation-state. The idea is quite problematic. Homogenous identity is another category of marginalizing Pahari people and state policies are formulated on the basis of it. These categories are merely inventions, not arising from the history. Government needs this category to divide and establish supremacy. To impose the homogenous nationalist idea, Bangladesh deployed military forces, made exploitative trade treaty and finally, governed like a direct colonizer. There was an end of British Imperial rule, but the Paharis' status remained unchanged due to their support towards India during the partition. The display, hoisting

Indian flag in Rangamati, Burmese national flag in Bandarban, made them to go maltreated by the Pakistani military rule. To some extent, it is apparent that the Pahari people are also responsible for their present status. Then, Bangladesh also used the pre-independence history to marginalize them once again. There was valid reason for tagging them as separatists during the war of independence. GoB took advantages of it. In the name of development, GoB following the same path what was paved in the Pakistani period. Presently, the Kaptai Dam is treated as the development disaster for Bangladesh. But the ultimate losers are the Pahari people. The final stage has been set in the contemporary period where the Pahari people are constitutionally tagged as *Upajatee* from their indigenous *Jatee* status. They are the people who are “wild, primitive and preserving exotic culture” (Uddin 2010). This is done when Bangladeshi nationalism submerged with other ethnic identities. Author has claimed that he has done ethnographic study but there are serious gaps among the interpretations. He merely criticizes the whole play without mentioning any single source available at the primary level. The author failed to mention the direct role of the Pahari people while he claimed that they hoisted Indian and Burmese flag in Rangamati and Bandarban. The author needs to be asked why a particular community stages this type of drama when they are not belonging to Islam or Bangladeshi culture. Why then Bangladesh force them to be a part of it? More explanation is required.

“The Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord in Bangladesh: An Overview” is an important study conducted by Ahmmed et al. published in 2013 by Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences. This paper discussed a lot of issues on peace accord signed in 1997 between the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) and the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS). Authors tried to figure out the unimplemented part of the peace accord by highlighting that this is not only responsible for the instability of the CHT region but also threat to the national security. It is said that peace accord, for its partial implementation, is responsible for the formation of United People’s Democratic Front (UPDF) and now they are aiming for full autonomy. In the introductory part of this paper, authors mentioned that demand for power-sharing leads to a demand for autonomy which is true indeed. When faced with the same type of situation, Bangladesh did follow this path asking for full autonomy. But what they have failed to mention is that Bangladesh did not impose colonial rule on CHT. The entire CHT region has remained unchanged in terms of economic exploitation, infrastructural development and so on. What did happen in the earlier period, it was caused by the guerrilla war taking place in the early 1970s to 1990s. Moreover, the people of CHT were not welcomed in Bangladesh, perhaps for their appeared solidarity with India and Myanmar. Tension arose from the particular incident when they lost their customary rule over the local administration of the region. What is problematic in the paper is that the independence of Bangladesh in 1971 is described as a “curse for the Jumma people”. This is merely a stereotyped analysis. There is no provision to think that the Jumma communities were so much happy and followed rules and regulations ordered by the preceded authorities. The authors, instead of concentrating on the real facts, wrote on the basis of emotion. As such their analysis is not constructive enough. One more aspect of the study is that it tries to convey that development projects were seen as detrimental for the entire community because it occupied lands. According to their statements, the GoB failed to implement its conditions of the peace accord. As Bangladesh is a unitary state, it cannot allow the matters which are unconstitutional in nature. But the authors focused on the implementation part only. Militarization is bad for the CTH area but the fact that UPDF is also doing criminal offenses is left ignored by the authors. Finally, the authors argued for the full implementation the peace accord and also warned the GoB that it needs to fulfil the promises.

Benedict Anderson used the term “print capitalism” in his book titled “Imagined Communities” published in 1983. He was interested to find out and understand how this particular mode of production is very influential for the rise of nationalism. In his paper, “Politics and Restrain: The Media and the Chittagong Hill Tracts” published by University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh and Intellect Books in 2014, Ahmed goes back to the importance of media both printing and electronic in nature and its wide spread use to critically understand the politics and the problems of CHT. From the first instance, it is true that media helps to construct particular discourse which is contestable and can be nullified too. Media once used to, and presently does too; find “others” within the known boundaries. It had less accessibility and was forced to restrain its publicity within the framework. This had happened due to the struggle for Bengali Nationalism and the emancipation of the Muslims referred by the work of Van Schendel. The author over emphasized on this particular reference. He did not search for alternatives as well. The author argued that GoB and its agencies are using media to shape negative public opinion against the indigenous communities. It has also mentioned that there was a tendency to assimilate them into the Bengali culture. Based on the nationalistic idea, media is used selectively and purposively to distort the real problems for the indigenous people. There is a binary opposition to treat the CHT communities differently from the low-land people. The only transparent blame which is still available against them is the divided loyalties among them. Development projects were treated as barriers for the entire community and also government was accused of looking for benefits through them. History changed when Kaptai Dam connected the Pahari people to India and Myanmar. Both of the countries, especially Myanmar, claimed that Bengali people settled inside their country. But media represented nothing happening in the region. Earlier Bangladesh offered them to march with the mainstream societies but the 15th amendment of the Constitution in June 2011, threw the entire indigenous community in an identity crisis. Over the decade indigenous communities faced tremendous state-sponsored military rule which was ultimately responsible for large-scale massacres. The mainstream media did not publish authentic news. Moreover, some national dailies also tried to influence common folks by spreading emotional and biased news and both of the positions are harmful. The author tried to focus on these issues. Most important of his discussion is that BAL and BNP played very diplomatic roles and used their tactics to manage international audience and donor agencies. After certain period, Bangladesh refused their identity but earlier they signed a treaty with them. By refusing their identity, the GoB has also identified their own treaty as a charade for the managing the situations. The author, while writing this paper, mostly depended on the secondary sources, especially local and international news articles. He did not complete ethnographic work. That is why voices from government officials and military personnel are absent. However, his initial motives are also not clear. At the end of the day, he also became a part of the polarized world.

Rashiduzzaman’s analytical paper titled “Bangladesh’s Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord: Institutional Features and Strategic Concerns” was published by Asian Survey in 1998. This particular paper came after the immediate result of the CHT peace accord between the GoB and the PCJSS. Initially, the peace accord was the talk of the country in terms of rejection and acceptance due to the non-participation by the political parties in opposition. That is why author has claimed that the peace accord has failed to create the national consensus desired by the Bangladesh political leadership. According to the author, this is the inception of sacrificing country’s sovereignty that gave more priorities to CTH interest because the GoB did not follow the larger public interest. Opposition political parties claimed that the GoB was typically nurturing disputes which are not favourable for the Bengali settlers in CHT. The author also gave credit to the GoB to set an example

for India and Sri Lanka where these two countries were facing similar kinds of insurgencies. At the same time, many issues arise when the GoB bypasses national and international agencies. The main opposition, BNP treated peace accord as the “black pact” because of the larger political imbalance. Particularly, the GoB tried to establish a new form of institutional and administrative set up in the CHT region which was unconstitutional and also marked as harmful for the unitary governmental system. Based on the given power, CHT region was divided among the administrative sectors and some of the smaller tribes complained that the treaty was unfavourable for them. This was called the new institutions for CHT and the devolution of administrative powers in the CHT occurred. Although the peace accord brings change in the entire administrative system, it will also be the responsible for the changes in political forces in the future. The author argued for the regional stability where “the government of Bangladesh needs an institutional mechanism for early warning and feedback to reconcile differences both among communities and between the tribal and nontribal residents of the region” (Rashiduzzaman, 1998).

The published work titled “Field Experience from the Multi-ethnic Setting of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh” by Asian Ethnicity in 2013 is an outstanding outcome presented by Muhammad Ala Uddin. This study is essential and important to know the field temperature while doing an ethnographic study within the contested and conflict zones- in the home and abroad. Being an ethnographer, a researcher will be treated neither the part of the studying communities nor the attached situation of the communities. There is another option to treat the researcher as insider or outsider. This natural binary will always be there. The author first tried to give us a snapshot of CHT and its various Pahari communities along with their socio-economic status. In a single sentence, he, mentioning Tridiv Roy, claimed that the Pahari people have a great affinity and kinship with the people of northern India, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, Burma, and Thailand. This particular statement hinders the identity crisis faced by the Pahari people whereas they demand for the aboriginals’ status in the country. But Uddin was much interested to look at the barriers he faced during his field visits. In those days, he observed both the emergency not only within the whole country but also the unofficial emergency created by the massive deployment of military forces due to the arms conflict among the Pahari communities organized by the JSS, the Bengali settlers and the Bangladesh military officials. Finally, long-term arms conflict ended when the peace accord was signed. In his whole paper, the author played crucial role trying to understand the changes in daily life of the Pahari people due to the Bengali settlement in the region. It is about the “details” of the people. To do this, he used major anthropological research techniques. These techniques are described thematically in the paper. But he avoided local administration, such as army officials, government bodies and so forth. Due to these absentees, there is a possibility of data mixture. He used his local friends or students living in the region. He received tremendous help from them which is not possible for an ordinary research. It is difficult to bypass the military officials deployed in the region to maintain securities not only for the Pahari people but also for the outsiders. Although he faced difficulties in the field while conducting interviews with women and Bengali settlers, he claimed mixed idea of *adivasi* with local Bengali women. Moreover, he claimed that Bangla became common language (lingua franca) for the Pahari people which is merely over generalization. As CHT is considered as the “virgin field for anthropological investigation”, we need to give more attention to address its cultural approaches.

In her paper titled “Pushed to the Margins: Adivasi Peoples in Bangladesh and the Case of Kalpana Chakma” published by Contemporary South Asian in 1998, Lamia Karim raised critiques on post-

colonial state formation of Bangladesh. She broke the silence and declared state-sponsored narratives dominated by its regulatory mechanism responsible for keeping the *adivasi* as the marginalized people. There was a tendency to produce Bangladeshi myth about origins which are responsible for marginalization in the socio-economic and the political frontiers. The author argued that Bangladesh as a nation-state coheres at the expense of the *adivasi* by producing the *adivasi* as a symbol of the willed ignorance (Karim 1998). Bangladesh replaced *adivasi* identity at the beginning of its journey as an independent state. The hill people faced tremendous threat of losing cultural identity and territorial rights. They were the targets of invented nationalistic awareness. Before the peace accord signed between the GoB and the SB, the hill people were involved in guerrilla warfare against the Bangladeshi state. At one point, the author argued that the economic exploitation was the real politics of the region and then the development projects hampered the entire geopolitical situation. But the abduction of Kalpana Chakma, due to the various allegations, was documented as the violation of human rights in the Hill Tracts by the state. This particular incident played a significant role in making the entire community conscious about the reality. The fundamental argument of her paper criticized the total ignorance of their presence in the age of nationalistic imagination. It was possible due to the state reinvented narratives about the *adivasi* and coerced the *adivasi* into accepting the will of the state. The author had intended to link Bangladeshi state ideology with its practices on the Hill Tracts people. According to her findings, the colonial legacy is connected with the post-colonial politics of Bangladesh. Colonial legacy is applied while Bangladesh is becoming a new form of colonial superpower for them. Previous historical narratives of the hill people now are used against state-formation of Bangladesh. The colonial rulers once effectively reduced the political abilities of the hill people. The incident of abducting Kalpana Chakma is telling the use of the same technique. It was an indication of considering the populous ethnic community as a minority overnight. On the other hand, Bangladesh imposed Bengali identities to establish a uni-cultural and uni-linguistic nation-state. Bangladeshi nationalism crossed its limit. It is trying to grasp other communities by its state-sponsored and invented politics. Bangladesh did not sign the 1994 UN Charter for Indigenous Peoples. It tries to bypass their legal status and promotes Bangladeshi nationalism. So the missing of Kalpana Chakma is considered as a symbol of willed ignorance. To some extent, her analysis seems neutral. At the same time, we need to ask why she addressed Kalpana Chakma only. SB also abducted many civilians, especially Bengali settlers. The abduction of Bengali settlers is bypassed in the study. The author's position also contradicts the ground realities. Most importantly, there is no proving that she talked with the primary stakeholders of the Hill Tract region. Although her study widens liberal thoughts, her statements have little validity from the ethnographic perspective.

From the review of literatures, we can see that most of the authors focused on conflict from political and identical perspectives where voices of army are absent. This research incorporates their voices along with the investigative formation of *love* and *hate* relation in CHT region. These are associated with the idea of stakeholders' perception and their strategic existence against the demand of living in the CHT by the Pahari people. Interestingly, in every article, the militarization of CTH is presented as the alien formation. Their importance in the area is neglected. At the same time, ethnic armed forces, led by SB, are becoming powerful in the region. These counter narratives are absent here. To balance, this research is focusing on listening from the army officials.

2.4. Section C: Theoretical Framework

Section C deals with theoretical framework of the research. The entire theoretical framework is developed to connect with the idea of Sustainable Development (SD). As the core development issue, SD is linked with the major stakeholders associated with modernization process of CHT. It has inclusion of the institutions, like army and government setup. Based on the ethnic identity, multiple analyses can be drawn from this theoretical framework. From one point, the Bangladesh Army has its own set of analysis which is absent here. On the other hand, development agents are in the threshold. They are the part of ethnic solidarity and development. As the same time, they are beneficiaries of the military conflict in the region.

