Discursive Formation of Peace Practice: Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord and Village Society of Bangladesh

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1. INTRODUCTION

On the basis of field research[1] in three villages in the Khagrachari district, this study describes an anthropological inquiry into the practice and discourse of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Peace Accord of 1997 in Bangladesh. The southeastern part of Bangladesh is commonly known as the region of the CHT. Approximately 845,544 indigenous Jumma people live in the region (BBS, 2011). Most believe in Buddhism, whereas the remainder practice Hinduism, Christianity and indigenous religions, [2] as opposed to Islam, the state religion dominant in the rest of the country. The root causes of conflict in the CHT are centred on identity formation. This issue arose during the British colonial period, in particular, when the colonial government introduced the policy of tribalism[3] in the CHT region. Unfortunately, this policy has continued under the post-colonial regimes even after Bangladesh gained its independence from Pakistan.

In response to the categorical refusal by the Bangladesh government to create any space for or grant any recognition to the CHT's indigenous people, the Jumma selected the course of armed conflict. The Bangladesh government responded with militarization as a counter-insurgency measure. In this context of increasing conflict, the main action that functioned to marginalize the Jumma was the resettlement of 400,000 landless Bengalis from the plains of Bangladesh to the CHT region between 1979 and 1987 under a government transmigration[4] programme. The increasing dominance of the Bengalis in this region severely affected the Jumma's livelihood, and Jumma resistance involved increased conflict with the Bengali settlers. Following political negotiation, on 2 December 1997, the CHT Peace Accord was signed between the Bangladesh government and Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samiti (PCJSS), a political party formed in 1973 to represent the CHT's indigenous people. The present study aims to examine how and to what extent the peace discourse has been practised in this multi-ethnic setting.

Scholars have presented three views of the conflict in the CHT. First, some believe that the crisis is deeply rooted in the politics of Bengali nationalism, which pushed the region into a massive conflict between the Jumma people and military (Zaman, 1984; Mohsin, 1997). Secondly, others have argued that ethnicity and racial difference have ideological character to determine class when contradictory interest between the Bengali and the Jumma becomes evident (e.g., Dewan, 1990). Third, in the post-Accord context, many recent studies have probed the conflict between Bengali settlers' organizations and Jumma political groups (Mohsin, 2003; Rahman, 2011). Concentrating on nationalism, politics or economic issues, all these studies have portrayed Jumma communities as largely powerless in the face of the state's dominance.

In this context, I have adopted the notion of the peace discourse as an analytical tool to investigate the dynamics of conflict in the CHT region. As suggested by recent scholarship on the peace discourse, the notion of peace is neither homogeneous nor static. Peace discourse studies have shifted their analytical approach from macro-level state-centric analysis to micro-level sociocultural analysis. Within this interconnectedness of different actors, agencies and institutions, I have sought to locate the history of relationships, everyday negotiations, agency and conflict dynamics of the CHT residents. In this thesis, I document that, even after the achievement of a political agreement between the conflicting parties, violence has continued. I have investigated this situation using an anthropological fieldwork approach. By locating the dynamics of conflict in the post-Accord period at the village level, I emphasize that the CHT Peace Accord, while it may have contributed to reducing the armed struggle, also created many problems in the implementation and clause-making processes. The Peace Accord has been undermined by ideas and practices that have done very little to meet the demands of the Jumma people in their struggle for recognition of their self-identity and cultural rights. This stifling of their self-determination is inconsistent with sustainable discourse on peace building.