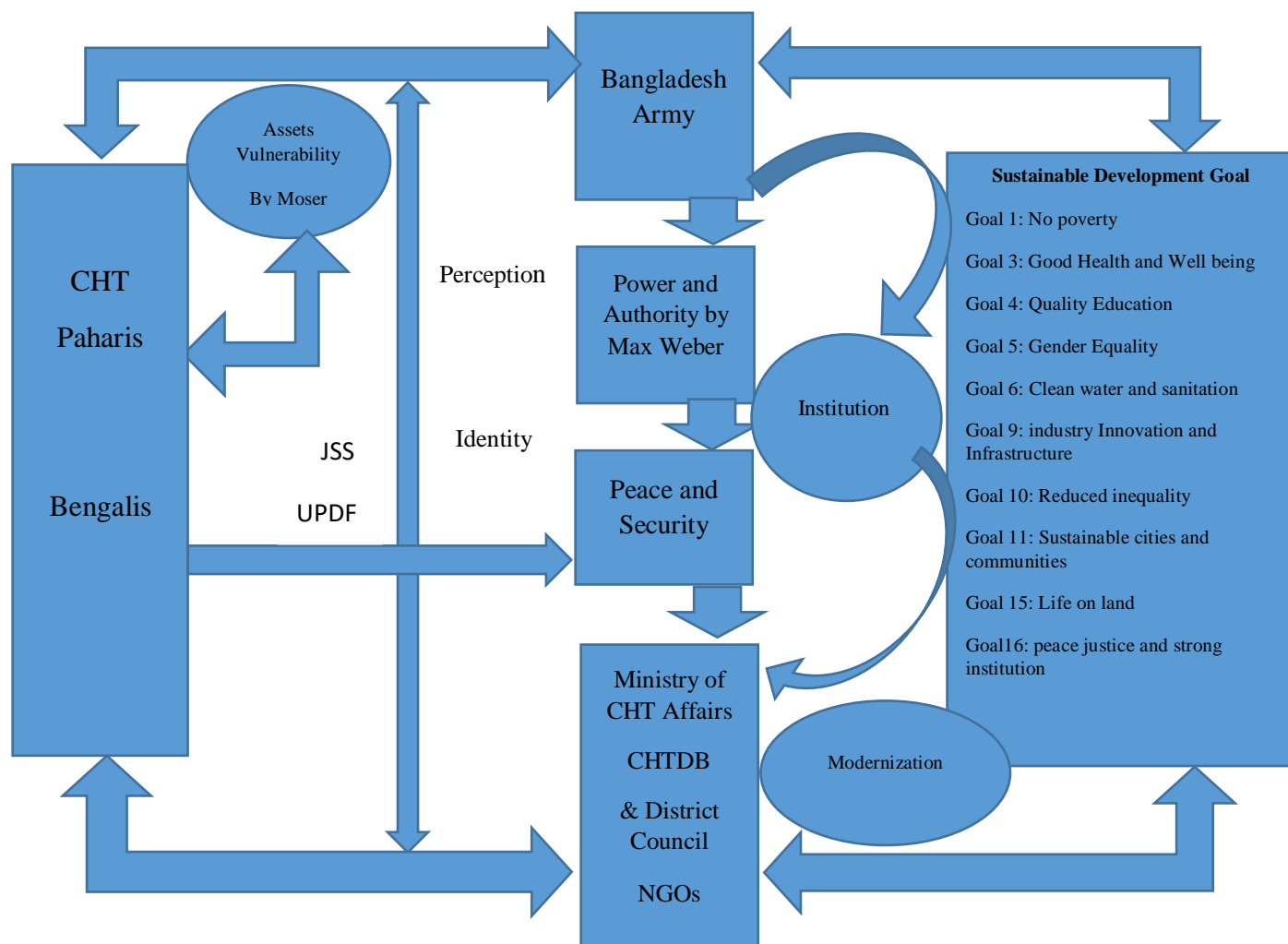


Figure: Theoretical Framework

The purpose of the research is to find out the formation of fractured, ambiguous relationship among the Bengalis, Paharis, Civil and Military administration which is creating major impediments and so hindering stable peace and security as well as sustainable development in CHT. Initially the causes behind fractured perceptions have been identified and then the gaps will be identified and

thus the research will carry out on strategies to overcome this conflict and feasibility of having unified efforts by the Paharis, Bengali, civil and military stakeholders for SD of CHT. Another intention of the research is to guide the GoB intervention strategically to ensure that the rights of the people are ensured. Precisely, the army presence in CHT is required. It is necessary to play protective role by the army for both the Pahari and Bengali settlers when SB is becoming aggressive and violating human rights. To understand the existing paradigm of CHT, the research focuses on interplay with the idea of SD. Significantly, multiple actors are needed to mitigate the problems.

2.5. Conclusion

Militarization in CHT is more of a state intervention. It maintains status quo and constructs the idea of invented Bangladeshi nationalism by offsetting historical existence of the ethnic communities in the region. It nurtures contested debate and pursue the mantra of development. State is implementing top-down development approach due to the ethnocentric superiority in the socio-economic and political domain. Bangladesh Army is at the centre of this issue. They are the part and parcel not only because of the peace accord but also for the bureaucratic mission fulfilled by the GoB. Researches on these issues are conducted partially without consulting army officials earlier that resulted in the absence of a crucial stakeholder to understand the situation. In this research, the main intention is to listen to them. Their involvement is crucial to making this research more vibrant and sound. The next chapter will focus on stakeholder analysis based on the available authentic data collected from the field.

Chapter Three

Unveiling Reality: Different Voices, Different Perceptions

3.1. Introduction

This chapter deals with this complex task to understand the real relationships among various stakeholders of CHT. Dealing with peoples' mind and perceptions is a complex task. This chapter consists of four sections. Section A deals with the voices and perceptions of the Bengalis in CHT who settled there. Section B deals with the voices of the Paharis and Section C covers the voices of Bangladesh Army who have worked experience in the region. Section D is based on the voices of the Pahari Political Leader, Academic and Security Experts. This chapter basically unveils the perceptions by different stakeholders towards the army and their stay in CHT region.

Section A: Perceptions of the Bengalis

Since British rulers declared CHT as an excluded area, few Bengalis lived in the area. But over the period of time, with State sponsored scheme, the number of Bengalis has increased. Thus the ratio between Bengalis and Paharis has changed significantly and now the numbers are close to being equal. In the persisting circumstances, perception of this stakeholder is vital.

3.1.1. Bengalis' Fear Factor in CHT

*If the army leaves this place, there will be no Bengali and you will not get any one for case study for your research...*²⁴

The quote stated above reveals the fear and insecurity of the Bengalis in the CHT region. In CHT, even after 20 years of the peace treaty, the Bengalis are living in a 'State of Fear'. In order to understand 'Fear' in the context of CHT, a couple of questions have raised- What is the nature of fear and panic that is lingering among the Bengalis in CHT? And what is at stake for the Bengalis who live in a prolonged state of fear in CHT? Fear is such a psychological aspect of human life which destabilizes our social relations and spawns mistrust within families, between neighbors and friends too. It splits communities through doubt and anxieties and spreads rumors and so it becomes quite difficult for one to be sure about the nature of the person s/he is interacting with. Thus "Fear, the arbiter of power-in visible, indeterminate, and silent" (Green 1994). The existence

²⁴ Expressed by Rahim, Author's interview, October 2017.

of fear challenges one's self-confidence in understanding the world properly. As Brecht noted, "Fear rules not only those who are ruled but the rulers too" (1976:29-297). In a similar vein, Albert Camus (1955) mentioned that "from an examination of the shifts between the normal and the emergency, between the tragic and the everyday emerges the paradoxes and contradictions that bring in sharp relief how the absurd (in this case, terror) works" (Camus in Green 1994: 228). According to Bengali respondent Jamal:

The Paharis consider the presence of the army a problem whereas the Bengalis, who settled here, consider that without army presence, they are not secured at all. The absence of army will increase the toll collection and other brutal activities by the Pahari terrorist groups like UPDF/JSS. After the withdrawal of army camps, there were cases of kidnapping of Bengalis by the members of Pahari organizations. If there is no army, a serious crisis may occur because the police force will not be able to tackle the situation. In Khagrachari district, the Bengalis organized procession and human chain so that the army forces are retained there. In those areas, the Bengalis felt so insecure that they chanted slogan – 'the Bengalis would leave the area first and only then the army can be withdrawn'. A few days back, the Pahari terrorists kidnapped three Bengali cattle barons and their dead bodies were found slaughtered at Ali Kadam area. Subsequently, the tension among the Bengalis and the Pahari groups increased and as a result, the Bengalis put fire on the houses of the Paharis of that locality. A case was filed at the local police station and the investigation is still going on. The situation is so bad that, in these areas, there are hostels where the Pahari students live in but Muslim students are not allowed. After that incident, the local administration had posted police forces on a 24-hour alert to avoid any unwanted occurrence. Still, the Bengali businessmen are afraid to go to remote areas of CHT because the Paharis may kidnap them and snatch their money. In fear of death, trade [Banana, tobacco, cow etc.] between the Paharis and Bengalis has reduced. During the time of the construction of Thanchi road, a Bengali labor was kidnapped and the army had to pay ransom to rescue that labor alive (Author's interview, October 2017).²⁵

Rahim, another Bengali, opines thus:

The day the army will leave this place, the situation of this area will be worse than that of the people who fled from Myanmar. The real fact is that local administration is not capable enough to give shelter or security to the Bengalis in CHT (Author's interview, October 2017).

In a similar vein, Ranjan, a Bengali businessman, states:

In order to run business, we have to face problems. If I do any construction work, I will get a phone call from the members of UPDF/ JSS. This is a very common and must-follow formality that I have to give them 10% toll. Those who would deny paying, would face problems by UPDF/JSS. I have to pay them with a smile on my face and I have accepted this (Author's interview, October 2017).

Abdul expresses that:

If you are going to build a new house, want to cultivate tobacco, pineapple or any other fruit and forestation, you have to pay toll to these organizations. If you don't pay toll, they will cut your plants. If you go to deep forest to cut timber and bamboos, you also have to

²⁵ 27th January 2018, four abducted tobacco farmers were rescued by security force from Naikhanchori of Bandarban District. It is significant to mention here that local militants demanded 8 lac BDT for these farmers (The Daily Kalerkantho, 27th January 2018).

pay toll. When we built our houses, we had to pay toll to JSS (Author's interview, October 2017).

Lack of security regarding both life and property, unlawful economic demands, the presence of subversive political parties, mistrust among ethnic groups and discrimination against the Paharis have created an atmosphere of fear that infuses everyday life in CHT. The Bengalis in CHT are subject to lack of security and serious absence of state protection (Choudhury & Hussain in Choudhury ed. 2017: 127-28). It is significant to mention here that any minor incident from the mentioned case studies has the potential to escalate into a large-scale conflict and a minor event may fuel more conflicts as new actors get involved. Moreover, the Pahari people are now divided in terms of what to demand of the government and how to view the process of accord implementation (Choudhury, Islam & Alam in Choudhury ed. 2017:32-33).

3.1.2. Fractured Relationship between the Bengalis and Paharis

Life in CHT is ethnically polarized and the relation between the Paharis and Bengalis can be addressed as 'fractured relationship' (Choudhury & Hussain in Choudhury ed. 2017: 127). Similarly, Amena Mohsin has stated, "Bengali-Pahari relationship was historically marked by ambiguity and suspicion" (2002: 28). This ambiguity and suspicion was fueled by our political leaders. Just after the peace agreement between the then Government Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina and the Shanti Bahini Chief, Shantu Larma, Leader of the opposition, Begum Khaleda Zia addressed the incident as breaking up of the nation (Karim 2007). Within this controversial situation, it is interesting that some respondents have conveyed that both the Bengalis and Paharis have a cordial relationship. According to Sima:

My neighbors are the Marmas and Tripuras and our relationship with them is so harmonious that we exchange foods regularly (Author's interview, October 2017).

Another female respondent has disclosed the same fact. According to Irene:

I was born in Bandarban. I have completed my graduation from Bandarban Government College. Personally, I think that the Paharis are good and simple. They are better than the Bengalis. The mentality of Paharis is not complex. They are not hypocrites like Bengalis (Author's interview, October 2017).

Interestingly, the Bengalis perceive the Paharis as people with good mentality, simplicity and trustworthy more than their own Bengali community people. Ranjan Das opines thus:

I have been living in the Bandarban district since 1987. Here, both the Bengalis and Paharis are living in harmony and hospitality. Despite the existence of few small problems, we are leading our life happily. We have cordial relationship with our elected representative, member of the parliament, Mr. Beer Bahadur [He is in charge of Ministry of CHT Affairs as State Minister]. The harmony between the Paharis and Bengalis are so much that I have employed a Pahari manager for my construction [contractor] business. In terms of a loans, we trust more on Paharis than Bengalis (Author's, interview October 2017).

Rahim, a Bengali respondent, also supports Ranjan's opinion and added that:

To me, the relationship between the Paharis and Bengalis are good compared to the relationship among Bengalis in CHT because the mentality of Paharis is good and cordial (Author's interview, October 2017).

Although both the Bengali fe/male respondents' perceptions are, in general, positive towards the Paharis, the same Bengalis, surprisingly fight with the Paharis and fire their houses which gives them a logic in favor of the presence of army is a 'must' in CHT. Abdul states that:

There is a cordial relationship among the local Bengalis and Paharis. Still, there are some bad incidents happening. It is my personal opinion that Hill Organizations like JSS and UPDF want such a situation so that there will be no peace in this region (Author's interview, October 2017).

3.1.3. Pahari Organizations as 'Greedy Spoilers'

According to Stedman, 'spoilers' are those "leaders and parties who believe that peace emerging from negotiations threatens their power and interests and use violence to undermine attempts to achieve peace" (1997:5). Additionally, Newman and Richmond define spoilers as "activities of any actor that are opposed to peaceful settlement for whatever reason. These actors are either within or (usually) outside the 'peace process' and use violence or other means to disrupt the process in pursuit of their own goals. Parties those join a peace process but suddenly withdraw and obstruct or threaten to obstruct the process may also be termed spoilers" (2006: 102). It is evident that toll collection by the Pahari Organizations has intensified and poses a threat to peace and stability. They collect toll from the local businessman, traders, commercial plantation projects, hotels, transport sector, farmers and the inhabitants of CHT. Due to the digital facilities, toll collection through mobile banking such as 'Bkash' has added a new dimension. Many top Pahari leaders developed massive earnings and assets being beneficiaries of these toll collection and Stedman termed them as 'Greedy Spoilers' (1997: 10-11). Abdul opines that:

It is noticeable that the incidents of toll have recently increased so rapidly. It is rare that we will get help from local administration if JSS or UPDF damages gardens owned by the Bengalis. Within last three years, eight Bengalis were killed and their motor cycles had been snatched (Author's interview, October 2017).

Sima expresses that:

The Pahari organizations are so greedy that they want to grab everything. If Bengalis do not pay toll, the Paharis will attack them. My husband is running timber business. He has not faced any problem of such kind but many friends of my husband faced this problem. If you go to the remote areas, UPDF/JSS will take you hostage and once you pay, only then they may release you and this is why I always remain anxious about my husband (Author's interview, October 2017).

According to Nasim:

The hill terrorists impose monthly subscription on the businessmen. The amount of this subscription is so high that it becomes impossible for the middle class businessmen to pay.

If anyone is incapable of paying the subscription, the terrorists threaten him of abduction and killing. Thus the businessmen are compelled to close their businesses. As a citizen of an independent and developing country, everyone has the equal right to continue his business. The hill terrorists threaten not only the businessmen but also the government and NGOs officials (Author's interview, October 2017).

Bengalis have not only negative perceptions on brutal activities by the Pahari organizations but also consider their formal political participation with mistrust. According to Abdul:

In CHT, the Bengalis are divided into two groups: followers of both Bangladesh Awami League (BAL) and Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP). Before 1996, majority of the Paharis usually cast their votes to BAL. During the National Election in 2001, UPDF successfully divided this vote bank. During the election, UPDF chief, Prosit Bikash Khisa earned significant number of votes from Rangamati and Khagrachari district. Since then, they are also getting votes from the Paharis. During the National Election in 2014, UPDF and JSS made a deal and based on that, at Rangamati and Khagrachari, JSS and UPDF candidates participated in election respectively. It is significant to mention that JSS candidates at Rangamati won the election. In addition to that, during local and national elections, JSS and UPDF select candidates and inhabitants are forced to cast their votes to their nominated candidates. At local level elections, JSS/UPDF nominated candidates usually have no opponent. ...Among all the Paharis, the Chakma community is the most educated and the members of the Chakma community comprise half of the total Pahari population. These Chakmas are enjoying 90 percent quota facilities in government services. In the local political parties like JSS, UPDF and JSS [reform], the Chakmas are holding the leadership position too (Author's interview, October 2017).

In one month, it is the third such killing of United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) leader Mithun Chakma was shot dead in Khagrachari's Sluice Gate area at 3rd January 2018. His party blamed the operatives of newly formed UPDF (Democratic) for the murder. It is significant to mention here that, Mithun, also a former president of Greater Chittagong Hill Tracts Hill Students' Council, was returning home from Khagrachari District Court. In a statement, Central General Secretary of UPDF, Ravi Shankar Chakma blamed the UPDF (Democratic) for the killing. He issued a statement that the 'Mukhosh Bahini' (Musk Force) in Khagrachari killed Mithun²⁶.

Earlier, on December 16, 2017, Anol Bikash Chakma alias Pluto Chakma, 42, a resident of Kawkhali upazila in Rangamati and a leader of Bandukbhanga union UPDF, was shot dead. Another UPDF leader, Anoti Ranjan Chakma, was shot dead in Bagaichhori area of Naniar char upazila in Rangamati on December 5, 2017 (The Daily Star, ProthomAlo and Daily Ittefaq, 4th January 2018).

²⁶ Some leaders and activists left UPDF on 15th November 2017, UPDF (Democratic) announced the formation of a new party. Tapan Jyoti Chakma was the leader of the new party. Mithun himself was accused in many pending cases of murder, kidnapping and extortion.

From the above incidents, clear adverse perceptions and wrath uttered by the Bengalis in CHT can be witnessed. Levene (2009:361) features SB insurgency often ending in mass violence against whole villages and in some cases, even in sexual violence and disappearance of civilians. During this crisis, in order to get institutional help in conflict resolution, the army played the vital role because police as well as other security institutions suffered from lack of confidence because of their lack of efficiency and effectiveness (Choudhury, Islam & Alam in Choudhury ed. 2017: 100-103).

3.1.4. Perceptions on NGOs and Western Interest as a ‘Spoilers’

Western countries especially the USA, UK and North European countries and their funded NGOs have shown keen interest in CHT and are running so many projects for sustainable peace and development. The reserves of energy (gas and oil) and geopolitical location of the region have given CHT international focus. In addition to that the GoB and NGOs are giving special advantages to the Paharis for their well-being. Ranjan Das states:

The Paharis are getting more advantages and support compared to the Bengalis from the army. In addition to that, all the projects by CHTDB, UNDP, CARE and others are only for the development and empowerment of the Paharis, not for the Bengalis (Author’s interview, October 2017).

There are educated young Bengalis who are frustrated and consider themselves deprived as the Paharis are given more opportunity by both the GoB and NGOs. Irene opines:

During recruitment in any job, district council prefers local people [Paharis]. A few days back, there was an incident of fight regarding the recruitment of primary school teachers. The Bengali candidates came to know from district council that Paharis would get preference which made the Bengalis angry. ...CHTDB organizes computer training workshops where the Paharis get priority. In addition to that the Paharis get stipend/scholarship facilities for education at primary and secondary school level, whereas, we are always deprived of these facilities (Author’s interview, October 2017).

In a similar vein, Rahim’s voice reflects clear anger and frustration:

In *Zilla porishad* forms, it is asked whether I am a ‘tribal’ or not. My qualifications are ten times more than that of a Pahari but a Pahari will get the preference for the job. Isn’t it discrimination? In this case, the Paharis will remain silent (Author’s interview, October 2017).

The Bengali respondents believed that economic inequality exists in most of the cases. There is conventional notion in the conflict studies that economic discrimination may offer the basis of frustration which eventually leads to conflict (Choudhury, Islam & Alam in Choudhury ed. 2017: 111). In these circumstances, the Bengalis are concerned about their future in the CHT and they sometimes consider themselves second class citizens in their own country and this initiated ‘Somo Adhikar Andolon (SAA)- Equal Rights Movement’.

There is evident that the GoB has cancelled registration of some national and donor-based NGOs because they were working to transform significant number of Paharis into Christians (Acharjee 2011). Accordingly, there are also some NGOs which are organized by the Chakma Raja, followers of JSS Mro and other communities. These NGOs obtain foremost endowment from donors as they represent the Paharis community. NGOs like World Vision were involved in the process of evangelization. The biased and one-sided aids/loans of these NGOs created negative perceptions of Bengalis in CHT.

In 2011, there was a ministerial meeting with several ministries along with military and intelligence that was focused on the interest of foreign journalists and foreign-funded NGOs. In the meeting, speakers had pointed out that these two groups have special agenda on CHT to turn it into another East Timor or Southern Sudan (Ahmed 2014). BNP once demanded ban on EU and NGO activities in the CHT and also asked the GoB to ban the International CHT Commission for working with them. Besides, foreign patrons, political elites, political allies and even multinational corporations and some other actors are also profiteering from ongoing conflict (Haque 2015: 34).

3.1.5. Restriction VS Openness for Modernization

During the colonial era from 1860-1900, migration of the Bengalis into the CHT area was not restricted/ prohibited but in 1900, the British rulers considered that the Bengalis influence over these areas must be restricted and so a set of rules were introduced in 1900. This was known as 1900 Regulations (also called CHT Manual) to administer the Hill Tracts²⁷ (Roy in Karim 2007). The key feature of the Regulations was that migration from plain to CHT was almost prohibited. After the formation of Pakistan (East and West), in 1960, the State Government of East Pakistan had decided to open up CHT area for tourism and modernization and finally, in 1964, it was fully opened for the Bengalis and its modernization activities (Karim 2007). According to Rahim:

There is a place named ‘Melenga Para’ where the Paharis were not used to wear any dress. It was Bangladesh army who helped these communities and taught them how to wear dresses, use sanitation and modern equipments, trade and transportations. Previously the conditions of communication were so bad that it took a long time to reach destinations. After road construction by the army, now it has become easy and local people can come

²⁷ Indigenous culture in Bangladesh may be described properly by Abdus Sattar. According to him, [The Adivasi people]... are yet to receive even a peripheral contact with the civilized world. Their ways of life are timeless. Their cultural configuration is still intact; the outlines still hard and sharply are drawn against the contrasting background of civilization with no sign of dimming. Their religious beliefs and practices completely insulate [sic]..them against the demands of modernization. Even their economy is antediluvian [sic]... if there is no education it will further widen the gap between the civilized and the pre-civilized. Isolated and left behind, the tribes will become more inward-looking and aggressive. The tribal are usually simple, credulous and jovial folks. As long as they have enough to eat, they are not much bothered by worries. The elders give themselves up to singing and dancing while the children play or frolic. They are of deep interest to anyone who wants to discover a man in his raw form (Schendel in Karim 1998: 311).

and go back to their destination on a daily basis. In past, the Paharis didn't send their children to school but nowadays they are sending their children to school and thus their thoughts and world views have been changing and it was possible only for Bangladesh Army (Author's interview, October 2007).

In a similar vein, Ranjan Das opines thus:

We are getting advantages because local development is not possible by the Paharis. They have learned all the modern things from the Bengalis and thus entering into the civilized world (Author's interview, October 2017).

There is a different opinion from the Bengali respondents regarding CHT as a restricted zone only for the Paharis. According to Rahim:

In Sylhet district, there are hills too and there are ethnics who live there. Do they blame why the Bengalis are living there? Aren't the Paharis living in Dhaka city? Then why the Bengalis will not be allowed to live in CHT? This is my country and it is no doubt that the Paharis are making 'unfair demands' to remove us from CHT (Author's interview, October 2017).

According to Probir Kumar,

I have been living in Khagrachori district since 1983. Bangladesh is not the property of any particular community rather this country is for all including Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Christian and ethnic people. What kind of claim it is that only the Paharis will live in CHT? Isn't CHT part of Bangladesh? Did we ever claim that the Paharis are not allowed to live in any other part of Bangladesh? Did we ever say that they are not allowed to buy land and build house in any other part of Bangladesh? Did we claim that they would not be allowed to do any kind of business in the other parts of Bangladesh? If they can stay in anywhere of Bangladesh, then we have our civil rights to live here as well (Author's interview, October 2017).

From the above quotes by the Bengali respondents, we can say that, they are justifying themselves that the army is the key channel to transfer modern aspects of daily lives among the Paharis and therefore, claim justification for the presence of the army in the CHT required.

3.1.6. Army as Security Guards

Safety and security is termed as a fundamental right in the Constitution of Bangladesh. Article 26-47 describe the fundamental rights regarding personal safety and quality which also gives the citizens of Bangladesh a broad range of liberty in different fundamental issues of human life²⁸. It is significant to mention here that all the Bengali respondents have given very positive opinion towards Bangladesh Army. Sima expresses that:

²⁸ For details – see Constitution of Bangladesh. http://bdlaws.minlaw.gov.bd/pdf_part.php?id=367 (Last viewed on 8th January 2018).

This is my birthplace and I have grown up on this soil and I cannot trust this that the army can do any harmful work. This is absolutely vague perception that the army does help the Bengalis and torture the Paharis. There are some terrorists among the Paharis who torture the Bengalis and in addition to that the Bengalis do fight with the innocent Paharis. In order to stop these fights, we don't have any alternative but the presence of army here. If there is army, only then the rights of all would be ensured (Author's interview, October 2017).

According to Rahim:

Earlier, the Hill Organizations [JSS/UPDF] used to come with arms and snatch goods of the Bengalis. During that time, there was no army here and presence of the army has helped to reduce these kinds of incidents. Previously, at night, we were afraid of going outside which has now reduced and incidents of criminal activities have also been reduced (Author's interview, October 2017).

Karim opines:

There is no alternative to army presence in the CHT. As the CHT are peripheral and inaccessible, the terrorists often wander in these areas. The armies are essential to controlling and suppressing them. To fulfill this necessity, the armies are involved here and their contributions are admirable (Author's interview, October 2017).

Nasim explains:

If we observe carefully, we will understand that in near future, the CHT is going to become the focal point of the world politics. The military are assigned for the security in every region. The CHT is nothing but a part of this independent Bangladesh. Point to be noted that the terrorist attacks in the CHT are increasing at a geometric rate with increased frequency. In response to the continuous unstable situation and to maintain the social balance, it is a must to assign the military in the CHT. In short, there is no alternative of the military in the CHT to protect the independence & autarchy of the country. I think that there is a necessity of the military in CHT so that we can move freely as the citizens of an independent country (Author's interview, October 2017).

Hasan states that:

I am a resident of Nayapara village in Lama upazilla under Bandarban district. My great-grandfather and grandfather settled in Lama permanently for business purposes. Security is a big concern in the three Chittagong district than any other districts of the country. In most of the cases, the internal security forces are unable to control the security issues in the region but the Bangladesh Army's role in controlling situations is praiseworthy and still, they are successful. The army is of great threat for the dacoits. Earlier, the combing operations by the army helped the locals to sleep comfortably because fearing the raids, the dacoits were forced to pause their activities. Some of the militant group members from India and Myanmar also appear here as the area is adjacent to the borders of those countries. There is no alternative to the army to defeat them. Many of the people blame the army for land grabbing and torturing the locals after the 1980s. But from the elderly, I have come to know that establishing Bengali settlement, grabbing native people's lands, increasing the Bengali settlers etc. were done under the backing from the government and local administration. The army had no direct connection with such acts. But the army had to interfere, with government directives, when the disputes went out of control. After controlling the situations, when the local leaders [chairman, member or *sardars*] failed to reach a resolution or were unwilling to follow orders, an assigned army officer used to

settle the issue and everyone, regardless of their identity, had to obey the solutions. So, removal of the army from the localities will create a serious security risk for the Bengali settlers. Only the presence of the army here refrains spoilers from creating unwanted situations. Consequently, the army is also required for the native people as well. Bangladesh Army is an undeniable part of the area for its past success and for controlling the present instability in the CHT (Author's interview, October 20017).

On the one hand, Nasrin (2017) in her research claimed that, SB had always been portrayed as terrorist group responsible for the death of the army by the mainstream media of Bangladesh, but on the other hand, we need to keep in mind that, it was never published that how many army officers were being killed in CHT by SB. From above quotes, we can say that the Bengalis in CHT consider presence of the army as safeguard/amour not only for themselves but also for the nation as a whole. This has also been reflected by Choudhury ed. (2017) study where majority the Bengali respondents mentioned that the presence of army is effective in all situations although the Paharis have just the opposite opinions.

Section B: Perceptions of the *Paharis*

During different stages, i.e. British era (1757-1947), Pakistan era (1947-1971), Post Independent Bangladesh (1971-1997) and after Peace Accord (1997-onward), each time, aspiration and demands of the Paharis were denied by different governments which has an impact on the construction of perception of the Paharis in CHT.