2. THE THEORETICAL DEVELOPMENT OF PEACE DISCOURSE

In 1969, Galtung first introduced the notion 'peace discourse' in mainstream peace literature. He identified forms of the peace discourse based on how people around the world organize their understanding of conflict and violence. Galtung (1969) stated that the peace discourse makes use of tested conflict analysis techniques, broadens the scope of actors and stakeholders, takes into account root causes and basic needs and assumes that solutions must be based on legitimate goals. According to him, conflict is not necessarily negative, nor does it need to lead to violence; rather, it is necessary for progress and evolution. Any social

change can be understood as a conflict with the status quo, and change can have positive effects. Moreover, Galtung (1969) described two interrelated forms of violence: direct and structural. Direct violence involves physical aggression or military force; structural violence is damage built into the laws and traditional behaviour of a group or society, and it can be permitted, ignored or resisted. Each of these forms of violence can be equally destructive and detrimental.

Twenty years later, in 1990, Galtung wrote another article titled 'Cultural Violence' in which he emphasized the importance of cultural circumstances. He stated:

> The study of cultural violence highlights the way in which the act of direct violence and the fact of structural violence are legitimized and thus rendered acceptable in society. One way cultural violence works is by changing the moral color of an act from red/wrong to green/right or at least to yellow/acceptable; an example being 'murder on behalf of the country as right, on behalf of oneself wrong'. Another way is to by making reality opaque, so that we do not see the violent act or fact, or at least not as violent. Obviously this is more easily done with some forms of violence than with others; an example being *abortus provocatus*. (Galtung, 1990:292)

Furthermore, Galtung listed six cultural domains of violence: religion, ideology, language, art and empirical and formal science. Galtung's work opened up a space in which to identify the root causes of conflict in the cultural context. Although his approach is still followed by many liberal peace-building activists and scholars, the cultural method has been criticized for its emphasis on universal principles of nature. Scholars of cultural study and anthropology, in particular, questioned the categorization of cultural violence. Although religion, ideology, language and art potentially create some space for 'subjectivist' concerns, they also remove the promise of greater attention to culture by centring on the universalized 'presumption about natural laws and human nature'. More specifically, Galtung identified cultural violence in relation to the 'structure of peace' and limited his scope to inter-state relationships, with the non-state cultural contexts yet to be investigated. By this over-emphasis on the role of structure, the grassroots people were made to appear as mere tools.

The predominant position, which considers war as part of the architectonic structure of the system of states, defines peace as the absence of war. Peace in this view is mere appearance, a front, a playful moment, a mimetic act, which emerges when the 'real thing' in the lives of the local people is somehow blocked. Thus, the peace discourse has often failed to recognize the social interaction process which is created in the everyday lives of the local population. It is through social interaction during our entire lives that we begin to learn what is to be expected, to see what is expected and to act and react in expected ways. In so doing, we are constructing and maintaining the social order.

Adrian Little's (2014) work *Enduring Conflict: Challenging the Signature*

of Peace and Democracy has challenged the idea that the absence of conflict is the foundation and norm of a stable political environment. By linking complexity theory and the notion of signature with case studies, Little argued that political processes need to be understood within their social and cultural contexts. In looking at countries involved in conflict transformation, he developed the idea of 'enduring conflict', referring to both the long-lasting nature of political conflict and the endurance of people in conflict-ridden societies.

Little's argument addressed the many ways in which conflict persists and continues to characterize social relations and identification in 'post-conflict' settings. Building on the theory of post-structuralism, Little investigated the use of binary divisions in theory and practice, arguing instead that conflicts have a spectral dimension, whereby they 'sometimes linger unarticulated at the back of the stage' and manifest themselves through political institutions (2014:24). In a similar way, anthropologist Chris Coulter (2009) indicated that many of the international organizations and NGOs that implement post-conflict transitional justice mechanisms operate from a human rights framework described in legalistic language. This framework, however, may not be suitable for in-depth examination of societal or cultural systems of meaning that exist separately from the context of conflict. Moving beyond traditional approaches, the post-structuralist paradigm poses questions about the types of strategies that ordinary people use in their everyday lives to cope in conflict and post-conflict societies and how these strategies are informed by the cultural space in which they occur.