3.2.1. Ethnic Cleansing

Levene (1999) have argued that under different regimes, ethnic cleansing was a major issue in CHT area. He described precisely how the government executed genocide to acquire the power of CHT area. After the formation of the newly independent country, the GoB took redistribution of population policy and had given permission to the Bengalis to settle in the CHT region. In 1964, the Bengali population in CHT was 12 percent whereas it became 44 percent in 1991 (Karim 2007). According to Mra Cha Thwoy Marma:

I am from a village at Alikadam which is a part of Bandarban District. I was a student at the University of Dhaka. I have completed my graduation and post-graduation. During my graduation, I studied about the crisis between the stakeholders of CHTs and Bangladesh Army. The crisis is not limited to these two interest groups. There are different interest groups like settler Bengali, Rohingya Muslim, thirteen Pahari groups and minor Bengali Hindus. The thirteen Pahari groups are known as Marma, Chakma, Tripura, Mro, Tanchangya, Bom, Khumi, Gorkha, Ahomiya, Chak, Pankhoa, Lusai and Khiyang. They have been living in this region for thousands of years with their different language, culture and style. The settler Bengalis have settled since the reign of President Ziaur Rahman and General Ershad, mostly from the plains of North Bengal and South Bengal and most of

them were involved with criminal activities. Rohingya Muslim is an ethnic group of Myanmar. These two groups settled with the direct assistance of Bangladesh Army. They together polluted the hill society and their culture, committing incidents of rape, robbing land with the help of the army. The army interferes in every sphere of the Pahari society even in their religious activities. Even the daily public affairs related to the Pahari people are controlled by the army. During the election of Upazilla Chairman or other important issues, the Bengali candidates were called by the Brigadier General of the Cantonment to establish Bengali nationalism. The police and local administration have limited role in these kinds of public affairs. There is a special act of the GoB that an army officer of CHT can shot any person who is suspected as criminal. I think this is nothing but the reign of the army. Before the independence of Bangladesh, the Paharis were 95 percent in this land. But in the census of 2011, 48 percent are Bengali and Paharis are only 52 percent. If this process continues, we will be removed from our land very soon. We have already started losing our language, culture and most importantly land. It is not difficult to anticipate that because of influence by the GoB and army; the day is not far when we will disappear from our own land (Author's interview, October 2017).

While I am doing this research, seven Pahari families have recently left their homes in Bandarban's Naikkhayangchhari upazila after some unidentified people had allegedly threatened them with life if they failed to pay them money. The criminals demanded Tk 1 lakh from each of the families. They looted their houses and beat them up, and in addition force them to leave their homes and grab their land (Barua, The Daily Star, 21 February 2018,). From 1978 to 1985, under the direct sponsor of the GoB, nearly 400,000 poor Bengalis were shifted in CHT for settlement purpose (Chakma 2010: 291; The CHT Commission 1994: 26²⁹; Dowlah 2013: 776). These poor people were settled in the State owned *Khas*³⁰ land and each family was given 5 acres of hilly land, 4 acres of mixed land and 2.5 acres of paddy land (Chakma 2010:291; Arens 1997: 1813). It is interesting to mention here that the western donors also supported the policy of demographic engineering (Adnan 2008: 34). In addition to that western donors supported formation of CHTDB because CHT is rich with reserves of minerals like coal, copper, uranium and oil (Arnes 1997: 1815). Praveen & Faisal (2002) discussed that almost 100,000 Paharis were driven away, displaced from their ancestral land after the installation of Kaptai Dam. Further discussion was provided on two new projects and their bad effects on the agricultural sector of the Pahari people. These projects took away 7500 hectors of cultivable lands, causing a sharp decline in the productivity of agricultural goods of the Pahari people. This allegation is also supported by the study conducted by Majumder, Bala and Hossain (2012).

According to Nasir Uddin (2013), after the liberation of Bangladesh, though the Paharis were self-sufficient and self-reliant, they were forced to revoke their identity as indigenous people and told to become 'Bengali' which led to further protests and collision between the Pahari people and the military forces. This collision saw losses on both sides but the Paharis outnumbered Bengali settlers and military forces by a significant margin. Nasir Uddin (2010) describes that even after the ending of colonization, the process still runs in forms of restructuring and controlling the legislation of the CHT area under military governance. There is a debate on indigenous terminology. Father of the nation, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, during his election in 1973, travelled CHT and stated that "ethnic minorities would be promoted to the status of Bengalis...a bill was passed in Parliament on 23 January 1974 declaring Bangladesh as a uni-cultural and uni-linguistic

²⁹ <http://www.chtcommission.org/> (Last viewed on 28th February 2018).

³⁰ Government owned land.

nation-state” (Karim 2007: 307) and, in a similar vein, Foreign Minister of GoB, Dipu Moni has declared that “Bangladesh had no indigenous people”. This also reflects ‘Bengali Nationalism’ which was incorporated in the 1972 Constitution of Bangladesh.

3.2.2. Army as Fear, Tyrant and Objectionable

The then Army President Ziaur Rahman, by late 1976, started deploying army and the number rose to 150,000 military and paramilitary personnel (Dowlah 2013: 775) with a ratio of one soldier for 5/6 Paharis (Levene 1999: 354). The Paharis who signed the Peace Accord, all think alike and believes that the presence of military is hampering the peace and tranquility of CHT area as well as obstructing development. The role of military is also acting as the prime force to divide the allegiance among the Pahari people, promoting controversial ideologies. Specifically, according to them, the military, aided by the GoB is enforcing tyranny on the Pahari people of CHT area to gain their own benefit as well as the settlers’. Acts such as taking the lands, possessions and humiliating rights of the Pahari people of CHT area in favor of the settlers, government officials as well as military themselves have made the scenario very debauched. According to Ucha Tanchangya:

I am from Khagrachari Sadar where I have spent 23 years of my life. Since childhood, I have been accustomed to army force with their intervention on any occasion, festival, functions and meetings or in our daily activities. But I cannot understand one thing, till now, in spite of the existence of specific administration, authority and institutions, why the army should play or act that role by themselves? And if these are obligatory, then why these are only for the Paharis? Another question is why they have to seize the land without any proper process? Ultimately, the army is the key authority, administrator, tax collector and everything and this is why consequences /impact will not be fruitful and rather they will receive abhorrence for themselves (Author’s interview, October 2017).

Recent events such as the issue of Romel Chakma, providing arms to Mros and aiding Rohingyas have fueled and solidified the condemnation even further. Further studies alongside above mentioned case studies support the impugning even more. According to Asim Tripura:

I am a student of Dhaka University and also a representative from CHT. Military is the key security force in a country. It plays a vital role in keeping security and safeguarding sovereignty of the country. But in CHT, Bangladesh Army is playing the opposite role. In CHT, military means fear, especially to the Paharis. The situation has gone up to such extent that when a child cries and his/her mother or someone wants to stop him/her crying, usually says, ‘If you don’t stop, then the army will come’. After hearing this, the child stops crying automatically. All the Paharis will acknowledge that through the army and their direct assistance, both the army and settlers grabbed our land and evicted us from our ancestral lands. In the name of operation ascension, the army intentionally searches the Paharis’ home, vex them and charge them with false cases.

Very recently, Romel Chakma was killed after being tortured by the army. In addition to that the army indulged inhuman act of burning the motor cycle of Romel by using petrol and kerosene and did not return his dead body to his parents. Unlike this, many incidents can be referred to illustrate the ways in which the rights to security, freedom of expression, movement and association have been violated. Reference can also be made of Kalpana

Chakma, leader of Hill Women's Federation. Her kidnapping and disappearance in 1996 had made international headlines. In case of any kind of program whether social or religious, *Pohela Boishakh* [New Year festival] by us or religious procession or political activities; we cannot perform any without the permission of the military authority whereas local administration remains silent. My question is- why?

Practically, our culture is our rights by born but why the army is interfering in this? The armies in CHT are not for the security but for the oppression. Moreover, where there is an army camp, there is an illegal settlement of Bengali settlers. In order to create a peaceful environment in CHT, at first, GoB must withdraw military from CHT (Author's interview, October 2017).

Adnan and Dastidar (2011: 58-60) at Taindong (2010) and Baghaichhari (2013) have also accused the army of directly participating in the forced eviction of the Pahari villages for the expansion of security settlements and for tourism. In a study, *Mapping Conflict in Chittagong Hill tracts in 1997-2014* by Choudhury ed. (2017) also proves that the direct benefit of developmental initiatives went into the pockets of political leaders who are increasingly becoming authoritarian in their localities and this is also facilitated by improved infrastructure that makes land more lucrative and encourages grabbing (Choudhury, Islam and Alam in Chowdhury ed. 2017: 100). These have shaped negative perceptions along with low level of confidence on army as an institution. Imong Pru Marma who is the grandson of Marma king of Bandarban states in this way. According to him that:

I do not know how the other people feel being with army. Most of them might feel safe and secured because the Bangladesh Army has reputation in Peace Mission. However, when it is about me, I am sorry that I could not feel myself secured to remain close with the army presence since my childhood. I will talk about that later why I could not feel secured. Prior to that, it needs some background. Often some of my Bengali friends from the plain say that we, the people living in the hill, want a different state where there would be no army. I also wondered, 'Really do we want so? Never!' The hill tracts treaty [mostly known as the Peace Accord] had a clear demand that there should be three cantonments in three Districts, but there would be no makeshift camps. The problem basically began with the temporary camps. In the other districts of the country, there are less such camps while those are random in the hill areas and the trend has been continuing for years. Questions may arise like what the problem is with the camps. We should go back again to get the answer. Remember one thing that mistrust and hatred do not develop overnight. They grow gradually. Now just think about the fact why we, the hilly people, cannot support the temporary camps. Certainly they are doing something which caused negative experiences for our forefathers. We actually cannot believe them even if they do something better or take part in local development. It appears to me that a military rule is going on in the CHT and certainly they would not want to lose the regime. And thus they are creating gradual plots and we are the sufferers. A joint report from the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, Shimin Gaico Center and Organizing Committee CHT Campaign said that there were 285 human rights violation issues from 2004 to 2011 by the army and two of them were rape-related issues in 2006. Can you imagine? How would we adjust with them when they are involved in such heinous acts? They have also looted, arrested and many other shameful acts are available. Even they have charged on some peaceful meetings in Khagrachari district and arrested some youths. The army wants to confer the Romel Chakma death liability to the police. There are many such examples that cannot be depicted

using words. Many other such events are available which have not been recorded. The army raid is conducted in Dhaka when there is any large-scale operation needed and the other types of issues are controlled by the police. Now, why there are armies in CHT instead of police? Does not this reflect their army regime in the localities of CHT? Finally, the commoners of Bangladesh are irritated on traffic and police corruption but we are much more irritated by the army activities. So, we want all the illegal army camps to be removed (Author's interview, October 2017).

3.2.3. Acceptance and Learning to Live Together

Learning to live together with peace and harmony refers to a sustainable balance between the need to think locally, regionally and globally. Education of the people in the region is a critical factor in the achievement of such positive outcome (UNESCO 1998 in Sinclair, ed. 2013). Previously the Paharis did not send their children to educational institutions but over the period of time, their mentality has changed and now they are sending their children to educational institutions. Suborna Chakma who is working in a public university as a faculty opines positively:

I am from Rangamati District. I am working as a faculty in a Public University. The current situation is harmonious comparatively before 1997. As a resident from CHT, I think the Paharis are now accepting the fact that the Bengali settlers are part of CHT. However, they are also frightened to lose their land to them. At the same time, the Bengali settlers are even attempting to gain their rights like quota in the job sector. So the perspectives of both the Bengali settlers and Paharis have changed over the time. Both are now concentrating on gaining better opportunities than the other. Now, if we look at the political sides, the presence of army entirely depends on the GoB. The GoB will take care of this decision. It is necessary to keep the military in CHT to protect from unnecessary incidents for both the Bengali and Pahari people. Some people might not like this ideology. However, it is a crying need to keep peace in this region. To continue the peace in this region, both the Bengalis and Pahari have to move forward and approve each other's presence. Further, it is also necessary to verify activities from both sides. Most of the time, we have seen that the Bengalis commit a crime of rape³¹ which is unthinkable in the Pahari community. On the other hand, the Pahari people become outrageous while dealing with the Bengalis. So,

³¹ Human rights of 364 Pahari women have been violated from 2013 to 2017. Of them, 106 were victims of physical persecution, 100 women were victims of rape and 66 attempted rape. In January alone, only 10 were raped, three of them were murdered after the rape. After the rape, Sabita Chakma, Sujata Chakma, Chobi Marma and Tuomaching Marma were killed (Ahmed: 2018). While I am doing this research, "an ethnic minority Marma family in Rangamati alleged on Wednesday that two of their daughters, one aged about 17 and the other about 14, were raped in their residence at a village under Bilaichari early Monday. The parents of the victims at a press conference at Rangamati Press Club said that a group of five to six Bengalis stormed into their house around 3:00am on Monday and raped their daughters. It was being suspected that army men were involved in this rape incidence. The PCJSS alleged that the army was trying to cover up the incident" (The New Age Bangladesh, 24th January 2018). The recent update is that "the two Marma sisters, one of whom was allegedly raped and the other sexually assaulted by members of security forces last month, were handed over to their parents at Rangamati Sadar Hospital yesterday in presence of police. The family members, however, went traceless after they left the hospital (The Daily Star and the NewAge Bangladesh, 16th February 2018).

the military could be the mediator in these circumstances (Author's interview, October 2017).

Although few leaders of Pahari Organizations are not happy on Peace Accord, mass people have different perceptions. According to Manila Kisha who is also working as a faculty in a Public University opines that:

Before peace accord, we had problems but at present there is a warm relationship between the Bengalis and Paharis. In the last few years, we haven't seen any fight between the Bengalis and Paharis in my locality. I was a student of public university and also have higher degree from a Western country. When I was a student at primary school, I experienced tension, riots and hatred between the Bengalis and Paharis. During those days, it was difficult to attend school regularly but even after being a female, I did not experience any bad incident by the army and/or Bengalis. In plain land, it is very common that school and college going girls do face physical, sexual, verbal and symbolic harassments by the male counterpart. At present, in my locality [Khagrachari Sadar], we do not have terrorist attack by SB. My relatives who live in remote areas of Khagrachari are also now passing good time as there is no bad incident happening anymore. In one word, I can say that the presence of the army and peace treaty altogether have made SB ineffective in CHT region and gradually, the situation is changing as we all desire peaceful life in CHT (Author's interview, October 2017).

In a society, all the members do not have same mentality and it differs from generation to generation which we address as generation gap. No doubt, the mentality of present is influenced by digital information and electronic communication which helps to change mentality faster i.e. new way of thinking and relying on adjustment. Hence, mentality changes are also made through education³² and that has clearly been reflected by two educated female Pahari respondents which is totally opposite to the Pahari male respondents of the research. It is significant to mention here that the Bengali female respondents also opine that they have very cordial relationship with the Pahari women. Thus the issue of gender construction in CHT may have positive aspect while shaping perceptions positively.

Section C: Perceptions of the Army

Reportedly, nearly one-third of the country's army remains deployed in CHT (UNPFII 2014) and in addition to that the army remains influential in development projects, administrative functioning and overall, security issues as well (IWGIA 2010). But surprisingly voices/opinions of this significant actor of CHT have never been incorporated in research, academic work or in media discussions in Bangladesh. This section deals with the opinions of the army in relation to CHT.

³² Inos-Schiller, E. (n.d.) Education, Mentality and Culture in the Internet Era file:///C:/Users/Dr.%20Reaz/Downloads/Documents/educationmentalityandcultureintheinternetelenaianoschiller_7_2.pdf (Last viewed on 27th December 2017).

3.3.1. Threat to National Integrity

During 1947, Pahari leaders wanted to be with India and later during the independence war in 1971, they joined the West Pakistani army forces and the Bengalis often call them ‘*razakars*’ (Karim 2007). According to Brigadier General Arham-ul-Huq Chowdhury:

I am Brigadier General and I was in charge of Bandarban district as a Brigade Commander. To me, it is impossible to implement peace treaty because it is directly confronting the constitution of Bangladesh. Even at this age, in these areas, collection of the toll is very common. People like Santu Larma have kept this problem alive. This kind of opportunist is spoiling young Paharis intentionally by spreading hatred towards the Bengalis. In order to get attention, media and NGOs do always focus on the Paharis but what are the opinions of the Bengali settlers? During 1947, the Paharis wanted to stay with India and additionally, during the 1971 independence war, the same Paharis wanted to be with West Pakistan³³. These Paharis have always been engaged in activities against the national integrity of Bangladesh. They are always threatening the national integrity of Bangladesh as a sovereign country. After 1997, the situation has become far better. In one word, it is not possible to solve the problems of CHT just like mathematics. More time is needed to bring peaceful, cordial atmosphere (Author’s interview, October 2017).

3.3.2. Win Hearts and Minds

The introduction of ‘Armed Forces’ in 1980 not only strengthened the law and order among residents of CHT, it saw a significant change in the educational and medical facilities in the respective area (Hossain, 2016). CHT is not same as other regions of Bangladesh and thus needing a special treatment from the armed forces. They established many schools and better medical facilities in the area as well as took on humanitarian projects to help the poor Paharis. The implication of peace accord also needs the presence of armed forces. The survey shows that among every 40 Pahari respondents, 30 respondents are happy with the implication of Peace Accord (Ibid). Steps such as elimination of hostile forces to secure peace in CHT, maintaining secure line of communication, protecting minorities from any riotous situation, preventing drugs smuggling, protecting important government assets as well as cementing nationalism must be conducted through the military force (Ibid). According to Joy Ahmed:

At present, I am Lieutenant Colonel and have been working for 3 years at Khagrachori district. The deployment of the army in CHT area was not welcomed by the Paharis for a long time after deployment. Gradually, the army has changed the situation as they started working on the principle "win hearts and minds of the local people". Therefore, the army started many pacification works like establishing schools, treatment facilities, building culverts, constructing roads, constructing houses for the poor Paharis etc in the remote areas. Moreover, the Paharis also gradually began to understand that the cause behind the fight by the PCJSS is not for the local people and that was not right. The armies have also started working on the principle that without water, fish can't survive. Therefore, the army

³³ Pakistan was divided into two parts- East Pakistan and West Pakistan. After 1971 independence war, East Pakistan is known as Bangladesh.

made the existence of PCJSS in the CHT difficult not only by the military operation, but also by the local Paharis. Gradually, the Paharis have started supporting the army and withdrawing the support from PCJSS. Being a hilly area, CHT is totally different from the other parts of Bangladesh. Many modern facilities were absent in CHT. Once the army got deployed and started working to win the hearts and minds of the local Paharis, the army brought many modern facilities to the door of the Paharis. Following this process, I used to take medicine, food, pens, papers, pencils with me when I used to go out for patrolling in the Pahari *paras*. Even I used to evacuate the sick person to the nearby hospital by my troops accompanied me for patrolling. I used to talk to the local leaders of Pahari villages, listen to their problems like need of culvert on the *khal* [canal], school, medicine and seeds for cultivation, pesticide to kill the insects etc. I used to note down and forward the demand to higher HQ [Head Quarter]. As part of the pacification program, the GoB allotted money through the army to solve or fulfill the requirements of the Paharis. At night, I also used to go for patrolling to keep the area free from the miscreants or the PCJSS. They used to collect ransom or money from the local Pahari people to continue their movement. Due to our patrolling in the area, the local Paharis were also free from the disturbance of PCJSS. For all these reasons, the Paharis have accepted the presence of army very positively. One of the prime tasks of the army was to ensure the safety and security of the Bengali settlers in the Pahari areas. The Bengalis were also given help by the army. In my area of responsibility, there were only five Bengali families. I also used to help them by providing with medicines, food and stationeries for the children etc. For the survival or existence of the Bengalis in the Pahari area, the army presence was the prerequisite; therefore, the Bengalis did not have any option other than accepting the presence of army and assisting army in many ways. As a neutral citizen of Bangladesh, my opinion is that without the presence of Bangladesh army, it would not be possible to solve the problem of CHT so peacefully. The number of Bengalis is now more than the Paharis, even if not more it is almost the same. In this situation, both the Paharis and Bengalis need army because without us, none can control the situation in CHT. Both of the parties are equally strengthening but none can overrun others. Therefore, both the Bengalis and Paharis are insecure without the presence of army (Author's interview, October 2017).

Although, Bengali armed forced officers has out spoken in favor of the Bengalis in CHT, the perceptions of Pahari officers towards the Bengalis in CHT are not amicable at all. According to a Pahari army officer:

I am a Brigadier General and I am from Pahari community. My home town is in Rangamati District. Personally, I am very much disappointed regarding the CHT issue. The Bengali *miscreants* have grabbed my own land. I did not get any help from DC [District Commissioner] office, DB [Detective Branch], SB [Special Branch] and NSI [National Intelligence Services]. Even I had to knock the door of court but did not get any positive outcome and as a result, I didn't get those lands back. In contrast, according to me, the perception of Paharis towards the army is very positive. I have seen so many Paharis who cried during the time of our departure from CHT. So why would I not say that the Paharis do like the presence of army at CHT? (Author's interview, October 2017).

The three districts in CHT have got different geo-environmental dynamics because of their natural setting. Since the signing of peace treaty between the PCJSS and the Government Security forces of Bangladesh, the political spectrum of CHT have been facing the power tug-of-war between Shontu Larma of JSS, i.e. the signatory of the Peace Treaty and its' arch rival – Proshit Bikash

Khisha of UPDF. Both the parties possess armed groups which results in random armed clashes between them. As such, issues like spreading area of influence, monetary benefits and media exposure often takes the toll on the livelihood of the poor peasant populace of CHT due to the activities of these two parties. As a third party, the 'JSS *Muldhara*' [mainstream] i.e. the offshoot of JSS that opposes the treaty, has got a nexus between themselves and the UPDF. In this triangular scenario, the government security forces, i.e. Army, Police and Ansar along with the Civil Administration, plays a buffer role to keep the stability in the area. The following figure may reflect the apparent scenario in CHT Districts:

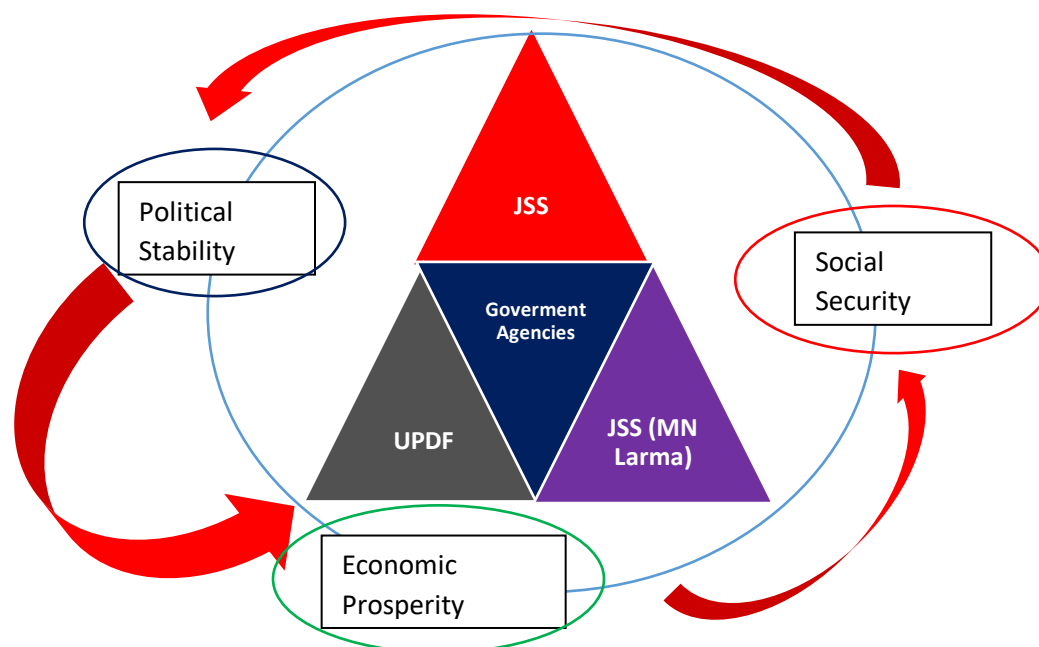


Figure: Casual Relationship among Political Stability, Social Security and Economic Prosperity in CHT

As shown in the figure above, the army, being one of the government agencies, takes the lead role in maintaining social security in CHT that encompasses and spills over to the political and economic spectrum of the area. The army organizes different 'In Assistance to the Civil Administration' activities, coupled with different 'Capacity Building Projects' such as healthcare campaign, winter clothing distribution conducted in coordination with Lions' Club Bangladesh (Chittagong Chapter), different vocational training projects for the greater populace of the area. In line of such activities, Inter Union Boat Race Competition, Winter clothing distribution and Health Care and Cataracts Surgery Campaign was also organized by the security force with the help of Bangladesh National Society for Blinds (BNSB) and Southern Medical College, Chittagong. Such an activity was very much helpful in ameliorating the socio-security fabric in the area. The two parties started campaigning against the campaign through their student wings. In places, they started to spread warnings to the local people not to join the program. They have gone to every educational institution to spread their warning messages to every family, announcing the probable

consequence of disobeying their admonishments. But all went in vain (Author's Field Data Collection, October 2017).

The government security forces intensified their patrolling activities in gardens for example, the pineapple gardens of Naniar char, which supplies a significant number of pineapples to the national market. They have also intensified their activities in the local markets so that the miscreants or the so called members of the parties cannot extort the money from the local business men or peasants. Consequently, UPDF and JSS (mainstream) could not fulfill their targets of raising money for filling up the coffers of their parties. Resultantly, communal harmony was prevalent. But this was detrimental to the intention of those two parties (ibid).

Section D: Perceptions of Others

This section deals voices of the Pahari leaders, Human Rights Activists, Security Experts and Academics on CHT issues.

3.4.1. CHT Ruled by Army Dictatorship

The Pahari leaders play a vital role not only in politics but also daily lives in CHT. That is why it is impossible to overlook their opinion. According to Secretary-General of Pahari political organization:

Before the 1997 peace accord, the condition of CHT was down but the Paharis fought to live together. There were very few Bengalis and Rohingya and there was only one army Cantonment. Almost 100 percent of the army was Bengali Muslims. The army considers the Bengali settlers and Rohingya as their brothers because of their religion. The army protects the Rohingya Muslim refugees although they have no legal right to live in this country. The army often gives them our land to settle in. We have seen over the period of time that the Bengalis, mostly from Noakhali, Barisal, Sirajganj etc are always welcomed by the army. They often grab our land and hands them over to live on. The road construction is only a land-grabbing strategy.

They have claimed that they are the only ones who can maintain security in CHT but I want to unveil you the tricks of army. They blame Mro National Defense Party (MNDP) for the security problem but everyone knows that the MNDP was formed by the army. They have assisted the MNDP to create a facility for themselves. The Mro are the most backward tribe among 13 Pahari communities. How did they get modern arms and train themselves to use those arms? The army has given those arms to the Mro. I am asking why the army has done this. Bangladesh army has used the 'divide and rule' policy and spread hatred within the Paharis to reach their own ends.

In CHT, the army has tremendous supremacy over local politics. Before the election, it is mandatory for the nominees to go and meet the army officials personally. To me, there is

a negative relationship of militarization and development. Development refers to the improvement of education, growth of economy and employment opportunities but we, the Paharis, are still fighting for our rights in CHT. Development and democracy are interlinked. The GoB claims that it is a democratic country whereas, in CHT, we are living under military dictatorship. We know that dictatorship is always harmful for the development and if we look at Myanmar, Pakistan and Libya, we will find the proof. The United States, Germany and Japan had only become developed when they had introduced democracy in their countries. The army personnel always interfere in CHT politics; not only in our politics but also in our culture and daily lives (Author's interview, October 2017).

3.4.2. Implementation of Peace Accord and Anxiety

In Bangladesh members of civil society are not only active but also quite vocal regarding violation of human rights especially at CHT. Advocate Sultana Kamal, the former Caretaker Government Advisor, was addressing at a roundtable titled '20 Years of Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord: Land Right Problem of Locals and Solution'. The event was jointly organized by private organization – Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD) and International Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission (CHT Commission). She has said that

The CHT Peace Accord implementation is becoming complex gradually. The situation has been created for the political reluctance of different ruling parties at different times. There are no exemplary achievements even after passing of 20 years of the accord. She the chair of the event, Sultana Kamal, said that a kind of grabbing has been established in the CHT. The responsible people did not obey their duties. Now an undeniable national crisis has been created. Sultana Kamal stressed on the local government body elections which were resulted from the peace accord. She said that if the organizations are not democratized, people will not get the desired result (ProthomAlo, 26th Nov 2017).

3.4.3. Influence of RAW

A retired Brigadier General who has 33 years' experience both in Pakistan and independent Bangladesh opines that:

The CHT problem arose in 1935 when the Communist Party started their movement in Rangamati district. The hill chief Charu Bikash Chakma went to Bombay [Presently Mumbai] to meet with the leaders of Congress and discussed about CHT as Pahari leaders wanted to stay with India. After 1971, many army personnel returned to Bangladesh and they were held in many important posts of the army which splits the army from the 'Freedom Fighter' and 'Non Freedom Fighters' into two camps. The Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), India, did not take back the status of the army's important posts back to Pakistan. In 1988, during the time of President Ershad, Bangladesh Army prepared a 300 pages' confidential reports on situation analysis of CHT but never discussed that in public forums.

Many development programs have been taken in CHT. The comparative review of Human Development of whole Bangladesh and Human Development of CHT will make things clearer. The Paharis blame the army for firing their homes which is not true. Significantly, the present government signed the peace treaty without consulting anyone. It is to be noted that the land issue and the Regional Council, has been mentioned in the Peace Accord in such a way that is contrary to the Constitution of Bangladesh. There has been a lot of development within numerous small ethnic groups due to the help by the army. If the army goes away, then the hill chiefs will be benefitted. So they want the army to leave. Note that the RAW, plays a very important role here and as long as the RAW does not withdraw their support, the Pahari leaders will not come in the right direction. Those Pahari leaders basically do not want to solve this problem for their own benefits (Author's interview, January 2018).