By tracing the genealogy of the peace–conflict dichotomy, Coulter argued that the predominant peace discourse often relies on the assumption that, with the arrival of a politically determined end to conflict, the lives of those affected by conflict will improve. In this dichotomy, people experience either peace or conflict; anything in between does not fit into these categories. This presentation of the supposed dichotomy raises the controversial question of whether participants' positions relative to society improve or worsen as a result of conflict. Coulter's analysis of post-conflict social relations is equally significant. Instead, of reproducing the imagery of the post-conflict period as a time of progress and development, Coulter demonstrated that for grassroots people, particularly those who have acted outside their typical social position (e.g. insurgents or counter-insurgents) during the conflict, the post-conflict period can be a time of silence, repression and conformity as the people are encouraged or forced to return to socially ordained positions and behaviours. Rather than defining ordinary people as victims or perpetrators, communities labelled those people who had been with the rebels as 'a social dilemma' (2009:212).

In this sense, Coulter's work stands in stark contrast to the large body

of conflict and post-conflict literature with its intention of locating and representing grand narratives, patterns, cohesions and trends. She suggested investigating the ways in which local people negotiate and/or contest these discourses, as well as the everyday dilemmas with which they live. For example, looking beyond the public activities of rebels and the armed forces, we see that, without people's continuing involvement in maintaining their livelihood by working in their jobs, operating businesses, undertaking schooling and cooking (activities typically performed by ordinary people during both conflict and peace), the warfare machine would come to a halt. As Coulter put it, 'even during the war, the chores of everyday life had to be performed' (2009:116, as cited by MacKenzie, 2011). The performativity in the ordinary people's accounts and the reiteration and citation of existing discourses are examined along with the new possibilities that emerge.

The scholarship of post-structuralism has influenced many anthropologists' investigations of the peace process in particular societies. Thus, in *The Anthropology of Peace and Nonviolence*, Sponsel and Gregor (1994) proposed that peace initiatives should be considered in a holistic way. Looking beyond the study of history, culture and politics as separate entities, the holistic approach examines how this entire social phenomenon involves interaction between these contexts (Little, 2014; Sponsel and Gregor, 1994; Douglas, 1992). Such a perspective requires identification of the root causes of conflict in a broad historical, political, social and cultural context, given the fact that options for peace and conflict are largely the products of existing social structures. By adopting the holistic approach in this study, I trace how all these discursive practices contribute to the materialization of the existing discourses of peace.

3. THE DIMENSIONS OF CONFLICT IN CHT: A BRIEF HISTORY

Due to the intrusion of the British Empire (beginning in 1860), Pakistan (1947) and Bangladesh (1971), the Jumma people of the CHT have gradually been marginalized in the context of social, economic and political positioning within the state. Prior to the British colonial period, the CHT region was independent and its people lived as a sovereign territory under customary rules and an administrative system. The indigenous people, at that time, were identified by the Bengalis as *Joomea*, meaning the people involved in *Jhum* or shifting cultivation (Tripura, 1998). The cultivation process was managed by customary rights and was considered the key to the survival of the Jumma people's identity. However, the politics of identity originated in the British colonial period, when it was adopted in the state apparatus as part of Britain's tribalism policy in dealing with the CHT region. The colonial government at first used

sub-names, such as 'tribe' or 'hill men', to distinguish the Jummas from the majority of Bengalis in the country. The notion of 'tribal' was related not only to the identity issue, but also to the governing policy through which the colonial administrator began to control the whole political economy of the local people. The colonial administrator documented several aspects of tribalism, such as having religious beliefs perceived as primitive, i.e. animism and 'heathenism' (Marriott, 2003:146; Xaxa, 1999); ape-like physical features (Marriott, 2003) and sexuality of an immoral and exotic nature (van Schendel, 1992). In the CHT, the Jumma people, for the first time, came to experience a different kind of political economy, which caused changes in their own culture and society. The colonial administration started the process of land alienation by taking over the ownership of land rights in the CHT through the creation of reserved forests (Dewan, 1990).

The serious problems in the CHT began with the building of the Kaptai hydroelectric dam between 1957 and 1963, when the territory was part of Pakistan. This dam flooded at least 54,000 acres of settled cultivable land farmed by the Jumma people (Nasreen, 2002), permanently displacing thousands of indigenous people without any compensation (Jenneke, 1997). This policy of exclusion from decision making, adopted by both the British and Pakistani governments, has continued to dictate the development of identity and the livelihood policy of the CHT people since the creation of Bangladesh.

After Bangladesh gained its independence in 1971, a group of indigenous people formally expressed their demands for autonomy to maintain their self-identity. However, the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, rejected the Jumma people's demands, advising them 'to forget ethnic identities' and 'to be Bengalis' (Al-Ahsan and Chakma, 1989:967). This denial of constitutional recognition of the Jumma people's diverse ethnic identity and regional autonomy by the independent state of Bangladesh brought social, political and cultural chaos to the CHT. A portion of the Jummas initiated a strong resistance movement by forming the political party PCJSS, with its armed wing Shanti Bahini ('Peace Force'). From 1976, the CHT became an area under military occupation and a training ground for counter-insurgency. Moreover, approximately 400,000 Bengalis moved into the region between 1979 and 1987 under a government transmigration program which had several sociocultural consequences for the indigenous Jummas: destruction of the agricultural system, changes in the names of indigenous localities, attacks on indigenous religious institutions and, above all, forced eviction from their land. The indigenous Jummas now risk being outnumbered by Bengali settlers who have continued taking over their land and attacking their religious and cultural values. Under these circumstances of conflict and violence, the Jumma women have often been the most vulnerable

victims. The civil administration and the military have appeared to be concerned bystanders at best or, in some instances, the direct patrons and protectors of the Bengali settlers (Mohsin, 1997). Since 1980, 13 major cases of sectarian attacks by Bengali settlers on the Jumma have been reported (International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 2012; Amnesty International, 2013).

During the period of counter-insurgency, almost a hundred thousand Jumma have been forced to cross the border into India or have become internally displaced as a result of the armed conflict (Jenneke, 1997; Barua, 2001). Around 8,000 people,[5] including security forces, from the two communities have been killed. After a long process of political negotiation, a major turning point occurred when the Bangladesh government and the PCJSS signed a Peace Accord in 1997. However, the Accord has not settled the situation: rather, several new issues have arisen in the CHT region.

4. BENGALI DOMINATION IN THE HILL

The Bangladesh government saw the CHT as a suitable place to resettle landless Bengalis from the plains, and about 400,000 Bengalis moved into the CHT region between 1979and 1987. This resettlement project has dramatically changed the demography. The percentage of Bengalis in the CHT rose from 26 per cent in 1974 to 47 per cent in 2011. The Jumma people started to realize that they would soon become a minority in their own region. Officially, Bengali resettlement of the CHT was presented as an initiative to achieve a demographic balance between the plains and the CHT. However, my ethnographic study of three villages shows many complex scenarios extending beyond these factors. The rights of the Jumma people actually originated under a separate legal regime, in which they considered themselves a distinct group with their own identity, separate from that of the rest of the country. Their rights and interests were regulated and administered by traditional institutions according to customary law (Roy 2000:54). The meaning of 'customary system' in the CHT did not refer only to land rights and land management issues; rather, it designated the way in which the Jumma people led their lives, including their social, political and religious contexts. This system constituted a traditional way of life. However, the direction of the post-colonial state greatly affected the customary rights of the Jumma people. In particular, the Bengali resettlement project, with its multiple layers of intrusion, enormously affected their everyday lives. This project destroyed the existing modes of production, affecting the traditional administration body, community organizations and networks and threatening the cultural identity of ethnic minorities, with the worst sufferers often departing from the agricultural land. The following ethnographic pictures of the

Khagrachari district elucidate the significance and implications of this scenario.