3.4.4. Importance of Unity

The founding Chairman of Peace and Conflict Studies, a Department of University of Dhaka and Present Vice-Chancellor of ASA University, Prof. Dalem Ch. Barman said:

The constitution could be amended to take special measures for the backward population. The problems of the CHT are not being solved because the stakeholders in the area are looking for their own selfish gains. There is a crying need for unity among the Paharis for peace and security of the region (Author's interview, January 2018).

From the above opinions, we may say that the Pahari leaders are held responsible by the army for the overall situation whereas security experts are giving emphasis on external actors who are boosting motivation of the Pahari leaders to make this whole process complicated. Significantly, human rights activists are worried about human rights situation and want full implementation of peace accord as soon as possible. In addition to that academics' points of view were more on the unity of the Paharis so that they can bargain with the GoB and uphold their rights. However, there is a way for the GoB to amend the Constitution of Bangladesh for the backward community and the SD of CHT in the long run.

3.5. Conclusion

To understand the complex situation prevailing in the CHT region, we need to go through the recent events and try to identify the key reasons with a view to finding out a peaceful solution.

The hardline Pahari group, UPDF has split recently with some of its former leaders of the military wing announcing a new faction terming it democratic and raising a volley of allegations against the current leadership of the UPDF including their involvement in arms trading, extortion, fund embezzlement etc. Political observers and main UPDF leaders allege that the new faction backed by the GoB has been established to create division among the Pahari groups and weaken them so

that the demands for the fulfillment of the 1997 CHT Accord or Peace Accord are not heard, and that they cannot wage any strong movement.

The two factions of the other influential Pahari political group, PCJSS, have apparently remained inactive and reacted carefully following crackdown by the joint forces that began in January 2015 under the pretext that the CHT had become a risky zone due to the criminal activities by the notorious armed members of the PCJSS and the UPDF.

The new directives came only two months after PCJSS chief Santu Larma declared a non-cooperation movement from May 2015 in which their arch-rivals, UPDF expressed solidarity for the first time. The consent scared the Bengali settlers, the army and the GoB. It is perceived that the army had floated the UPDF in 1998 as an opponent to the PCJSS that surrendered arms and sought peace.

A day after the UPDF split, the army chief visited camps in Bandarban in the CHT area after a long time. As per the 1997 Accord, there cannot be any temporary army camp in the region. But their presence, under Operation Uttoron, is justified by detaining PCJSS/UPDF members with arms, bombs, drugs etc. Since last year, the army has forced/convinced a number of national newspapers to write imaginary special reports on Buddhist terrorists of CHT and Myanmar's Rakhine working together to liberate the region/to seek sovereignty.

It should be mentioned that the Bengalis have outnumbered the Paharis in all the three hill districts in the last 40 years and now the Bengalis live in the most developed areas, grab lands of the Paharis and enjoy impunity. Different government agencies also have occupied/acquired land at different times are poised to grab more since the CHT Land Resolution Commission has been kept idle since its inception. The GoB does not only seem less interested in removing the inconsistencies in some laws related to the CHT but also are reluctant while violating the existing laws to benefit the Bengalis.

The nexus of Bengali settlers and the army-BGB-police are spreading hatred against the Pahari peoples by all possible means – from implicating them in crimes to bullying for their lifestyle. The spread of militant activities in the CHT since 1980 has become a matter of concern as it was found that a banned Islamic extremist group had a training camp in Bandarban. It is also well known that the army and the BGB have been sheltering the Rohingya extremist groups of Myanmar in the remote areas of Bandarban.

Denial in identifying the CHT's Paharis as *adivasi* or indigenous people, has remained a major problem. The current government and others in the past had used the term, as suggested by the United Nations to describe underprivileged ethnic communities who maintain their culture and

heritage, but stopped using it since the 15th Amendment to the Constitution in June, 2011 where the term ‘ethnic minorities’ was replaced with tribe or *Upojati*.

Recent incident of Romel Chakma’s death and Langadu attack have once again up-roared media attention especially for social networks. The situation in CHT has turned very volatile, at this moment, after the army – for the first time in recent years – was accused of torturing Romel Chakma, an HSC examinee linked to UPDF’s student wing in Naniar char of Rangamati, which led to his death after two weeks in Chittagong Medical College Hospital on the 19th April, 2017.

The army has not responded to the National Human Rights Commission’s letter asking for explanations on Romel’s detention but falsely claimed to the police that Romel had fallen from a hill and was hit by a speeding CNG auto rickshaw when chased by an army patrol team near T&T Bazar in the night of the 5th April. The army has also implicated Romel with two incidents of arson and loot of transports to justify the detention and interrogation.

Witnesses and Romel’s father Binoy Kanti Chakma said that he had been picked up by the army – in violation of the law and special rules that require joint forces to conduct raids and arrests – from Naniar char Bazar in the morning. According to case documents, Romel was taken to the police station at 12:30am on April 6 – more than 12 hours later after his detention.

At that time, Romel was so sick that the police had refused to take his responsibility and advised the army’s representative, Warrant Officer, Maznur Rahman, to take him to the upazilla health complex. Documents at the hospital say that Romel had been treated there from 2am to 3:30am. CMCH police outpost record book reads that critically injured (reason stroke out) Romel (wrongly spelt Royal) was admitted there at 7:10am.

The NHRC has confirmed that law enforcers were present during the treatment of the youth in different wards of the CMCH until his death. They gave the army one month to come up with a reply but the matter became insignificant after the arson attack on three Pahari peoples’ villages of Langadu in Rangamati on the 2nd June where the army and the police played the role of instigators instead of preventing the mayhem.

The NHRC in its report has asked the GoB to probe the involvement of army personnel in the arson attack and take due action against the culprits to regain trust. It has also been suggested to search for the reason why the intelligence had failed to predict the attacks and to take necessary actions against those responsible.

In the case of communal attack on the Pahari people of Langadu in Rangamati on the 2nd June, 2017, the NHRC has found out that the members of the army helped the Bengalis to torch the

houses of the Paharis who had built resistance. It has also been discovered that the army and the local police had assured security to the Pahari people in the previous night when approached but they took no action to tame down the rowdy settlers and instead gave infuriating speech at a demonstration. Later when the Pahari political groups staged protests, the army and other forces swooped on them again.

Under the current circumstances, it is apparently clear that there is volatile situation persisting against the implementation of peace accord in the CHT in the near future. Attempts to implement the accord may make things worse as the GoBt and the armies are not willing to implement the CHT Accord and are trying to push the Paharis further behind.

Chapter Four

Drawing the Curtains: Concluding Remarks

4.1. Introduction

Perception is a very important thing which molds a society's socio-economic, political and cultural structure. It works within the existing embeddedness of the society. No matter how many times one shouts and claims that s/he believes in something/someone and/or going to place his/her belief, his/her actions will always be influenced by the perception s/he has. The following chapter deals with the diverse findings collected through ethnographic interviews with multiple stakeholders from CHT. The chapter also highlights some overall recommendations for the advancement of the region. Moreover, at the same time, the factual conclusion of the chapter is incorporated at the end.

4.2. Findings

The large numbers of findings are presented in this section mingled with the literature and ethnographic data. The findings follow:

i. The Bengalis who settled in CHT, consider the presence of the army not only as an agent of change for modernization but also key to safety and security. These people cannot think of living there without the presence of the army for a single day. In contrast, the Paharis consider the presence of the army problematic for them. The Paharis see army as a biased group who favor the Bengalis, support and/or provoke them against the Paharis and in addition, gets involved directly through criminal activities like rape of the Pahari women, torturing the innocent Paharis, putting Paharis' houses on fire, grabbing land in the name of tourism and development with/without any notice, interfering in their activities including religious processions. The army is exercising both their institutional power and authority over the Paharis and thus, they are facing ethnic cleansing and asset vulnerability by the army.

ii. Both the Paharis and the Bengalis have acknowledged the contribution of the army on different development projects. But at the same time, the Paharis blame the army of capturing their lands using the development agenda. The army has occupied the Marma cemetery at Rowangdari which has created dissatisfaction among the Pahari communities. The GoB has a ministry entitled 'the ministry of road transport & bridges'. The ministry is supposed be carrying out all the communication via land related tasks around the country. Raising the fact, they question why the

army, not the ministry of transport & communication, is doing these kind of activities in CHT. The army occupies the hills and develops it for tourism but the question as well as dissatisfaction raises as the Paharis are not directly being benefitted by those tourism projects and they are asked to pay when they visit their own land as well. The educational institutions built by the army are expensive and the Pahari parents do not have enough financial capabilities to send their kids to those schools. As a result, these institutions are also not helpful for the Paharis. In contrast, there is lack of school for the Pahari children in the remote areas, let alone quality teachers. 'Barga' [part time] teachers who are just 8/9 pass and usually unemployed are employed/deployed as teachers in these schools. They are given a little bit of money as salary. It is significant to mention here that, in CHT, each Pahari community has its own language. So language is a crucial factor because books are all in Bengali.

iii. The relationship between the Bengalis and the Paharis are ambiguous and distinctive in character. The Bengalis consider the Paharis as good-hearted and cordial and in a similar vein, in some context, they trust the Paharis more compared to fellow Bengalis. Females from both the Bengalis and the Paharis have quality relationships and do exchange homemade food between each other. This issue of gender dimension is clearly present at CHT. Surprisingly, the same Bengalis put fire on the houses of the Paharis and incidents of rape of Pahari girls are not uncommon by the Bengalis and the security forces. The absence of mainstream politics, inappropriate development, changing demography and above all, volatile law and order situation is sculpting the negative perceptions of the Paharis. There is a political difference between regional political parties. Political party like JSS is in favor of peace treaty whereas UPDF and JSS (Reformist) have the anti-peace treaty position. In contrast, the non-Pahari Organizations are becoming active gradually whose philosophy and/or flag bearers demands for the equal rights for all citizens of CHT. Eventually, the Bengali community has also appeared as a reckoning factor in the affairs of CHT.

iv. The Bengalis have very negative perceptions towards the Pahari political organizations as they extort regularly, often demand ransom and incidents of brutal killing are not uncommon too. The Bengalis consider these leaders of Militant Groups as the key 'spoilers' of CHT socio-cultural and political environment and blame them for the unstable situation in CHT.

v. Previously, the Paharis did not send their children to school. Now they are sending their children to school and thus mentality is changing over the period of time. This fact has been reflected by the female Pahari respondents and they see this factor as a very important one that contributes to the peaceful co-existence of the two groups and they also expressed for presence of the army in CHT.

vi. The Bengali settlement in CHT added a new dimension. It is responsible for the contemporary crisis. To some extent, Bangladesh tried to colonize its own land in the name of establishing cohabitants for the Paharis. Based on the military feedback, the Bengalis are settled in CHT in the late 1980s. The army officials used the stereotype narratives to address this paradigm shift.

Interestingly, one of the army officials who belong to the Pahari community considers the Bengalis in CHT as ‘miscreant’. Thus, the Bengali settlement is entirely denied by the Paharis. Due to demographic engineering, the Paharis are now becoming the minority in their own land and on the other hand, they are facing the identity crisis as the GoB does not consider them as indigenous. There is only one ‘Bengali’ nationhood in Bangladesh declared by the father of the nation, former foreign minister as well as Navabikram Kishore Tripura, a Secretary of GoB who was not only the Chairman of the CHTDB but also a member of Pahari community publicly said that there are no indigenous people in the country. Honorable Member of Parliament, Beer Bahadur opines the same thing. All the Pahari communities have their own kings but kings have no influence rather they see the problems of the Paharis through governmental lens, as a subject of the nation. The GoB is trying to create one and only Bengali nationhood in Bangladesh. In reality, over the period of time, different regimes/parties in power have used religion as a political tool and even now the constitution starts with ‘Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim’ which gives a wrong perception that only the Muslim live in this country. Thus the constitution itself repeatedly broke its argument.

vii. Over the decade, the army involvement in CHT is becoming a panacea not only for the administrative point of view but also for as the sole development planner and implementer in the area. They have access to the rights and lives of the people. When the Bengali settlement had created the primary tension, a large number of armies were deployed to protect them from the Paharis. The GoB allocated hilly land for them without consulting the Pahari leaders. In the meantime, the GoB legalized army presence establishing them as the main stakeholder to take the decisions over CHT development. Therefore, in order to win the heart and mind of local Paharis, Bangladesh Army has planned and undertaken different development activities in remote areas of CHT which has increased their acceptance and established cordial relationship between both the general Paharis and army. The army officials from Pahari community have also accepted that there is a cordial relation between the army and Paharis. Significantly, both the army officials and security experts opine that the GoB did not discuss before signing the peace accord and it is needed to mention here that this accord confronts the Constitution of Bangladesh. That is why, even after 20 years of Peace Accord, issues like land disputes, permanent residency, rules of business of Regional Council have not been implemented fully. In addition to that, donor agencies as well as external forces maintain good relation with the Pahari Leaders and also play vital roles in the politics of CHT.

viii. International Organizations, NGOs and other development partners are gradually assuming greater influence over the Paharis can help them with their projects. Thus, development projects in CHT brought discrimination not only for the Paharis but also for the Bengali settlers. Both the parties are living in liminal condition. One part of the analysis isn’t possible without considering the other. The Pahari students are getting more priorities than the Bengali settlers living in the hostels or any other institutes like training, scholarship and better job opportunities which has created frustration among the young Bengalis in CHT.

viii. Both the Paharis and Bengalis in CHT do not have confidence over local administration as well as on police force regarding safety and security and other day to day issues.

ix. In the past, there was no mobile phone network and due to presence of the army and restriction, media usually do not able to give the actual news of CHT region.

4.3. Recommendations

The research findings suggest several ideas and proposals for the betterment of the Bengalis, Paharis and Army for Sustainable Development (SD) in CHT. The following insights can fasten the SD process and well-being of the people living there.