4.1. Changes in the original names of localities

Changes in the names of localities are one important form of Bengali cultural dominance in the CHT region. Settlers have changed the names of localities which were originally in Jumma languages. In most cases, the settlers have imposed a new Bengali name as a symbol of their control over the Jumma region (Nasreen, 2002). The new names for some localities have reinforced the dominance of the Bengali language and Muslim religious values. In the case of Lamuchari village, I have observed that, whereas this was formerly one of the largest villages of the Mahalchari Upazilla of Khagrachari district, Bengali resettlement has divided it into several sections which have been renamed as Boro *Para* (central Lamuchari), East Lamuchari, West Lamuchari, Muslim Para and others. The Muslim *Para* was established by Bengali Muslim settlers; the name itself embodies the domination of the religion of the majority population over the community's historical Buddhist and animist beliefs. The changing of village names to ones reflecting Islamic ideology has seriously violated the traditional religious beliefs of the Jumma people. Although the place now called Muslim *Para* was previously known as *Khas* ('unused land'), many Jumma people had used it for agricultural purposes. The Bengalis have constructed many new houses there and have converted the place into a residential area. As a symbol of their takeover of this location, the settlers have imposed a new Bengali name on it. As an elderly Jumma person stated:

> Though the place of Muslim Para was previously known as Khas (unused lands), it was used for the agricultural purposes of Jumma people. After the construction of many new houses, the Bengalis turned the place into a residential area. The settlers imposed a new name in Bengali as a symbol of their settlement, as they claim[ed] the region very easily. By enacting an Islamic name 'Muslim Para', they denied our existence and religions. It is an aggressive journey of the Bengalis, a way of abolishing the Jumma culture from the region. These attitudes not only demolished our economy but also marginalized our religious values.

As shown in the above case, the vast scale of the demographic change has not only changed the names but also transformed the geographical location of many villages. The renaming of localities has violated the traditional religious values of the Jumma people as the new names are, in most cases, derived from Islam and used as a means of establishing Bengali and Muslim religious dominance. Still more overtly, Bengalis have also attacked traditional temples of the Jumma people as part of establishing their domination in the CHT region, as described in the next section.

4.2. Conflict Regarding Religious Differences

In recent decades, an increasing variety of religious institutions has become highly visible in the CHT region. While Bengali resettlement has dramatically increased the population count, it has also changed the region's overall religious scenario. The number of Islamic religious institutions has drastically increased since Bengali resettlement. The number of mosques in the CHT rose from 200 in 1974 to 592 in 1981 (Mohsin, 2003). Similarly, the number of Islamic religious schools (locally known as *madrashas*) rose to 35 by 1981. The increasing number of mosques and Islamic religious schools can be understood as part of the establishment of Bengali Muslim domination in the CHT region. During my fieldwork, I was informed that several new mosques were built in Khagrachari district after the Bengali resettlement project was initiated and that many temples were destroyed in the same period. The religious festivals of the Jumma communities were also vandalized. There are common and frequent cases of harassment of the religious leaders of the Jumma communities. In the Shalbon, Lamuchari, Babupara and Mahajan *Para* villages, approximately 10 mosques and *madrashas* have been built since the Bengali resettlement began. On the other hand, although five temples were built by different religious groups within the Jumma communities, at least four temples were destroyed in communal attacks by Bengali settlers between 1979 and 2012. The Jumma people claim that their religious values and practices are in danger. Although no exact figure is available, it is estimated that dozens of attacks took place in the CHT region from 1971 to 1993 (PCJSS, 2005; Chakma, 2010b). The main objective of these attacks was to undermine the ethical grounds of the Jumma society and to assert religious domination. Prior to the Peace Accord, the involvement of the state, security forces and non-government (Islamic) religious organizations was found to be marginalizing the religious values of the Jumma people in the Khagrachari district. Since the establishment of Islamic missionary organizations in the 1980s, conversion to Islam has become one of the most debated issues in the CHT region. For instance, the Islamic missionary organization named Al Rabita, financed from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, has been working since 1980 to convert the Jumma people from their traditional religious practices. According to a report by the CHT Commission (1991:73), 17 Marma (one of the Jumma subgroups) had converted to Islam in the village of Alikadam in the Rangamati district.

During the time of the counter-insurgency, celebrations of religious festivals in rural areas were highly controlled by state security forces. Villagers required permission from the authorities to celebrate any religious function. As stated by an elderly Jumma:

> [The] army makes us subject to obtaining prior permission from them for the

construction of our temples and any arrangements of our religious functions and festivals. They checked our every footstep, every move; from one village to another village. [The] army instructed our elder villagers to report to them if any stranger comes to our villages. They also said to let go any anti-social elements of our society; even if it is against our village elders or leaders who protest or try to protest the activities of this order.

Thus, in the pre-Accord period, the religious rights of the Jumma people of the CHT were violated in at least three ways: (i) vandalizing traditional religious festivals and institutions; (ii) conversions to the dominant religion and (iii) introduction of massive communal massacres. Army surveillance and the dominance of the Bengali Muslim religion have disrupted the celebration or practice of any religious function by the Jumma people at the village level. Thus, the Jumma people have sought to sustain their identity by fighting the dominant Muslim Bengali settlers in an effort to protect their religious values.

4.3. The Milieu of Everyday Conflict

The cultural differences between the Jumma people and the Bengalis have often created everyday forms of conflict or violence in their localities. In recent decades, conflicts between the people of the two communities can be found everywhere in the everyday life of the CHT. Forms of everyday violence appear in public places, such as roads or bus stands, marketplaces or offices, wherever the members of both communities interact with each other. Sometimes a personal matter between members of the two groups, even a simple verbal conversation, can be blown up out of proportion. I have interviewed several people about such cases in my fieldwork. Following is a case of how a conflict developed between a settler and a Jumma person called Babul Chakma:[6]

Babul Chakma is an inhabitant of Mahajan Para ("village") who has been involved in a small business [at] the Khagrachari Bazaar for 15 years. The distance of his workplace from [his] residence is about two kilometers. Usually, he uses [a] rickshaw for travelling to Khagrachari Bazaar from his residence. According to him, most of the rickshaw drivers of Khagrachari town come from the settlers' cluster village area. On September 25, 2011, he was a passenger of a Bengali rickshaw driver, coming from the local bazaar to his home in Mahajan Para ("village"). The actual fare of this journey was about 6 taka. After finishing the ride, Babul gave a 10 taka note and asked the driver to return 4 taka. However, the Bengali rickshaw driver said he would not return any money to Babul. Babul became angry with the rickshaw driver. Then the rickshaw driver gave him 4 taka. However, after two days, the rickshaw driver with some of his settler friends attacked Babul in the Khagrachari Bazaar when he was going to his workplace. It was raining and there were no other people at that time except the attackers. [The] settlers were furious, saying 'how dare you Chakku (Chakma tribe) insult Bengali?' At the same time, Babul was physically assaulted by them. [The] settlers were violent and took his money bag and umbrella.

As the above case has shown, the Jumma people are visibly harassed, often physically and mostly verbally. Bengali settlers often use insulting names for Jumma people, such as Chakku for Chakmas or Moghs for Marmas. Ethnic identity is often the most important factor that determines how other people are treated, taking precedence over economic status. Although he was economically poorer than his Jumma passenger, the rickshaw driver's conversation and attitude clearly indicated a sense of dominance over his passenger.