- i. There is a crying need for unity among the Paharis and they all have to accept Shantu Larma as the leader. Leaders like Shantu Larma, Beer Bahadur, and Dipankar Talukdar have to be brought to a table for discussion. Just like the government's support, it is necessary to have the mentality to bear each other. The more people can recognize as well as realize that the path to peace is the much needed and also desired solution because there is no alternative to avoid fighting for survival.
- ii. The CHT based political organizations are looking for the full implementation of the Peace Accord signed in 1997. The GoB should implement this fully as soon as possible with careful attention to the fact that issues of national integrity, sovereignty and rights of all stakeholders are kept preserved properly. Decentralization of power may help to reduce this tension.
- iii. There is no doubt that CHT is completely a different region. This is the era of national integration and globalization. Bangladesh needs to accommodate the people from all ethnic groups. CHT should be the cultural city of Bangladesh to promote tourism. In case of socio-economic development initiatives, a balanced and coordinated approach should be pursued by all the development partners enabling equal participation and benefit for both the Paharis and Bengalis. That is why, National Integration Program is required to incorporate the Paharis as well as the Bengali settlers so that none feel discriminated and love to cohabit in that region.
- iv. The GoB should strengthen local administrative and law enforcing bodies to reduce dependence on the army. Thus the balance of administrative rule may be ensured. The local bodies must have held responsible for the safety and security of CHT. In addition to that, the GoB should keep sharp eyes on both internal and external 'spoilers' at CHT so that situation always remains stable for development which may ensure SD in the long run.
- v. The CHT people have their own unique set of mind. The GoB should rethink discussing in the open forum on 'identity' issue and these type of debates may find a way to solve the tension. Additionally, mainstream people should come forward and announce solidarity with the Pahari 'indigenous' sentiments.

vi. Media, both print and electronic, may play a vital role. Proper information and news should be published neglecting any interference.

4.4. Conclusion

The problems in CHT are complex not only due to internal issues but also for its geographical position bordering both India and Myanmar. In dealing with the complex problems of CHT, an isolated approach is less likely to bring in lasting stability rather making things more complex. Earlier CHT was considered as an 'excluded area' for development, especially the British colonial administrators marked this area as such for their extended part of British Crown. During the partition of Sub-continent, the Pahari leaders of CHT wanted to be with India. In some part of CHT, they hung Indian flag and denied to become the part of Pakistan due to their non-Muslim religious identity. Their demand to combine with India earned them anti-Pakistani tags. The then Pakistan mainstream political leaders marked them as the separatist group. While the British justified their rule and oppression using 'civilizing the uncivilized' manifesto, the Pakistan government did follow the same path. They justified their decision to open up the area for project-based development showing the 'modernization' manifesto. The actual goal was to kill two birds with one stone. The Kaptai Hydro Power development was the symbol of Pakistani development model for them. The initial startup made CHT Paharis angry. Hundreds of thousands migrated to India and government paid little to compensate them. India also noticed this development 'hazard' and welcomed ethnic minorities into their country. The Pahari leaders have the record of expressing dual loyalties segmented into their identities during the early period of separation in 1947 and once again during the independence of Bangladesh. In the post-independent Bangladesh, the Pahari leaders demanded autonomy and separate identity which was 'clearly' denied by the father of the nation. The GoB not only overlooked their demands but also sent the army to encroach the entire territory in the name of protecting state sovereignty. In addition to that the GoB started demographic engineering from plain land to CHT and now the Bengalis are more than the Paharis in CHT. After three decades of insurgency and counter-insurgency, both the GoB and Pahari leaders signed Peace Accord in 1997. It is significant to mention here that main political parties in opposition as well as all the Pahari political parties, did not accept this accord rather consider this accord as their moral defeat.

Even after Peace Accord, local regular institutions have failed to win the confidence of both the Paharis and Bengalis in CHT. On one hand, both the Paharis and Bengalis especially females have very cordial relationships but on the other hand, issues of putting fire on the Paharis residence, the incidence of rape of the Pahari girls are happening at CHT. Similarly, the Pahari political organizations are also involved in extortion, abduction and ransom collection. In some cases, members of these organizations are also involved in the brutal killing of the Bengali businessmen. The Bengalis are in favor of the presence of the army for safety and security reasons along with different development activities whereas the Paharis are blaming the army. In fact, they consider the presence of army as the key problem of CHT. The army is being charged with land grabbing, favoring the Bengalis, raping, torturing, 'divide and rule' doer against the Paharis and exercising ultimate power and authority in CHT. In response to this blame, the army has denied and stated

that they are just following rules and regulations for the safety and security and performing their duties given by the GoB.

Donor agencies are working in CHT areas especially for the Paharis and their activities have already been questioned and some of their activities have already been discussed in Cabinet meeting and there are opines that those are anti-state activities. They are also blamed for transforming the Paharis into Christianity. Significantly, it is not possible to ignore the influence of India over CHT. In these circumstances, peace, human security, development and in the long run SD is becoming a utopia at CHT.

The most important factor is the political will of the GoB and JSS. If they are willing to engage each other with positive mindset, then the process of removing the difference may speed up. The issues like land dispute, permanent residency, voter list, resettlement of the Bengalis are the key disputes needed to be settled. The absence of planned and coordinated development is not allowing the region to progress as desired which is keeping the people unemployed and hindering economic freedom of the region. In these circumstances, the GoB has introduced 5 percent quota along with different privileges at school, college, university and government jobs for Tribal. Ministry of CHT Affairs, CHTDB, District Council and along with army have undertaken different development activities some of which are directly linked with the SDGs e.g no poverty, good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, industry innovation and infrastructure, reduced inequality, sustainable cities and communities, life on lands (protection of forest in CHT), peace justice and strong institutions. At one end, the issue of State sovereignty, safety and security needs to be ensured and at the other, voices of the Paharis and the Bengalis need to be taken into consideration carefully. Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King developed non-violence theory and have given emphasis on the movement to overcome social injustice especially through non-violence (Haque and Islam 2003). Mother Teresa said that Peace begins with a smile. All the stakeholders need to change their mentality of hatred and learn to co-exist with smile.

Appendix 1

Chittagong Hill Tracts Treaty, 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 the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS). However, some hill tribe sects and organizations have rejected the accord.

Under the framework of the constitution of Bangladesh and having fullest and firm confidence in the sovereignty and integrity of Bangladesh the national Committee on CHT Affairs, on behalf of the government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti, on behalf of the inhabitants of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, with an objective to elevate political, social, cultural, educational and financial rights and to expedite socio-economic development process of all citizens in CHT, arrive at an agreement described in four parts as below:

A) GENERAL

1. Both sides, considering CHT as Tribal Populated Region, recognised the necessity for protection of the character of this region and for overall development of it.
2. Both sides, in accordance with the decisions and responsibilities state in these paragraphs under this agreement, determined to make, change, amend and add concerned rules and procedures as per laws/rules.
3. With an aim to observe the implementation process of this agreement an Implementation Committee shall be formed with the persons stated below
 - a. A member to be nominated by the Prime Minister - Convenor
 - b. Chairman of the Task Force formed under this agreement - Member
 - c. President of the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti - Member
4. This agreement shall be in force from the date of signing the agreement. This agreement shall remain in force until all steps and measures according to this agreement are completed by both sides.

B) HILL DISTRICT LOCAL GOVT. COUNCIL/HILL DISTRICT COUNCILS

Both sides agreed to change, amend, add and repeal the Hill District Local Government Council Acts, 1989. (Rangamati Hill District Local Government Council Act, 1989, Bandarban Hill District, Local Government Council Act, 1989 and Khagrachari Hill District Local Government Council Act, 1989) and its various sections described as below:

1. The term '*Upajati*' shall be in force.
2. The name of the Hill District Local Government Council shall be Hill District Council.
3. Who is not a tribal and possesses land legally in the Hill District and generally lives at a certain address in the Hill District he shall be meant 'non-tribal permanent resident'.

4.
 - a. There shall be 3 (three) seats for women in every Hill District Council. There shall be one-third of the said seat for non-tribal women.
 - b. Sub-section (1), (2), (3) and (4) of section 4 of the original rule shall exist.
 - c. The words "Deputy Commissioner" and "of the Deputy Commissioner" placed in the second line of sub-section (5) of the section 4 shall be replaced with the words "Circle Chief" and "of the Circle Chief" respectively.
 - d. Following sub-section shall be added in the section 4 :
Whether a person is a non-tribal shall be determined, along with the identity of non-tribal 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 behalf.
5. It is narrated in the section 7 that a person elected chairman and member shall make an oath or announce confirmation before Divisional Commissioner of Chittagong. By amendment of it there shall be added the portion that the members shall make oath or announce confirmation before "Justice of High Court Division" in lieu of "Divisional Commissioner of Chittagong".
6. In lieu of the words "Divisional Commissioner of Chittagong" shall be placed the words "as per election procedure" in the fourth line of section 8.
7. The words "three years" placed in the second line of section 10 shall be replaced with the words "five years".
8. There shall be a provision in the section 14 that - If the office of the Chairman falls vacant and 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 mentioned as below:

A person shall, under the Act, be eligible to be enrolled in the electoral roll, if
 - (1) he is a citizen of Bangladesh;
 - (2) his 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 the sub-section (2) of section 25: The chairman and in absence of him a tribal member elected by other members shall preside over all the meeting of the Council.
12. As all the area of Khagrachari District is not included in the Mong Circle, so the words "Mong Circle Chief and Chakma Circle Chief" shall be placed in lieu of the words "Mong Chief of Khagrachari" in the section 26 of the Khagrachari Hill District Council Act. Similarly, facility of attending the meetings of the Rangamati Hill District Council by Bohmong Circle Chief also shall be maintained. In the sameway there shall be a provision of attending the meetings of the Bandarban Hill District Council by Bohmong Circle Chief.

13. There shall be provision in the sub-sections (1) and (2) of section 31 that-
There shall be a Chief Executive Officer as secretary in the Council. Tribal Officers shall be given priority in this post.

14.

- a. There shall be a provision in the 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. The sub-section (2) of section 32 shall, by amendment, be made as follows:
The Council may, in accordance with regulations, appoint, transfer, suspend, dismiss, remove class three and class four employees and inflict any other punishment on them.

Provided that, priority to the tribals is maintained in the matter of the said appointment.

- c. There shall be provision in the sub-section (3) of section 32 that-- The government in consultation with the Council may, as per regulation, appoint, transfer, suspend, dismiss, remove or inflict any other punishment on other officers of the Council.

15. In the sub-section (3) of section 33 shall be mentioned "as per regulation".

16. The words "or any other way determined by the government" placed in the third line of sub-section (1) of section 36 shall be omitted.

17. The original rule shall be in force in the fourth of sub-section (1) 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 framed and sanctioned.

19. In the 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 amendment of rules of sections 50, 51 and 52 the following section shall be made--

"The government, if deemed necessary may advice or order the Council, in order to ensure conformity with the purpose of the Act. If the govt. is satisfied that anything done or intended to be done by the Council or on behalf of the Council is not conformity with law or contrary to public interest the government may seek information and clarification and give advice or instruction to the Council on concerned matters in writing".

22. The words "if the period of supersession is completed" shall be repealed and in lieu of them shall be added "within ninety days of supersession" 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 of sub-section (1) of section 62- this section 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 regulation: provided that in the matter of such appointment tribals shall be given priority".
 - b. By repealment of the words "on 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 placed the words "as per rule and regulation".
25. The words "giving assistance" placed in the third line of the section 63 shall be in force.
26. By amendment of the section 64 the following sub-sections shall be made--
 1. Notwithstanding anything contained in any law for the time-being in force, no land within the boundaries of Hill District shall be given in settlement, purchased, sold and transferred including giving lease without prior approval of the Council:

provided that this provision shall not be applicable in case of areas within the reserved forests, Kaptai Hydro-electricity Project, Betbungia Earth Satellite Station, State-owned industries and factories and lands recorded in the name of government.
 2. Notwithstanding anything contained in any law for the time-being in force, no lands, hills and forests within the boundaries of the Hill District shall be acquired and transferred by the government without consultation and consent of the Hill District Council.
 3. The Council may supervise and control functions of Headman, Chairman Amin, Surveyor, Kanungo and Assistant Commissioner (land).
 4. Fringe land in Kaptai Lake shall be given in settlement on priority basis to original owners.
27. By amendment of section 65 this section shall be framed as follows:

Notwithstanding anything contained in any other law 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 be credited to the Council Fund.
28. By amendment of section 67 it shall be made as follows- "If deemed necessary for co-ordination of activities between the Council and govt. authorities, government or the Council shall put proposal on certain matter(s)".

29. By amendment of sub-section (1) it shall be made as follows- "The government having discussion with the Council may, by notification in the official gazette, make rules for carrying out the purposes of this Act and even after having rules made the Council shall have special right to file petition for reconsideration of the said rules".
- 30.
- . By omission of the words "with the prior approval of the government" placed in the first and second line of the sub-section (1) of section 69 and to add the following portion after the words "may"-

"provided that if the government differs with any part of the regulation made by the Hill District Council then the government shall give advice or instruction for amendment of the said regulation"
 - a. The words mentioned in the (h) of sub-section (2) of section 69 "transfer of power of Chairman to any officer" shall be omitted.
31. Section 70 shall be omitted.
32. By amendment of section 79 it shall be made as follows- "If any law by the Jatiyo Sangsad or any other authority, applicable to Hill District, is found to be hurtful to the District or objectionable to the tribal people in the opinion of the Council, it may file a petition in writing to the government stating the reasons of its being hurtful or objectionable for the purpose of amending or relaxing its application and the govt. shall, in the light of the petition, adopt necessary measures".
- 33.
- . The word "supervision" shall be added after the word "order" in the No.1 of the function of the Council of the first schedule.
 - a. The following subjects shall be added in the No. 3 of the function of the Council-
 - (1) Vocational training;
 - (2) Primary education in mother tongue;
 - (3) Secondary education.
 - b. The words "or protected" 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:
- . Land and land management
 - a. Police (local)
 - b. Tribal law and social justice
 - c. Youth welfare
 - d. Environment preservation and development
 - e. Local tourism
 - f. Improvement trust and other local govt organisations except Poursabha and Union Councils
 - g. Licencing for local trade and business
 - h. Proper utilisation of water resources of rivulets, canals, ponds except Kaptai lake and irrigation

- i. Preservation of death, birth and other statistics
 - j. Money lending and trade
 - k. 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:
 - . Registration fee from non-mechanical transports
 - a. Tax on sale and purchase of goods
 - b. Holding tax from land and buildings
 - c. Tax from sale of domestic animals
 - d. Fees from cases of social justice
 - e. Holding tax on government and non-government industries
 - f. Part of royalty from forest resources
 - g. Supplementary tax from cinema, theatre and circus etc.
 - h. Part of royalty from licence or lease for exploration and extraction of mineral resources given by the government
 - i. Tax from business
 - j. Tax from lottery
 - k. Tax from fishing.

C) CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS REGIONAL COUNCIL

1. A Regional Council shall be formed in co-ordination with the 3 Hill District Local Government Council 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 3 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 where status shall be equivalent to a State Minister and he must be a Jumma.
3. The Council shall be formed with 22 (twenty-two) members including the Chairman. Two-third 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 (men) -- 12
 Members tribal (women) -- 2
 Members non-tribal (men) -- 6
 Members non-tribal (women) -- 1

Among the tribal men members 5 persons shall be elected from among the Chakma tribe, 3 persons from the Marma tribe, 2 persons from the Tripura tribe, 1 person from the Murung and Tanchongya tribes and 1 person from the Lusai, Bawm, Pankho, Khumi, Chak and Khiyang tribes.