Unemployment and the economic insolvency of Bengali settlers are among the reasons for the everyday forms of violence. Increasingly, this behaviour can be attributed to the unfolding aggressive ethno-religious ideologies of the Bengali settlers. Settlers have admitted that they have often been involved in heinous acts, such as stealing cows, goats, poultry and agricultural products to meet their economic needs. In Lamuchari village, settlers have always targeted the houses of the Jumma people for these purposes. The Bengali businessmen of Lamuchari village are comfortably established, with well-furnished homes and other properties, but are rarely targeted by such activities. Along with economic reasons, the apparent cause of such occurrences is the Bengalis' denial of any sense of ethical existence within Jumma society. The overall scenario of ongoing violence in the CHT has caused the Jumma people not only to lose their economic possessions but also to risk losing control over their traditional culture. The context cannot be understood without discussing the connection between economics and religious issues in a holistic manner.

In summary, the causes of ongoing violence in the CHT are multifaceted and linked with land issues, customary rights, religion, militarization, Bengali resettlement and cultural antagonism. In my experience and field observation, I have seen these components continue to play the same role in different conditions. Although the militarization policy and Bengali resettlement are seen as separate at the policy level, in practical reality both state policies have mutually intervened in the lives of the Jumma people. The military have continued their operations in the CHT, and they also continue to provide support to Bengali settlers. Meanwhile, Jumma rights have continuously been compromised by improper administrative operations.

5. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF JUMMA RIGHTS IN THE CHT PEACE ACCORD 1997: DISCOURSE AND PRACTICE

On 2 December 1997, the government of Bangladesh and the PCJSS signed a peace agreement. The preamble of the Peace Accord stated that it was drafted in order to ensure the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bangladesh as well as the political, social, cultural, economic

and educational rights and socio-economic development of all citizens of the CHT region. The agreement contained four parts: (1) the general part, (2) Hill District Local Government Councils, (3) the CHT Regional Council and (4) rehabilitation, general amnesty and other issues. Though all the provisions have had significant impact at the village level, the following sections of this paper focus on the notion of 'non-tribal permanent resident' as applied to the Bengali settlers and to issues of 'upholding cultural rights' as the provisions most deeply linked to the notions of cultural violence

5.1. Upholding Cultural Rights: An Inherent Stream of the Colonial Legacy

The need for 'protection of the features of the CHT as a tribal-inhabited region' was recognized in the introductory part of the CHT Peace Accord. The revival of cultural identities became one of the central agenda items of the agreement, as stated in its preamble:

> Under the framework of the Constitution of Bangladesh and keeping full and firm confidence in the sovereignty and integrity of Bangladesh, **to uphold the political, social, cultural, educational and economic rights** of all the people of Chittagong Hill Tracts region and to expedite socio-economic development process and to preserve and respect the rights of all the citizens of Bangladesh and their development, the National Committee on Chittagong Hill Tracts, on behalf of the government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, and Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity, on behalf of the inhabitants of Chittagong Hill Tracts ... (Introduction, CHT Peace Accord, 1997) (The words in bold font are the researcher's highlighting).

Although the Accord acknowledged the Jummas' cultural rights, the Jumma people were identified as 'tribal' people in several of its clauses. For example, General Section A.1 states, 'Both the sides have recognized the need for protecting the characteristics and attaining overall development of the region considering CHT as a tribal inhabited region.' Moreover, the question of how the Peace Accord recognized the cultural rights of the Jumma people has been debated.

As we have seen, the history of conflict in the CHT was rooted in the self-recognition process of the Jumma people. In addition, in 1992, the year designated by the United Nations (UN) as the International Year of the World's Indigenous People, the Jumma started to identify themselves as indigenous people or *adivasi*, not 'tribal'. Several other international laws also encouraged the Jumma's organization and mobilization. International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 169, 'Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries', defined 'indigenous' as follows:

> ... peoples in independent countries who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, or a

geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of conquest or colonization or the establishment of present state boundaries and who, irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions.

The ILO Convention added: 'Self-identification as indigenous or tribal shall be regarded as a fundamental criterion for determining the groups to which the provisions of this Convention apply.' However, this Convention was ratified by neither the Bangladesh Constitution nor the 1997 CHT Peace Accord. The use of such terminology as 'tribal region' and 'tribal rights' reproduced the former tribalism policy once more. Serious problematic situations have arisen with regard to the conceptualization of the Jumma people as 'tribal'.