Among the non-tribal men 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. 3 (three) seats shall be reserved for women in the Council. One-third shall be non-tribals.
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 Council.

6. The term of the Council shall be 5 (five) years.
7. There shall be a chief executive officer in the Council equivalent to a Joint Secretary and priority to a tribal candidate shall be given in appointment to this post.
8.
 - a. If the office of the Chairman of the Council falls vacant then a Chairman shall be elected from among the tribal members for an interim period by the members of Hill District Councils.
 - b. If any office of a member of the Council falls vacant on any reason, then that shall be filled through by-election.
9.
 - a. The Council shall supervise and co-ordinate the subjects vested under the Hill District Councils including co-ordination of all development activities conducted under the three Hill District Councils. Besides these, if there is found any lack of co-ordination and inconsistency among the three Hill District Councils in discharging their responsibilities the decision of the Regional Council shall be taken as final.
 - b. The Council shall supervise and co-ordinate local councils including the municipalities.
 - c. Regional Council may co-ordinate and supervise in the matters of general administration, law and order and development of the three Hill Districts.
 - d. The Council may co-ordinate the activities of the NGOs along with conducting of management of calamities and relief works.
 - e. Tribal laws and social justice shall be under the control of the Council.
 - f. The Council may issue licence for heavy industry.
10. The CHT Development Board shall discharge its responsibilities under general and overall supervision of the Council. In case of appointment of Chairman of the Development Board competent tribal candidate shall be given priority.
11. If the Regional Council finds any rule of the 1900 CHT Regulation and other related laws, rules and ordinances contradictory to the 1989 Hill District Council Acts then the govt shall remove that inconsistency by law according to recommendation of and in consultation with the Regional Council.
12. Until and unless Regional Council is constituted through direct and indirect election, the government may by constituting an interim Regional Council, entrust the responsibilities of the Council.

13. If the govt. makes any law on CHT it shall be in having discussion and in consultation with the Regional Council. If there arises the necessity to amend any such law or to make any new law which may be harmful for development of the 3 Hill District or the welfare of the tribals, the Council may file a petition or put recommendation to the govt.
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 govt or any other authority
 - d. grant from any institution or individual
 - e. profit accruing from investment by the Regional Council
 - f. any other moneys received by the Regional Council
 - g. money received from such sources of incomes as the govt may direct to be placed at the disposal of the Regional Council.

D) REHABILITATION, GENERAL AMNESTY AND OTHER MATTERS

1. An agreement has been signed between the govt 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 JSS shall provide all kinds of possible co-operation. The internal tribal evacuees of 3 districts shall, after determination, be rehabilitated by the Task Force.
2. After signing agreement between the govt and the JSS and implementation of it as well as after rehabilitation of the tribal refugees and internal tribal evacuees the govt shall start survey of land in CHT as soon as possible and after proper inquires ownership of land shall be recorded and ensured.
3. The govt shall ensure providing two acres of lands to each landless family and the family who possesses less than 2 acres of lands, provided lands were available in the local areas. 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 settle disputes of lands of the rehabilitated tribal refugees, shall have fullest 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 judgement of this commission and decision of this commission shall be final. This (arrangement) shall be applicable in case of fringe land also.
5. This commission shall be set up with the following members:
 - a. Retired justice
 - b. Circle Chief (concerned)
 - c. Chairman of the Regional Council/representative
 - d. Divisional Commissioner/Additional Commissioner
 - e. Hill District Council Chairman (concerned).
6.
 - a. The term of the commission shall be three years. But the term of it can be extended in consultation with the Regional Council.

- b. Commission shall settle disputes according to the existing rules, customs and usages of Chittagong Hill Tracts.
7. The tribal refugees who received loan from the govt but could not use them properly due to conflicting situation shall be exempted with the interests.
8. Allotment of lands for rubber plantation and other purposes: All the non tribals and non-locals who were given in settlement of lands for rubber plantation and other purposes but had not implemented any projects within the past 10 years or had not utilised their lands properly, settlement of these lands shall be cancelled.
9. The govt shall allot additional fund, on priority basis, with an aim to implement more number of projects in CHT. New projects formulated with an aim of making necessary superstructures for development in the area, shall be implemented on priority basis and the govt shall provide fund for these purposes. The govt shall, having consideration about the environment in the region, encourage to develop tourism for tourists from the country and abroad.
10. Quota reservation and scholarships: - Until development equal to other region of the country the govt shall continue reservation of quota system in govt services and educational institutions for the tribals. With an aim to this purpose, the govt shall grant more scholarships for the tribal students in the educational institution. The govt shall provide necessary scholarships for research works and receiving higher education in abroad.
11. The govt and elected representative shall make efforts to maintain separate culture and tradition of the tribals. The govt in order to develop the tribal cultural activities at the national level it shall provide necessary patronisation and assistance.
12. The Jana Samhati Samiti shall submit to the govt the lists of its all 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 jointly shall 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 govt shall ensure security for return of JSS members and their family members to normal life.
14. The govt shall declare amnesty for the members who shall deposit their arms and ammunition on the scheduled date. The govt shall withdraw the cases against whom cases have been lodged.
15. If anyone fails to deposit arms on the scheduled date the govt 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 the permanent residents who were involved in the activities of the JSS.
 - a. In order to providing rehabilitation to all returnee JSS members a lump sum of Taka 50,000/- shall be given to each family.
 - b. All the JSS members including the armed ones against whom cases have been lodged, warrant of arrest and police circular for apprehension issued and punishment has been sentenced/inflicted in the absence, after surrendering of arms and return to normal life all the cases, warrants of arrest, police circulars and punishment sentenced in the absence against them shall be exempted as soon as possible. If JSS members are detained in the jails they also shall be released.

- c. Similarly, after surrendering of arms and return to normal life no cases can be lodged, warrant issued and punishment inflicted against anyone only for the reason that he was a JSS member.
 - d. All the members of the JSS who took loans from various banks and organisations of the govt but could not utilise them properly those loans including the interests shall be exempted.
 - e. The JSS members who were posted in the services of the govt or govt institutions they shall be reinstated in their own posts and services and the JSS members and their family members shall be given appointment in accordance with their competence. In this case, the rule of the govt for relaxation of age shall be followed.
 - f. The JSS members shall be provided bank loans on easier terms and conditions to give assistance for cottage industry, horticulture etc. self-employment activities.
 - g. The children of JSS members shall be provided educational facilities and their certificates received from foreign educational Boards and institutions shall be taken as valid.
17. After signing 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 (3 at the 3 District Hqs. and Alikadam, Ruma and Dighinala) by phases and with this in view, time limit shall be determined. In case of deterioration of law and order situation, natural calamity and such other works the army can be deployed under the civil administration like all other parts in the country as per necessary laws and rules. In this case, Regional Council may, according to necessity or time, request the proper authority for the purpose of getting assistance.
18. Permanent residents of CHT, on priority basis to the tribals, shall be appointed to all posts of officers and employees at all levels of govt, semi-govt, council offices and autonomous bodies in CHT.

Provided that in case of non-availability of qualified candidate among the permanent residents of CHT for a particular post, appointment in that post may be made on deputation from the govt for a term of certain period.

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 -
- 1. Minister on CHT Affairs
 - 2. Chairman/representative, Regional Council
 - 3. Chairman/representative, Rangamati Hill District Council
 - 4. Chairman/representative, Bandarban Hill District Council
 - 5. Chairman/representative, Khagrachari Hill District Council
 - 6. Member of Parliament, Rangamati
 - 7. Member of Parliament, Khagrachari
 - 8. Member of Parliament, Bandarban
 - 9. Chakma Raja

10. Bohmong Rnja
11. Mong Raja
12. 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 as per 18 *Agrahayan* 1404 Bengali year.

On behalf of the inhabitants of
Chittagong Hill Tracts
SD/-
(Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma)
President
Parbattya Chhattagram Jana
Samhati Samiti

On behalf of the government of the
Peoples Republic of Bangladesh
SD/-
(Abul Hasanat Abdullah)
Convenor
Hill Tracts Affairs, government of
Bangladesh

Source:

<http://www.satp.org/satporctp/countries/bangladesh/document/actandordinances/CHT1990.HTM>

(Last viewed on 8th March 2018).

Appendix 2

Table: Population Distribution in the CHT

	Bandarban	Khagrachari	Rangamati	Total	% Pahari	% Total
Chakma	77477	161960	260445	499882	59.12	31.28
Marma	-	67011	51235	118246	13.98	7.40
Mro (Mru)	38021	-	-	38021	4.5	2.38
Tanchangya	-	-	27052	27052	3.20	1.69
Tripura	20685	86190	-	106881	12.64	6.69
Others	36218	1820	17421	55459	6.56	3.47
Total Pahari	172401	316987	356153	845541	100.00	
Bengali	215934	296930	239826	752690		47.10
Total				1598231		100.00

Source: Bangladesh Census 2011, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics

Appendix 3



Photo: Nari Sanghati brings out a procession in Dhaka on Friday in demand of justice for two Marma sisters, who have recently raped and molested by men in military uniforms. NEWAGE Bangladesh, 24th February, 2018

Appendix 4



Photo: Members of four Chak families have taken refuge at Chak Headman Para Government Primary School in Bandarban's Naikhangchhari upazila on Friday after allegedly being threatened with life by criminals to leave their homes in Kanai Thong Chak Para village. Three other families of the community were sheltered by their relatives in the upazila. The photo was taken on Monday. The Daily Star, 21 February 2018.

Appendix 5

<https://www.facebook.com/devasish.roywangza/posts/1704048436312702>

Rajbari, Rangamati
Chittagong Hill Tracts
Bangladesh

Statement by Raja Devasish Roy, Chakma Chief,
& Rani Yan Yan, Adviser to the Chakma Circle,
on the Assault on Rani Yan Yan at Rangamati General Hospital
on 15 February 2018

Chakma Circle Chief Raja Devasish Roy's spouse Rani Yan Yan was assaulted on Thursday, 15 February 2018 around 7-8 pm while she was at the Rangamati General Hospital with two girls from her community, who were sexually violated on 22 January. The following account is based on her own narrative and that of a woman volunteer who was also assaulted along with her.

Around 12 noon on 15 February, a large number of policemen in uniform and around 10 plains clothed men brought the victims' parents to the ward where the victims have been unlawfully confined since 24 January. The police produced an order from the High Court and asked the parents to take their daughters away. Both of the victims refused to leave with their parents. The police repeatedly told the parents to grab them and take them away ('dhore niye jaan').

At one point, being so incited by the police, the father slapped one of the victims and at another point, the mother slapped another one of the victims. Rani and her volunteers intervened. Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Siddiqui ordered the women police to drag the victims out of the ward. Rani and the volunteers intervened stating that the court order, although providing custody to the parents, did not provide for the use of force to take them away against their wishes, and therefore, that the victims would have to be arrested in order to be forcibly taken away from the hospital.

When the victims requested to see their lawyers, who were refused entry to the hospital ward at that point of time by uniformed police and plains clothed men, this was at first refused. After the Rani and the volunteers intervened, the victims' lawyers were reluctantly allowed to enter the ward but were only allowed 10 minutes.

The police repeatedly asked the Rani and the volunteers to leave the scene. They refused.

Around 4pm, all the volunteers were ordered to leave the ward. One of the volunteers (a 21-year-old young woman) refused to leave the side of the Rani and she stayed with her as the events unfolded.

Around 6 pm, the police locked the door of the ward. The Rani and the sole woman volunteer could see through an upstairs window that uniformed soldiers of the army and plains clothed men were chasing away all the people who were present on the road in front of the hospital entrances on two sides.

Around 7 pm, the lights of the corridors of both the 1st floor and 2nd floor and common public spaces were turned off.

Around 7-30 pm, eight to ten women in civilian clothes, wearing scarves and/or mouth masks, and around six men in civilian clothes wearing mouth masks, and who were issuing orders to the group

of women, entered the ward and attacked the Rani and the woman volunteer in the presence of the victims, their parents and their 10-year old brother. The masks of some of the men and women came off during the scuffle, but they did not seem to care to put them on again.

They kicked and punched Rani Yan Yan and the other woman volunteer, who were both thrown to the ground and beaten further. The volunteer was not only beaten, but sexually molested by the men, while the women held her and dragged her down the stairs. Both were dragged out physically into the corridor and then downstairs. This group was then joined by another six men downstairs, in civilian clothes.

After dragging the Rani and the woman volunteer downstairs, the group of attackers separated the two, and while they took the Rani to the rear corridor, they took the volunteer to the corridor leading to the front foyer.

While the Rani was being beaten and dragged to the rear corridor leading to the rear entrance of the hospital, she heard the attackers saying: "If we are to finish this off, we cannot do it here, it has to be done outside the hospital," ('Shesh Korte Holei Ekhaane Kawra Jaabe Na, Korle Hashpataler Baaire Korte Hobei').

She was thrown out of the hospital with a punch on her left side of the head, probably to make her disoriented.

She saw more plains clothed men outside. However, it was a well-lit premise and people gathered in front of different structures within the hospital premises could see her and the plains clothes men. The plains clothes men kept an eye on her. Rani took that chance of visibility, and ran to the nearest boundary wall and crossed over it. She ran for 10-15 minutes in the dark and found herself at the lakeside. She immersed herself in the water and stayed there for about half an hour.

Later she made her way to a nearby house, and sought refuge and help. The family contacted her relatives, who came and transported her to a safer location.

In the meantime, the woman volunteer was taken to the front entrance, where a silver-coloured van, along with jeeps (SUVs), was stationed. The attackers kept her on the floor, occasionally beating her, while others brought the victims and their parents from upstairs and put them into the van. During the chaos of putting the victims into the van, the volunteer seized the opportunity and ran upstairs; and hid herself in one of the wards' store rooms.

From there she rang others, including Chakma Chief, Raja Devasish Roy, letting them know what had happened and that she didn't know where the Rani was, as she had last seen the Rani being dragged along the rear entrance corridor. The Chakma Chief, also an advocate at the High Court Division, was at the time boarding a plane from Dhaka to travel to Chittagong, after having addressed the Hon'ble High Court Division and the Hon'ble Appellate Division's Chamber Judge on the matter.

Raja Devasish Roy Rani Yan Yan
Chakma Raja Adviser to the Chakma Circle

Rangamati, Chittagong Hill Tracts, Dated, 16 February 2018

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