First, although the Bangladesh government has undertaken several institutional policies, these have been inadequate for the revival or upholding of the cultural rights of the Jumma people. The establishment of the Tribal Cultural Institutes and the *Khudra Nri-Gosthi Sangskritik Pratisthan Aine* (Small Ethnic Group Cultural Institute) through Act 23 of 2010 has been most frequently cited in this regard. Although three Tribal Cultural Institutes have been established in the CHT region, the Jumma people have argued that this has done little to identify the basic cultural problems of the local people. Most initiatives of these cultural institutes have concentrated on promoting tourism in the CHT region. At times, their function has been limited to entertaining high-ranking government and non-government officials with colourful presentations of 'tribal' dances, songs and a few publications. As these institutes have been mostly located at the district level, their connection with rural villages has been very minimal. Similarly, the activities of the institutes' museums have remained confined to entertaining tourists with the colourful dresses and ornaments of the mysterious local 'tribes'.

The state has presented local cultures as exotic showcases during the celebration of national events, such as Independence Day or Victory Day. On these occasions, the dances and music of 'other' cultures are paraded in public as a demonstration of diversity (Guhathakurata, 2003). However, the communities are portrayed in a passive manner, never as thinking and creative agents seeking transformation of their lives and of the system under which they live. Act 23 of 2010 was enacted after lengthy criticism of the 'tribal' notion by civil society organizations. In this regard, changing the names of related institutions was seen as most significant. For instance, the Tribal Cultural Institute, Bandarban, became known as the Khudra Nri-Gosthir Sangskritik Institute, Bandarban. However, the notion of the identities of small ethnic groups changed only in the titles; the functions remained unchanged (PCJSS, 2010).

Second, the use of the 'tribal' notion in seeking to revive the Jumma people's identity rights was problematic in the context of the complex historical background as well as the root causes of conflict in the CHT

region. The idea of 'tribal' people itself reflected the larger history of Orientalism, which formed the basis for how colonial and new post-colonial interests controlled the people (Said, 1978). In colonial times, the 'tribal' concept was a sign of colonial difference, producing an ever-widening chasm between the subjects and objects of colonial knowledge (Dirks, 2006). As in other indigenous territories throughout the world, tribalism was first introduced in the CHT by the British colonial government. However, five decades after the end of British rule, this policy was in effect renewed in the Peace Accord. In this regard, as one Jumma informant stated:

> Tribalism never improved our identity issue; the revival of cultural identity is only propaganda. Colonial attitudes have [been] further reproduced in the Accord. This kind of attitude would only bring disaster. It looks like the daggers are already drawn from the government side. However, many people are getting tired of movements, so it is time to create a pre-Accord situation.

Finally, in the post-Accord regime, the issue of the Jumma people's cultural identity has led to much debate and controversy, and on occasions, it has brought Jumma leaders and state officials into sharp disagreement. For instance, in my fieldwork, I observed World Indigenous Day on 7 August 2011 in Khagrachari town. Many student forums such as the Bangladesh Marma Students' Council; Tripura Students' Forum, Bangladesh; Mro Students' Council; Tanchangya Students' Welfare Forum; Chak Students' Council; Bawm Students' Association; Khiyang Students' Council and Khumi Students' Council within the Khagrachari district organized a rally, meetings and processions to demand recognition of the indigenous peoples in the Constitution. The police repeatedly attacked the participating groups; some Jumma activists were injured and one Jumma student was arrested.

Although the Peace Accord affirmed the goal of upholding cultural rights, the issue of tribalism has not yet been acknowledged as a leading root cause of the conflict. Recognition of their identity remains the central demand of the Jumma people. This is part of the legacy of the signing of the Peace Accord in 1997. The agreement was contracted on behalf of the Bangladesh government by Mr Abul Hasnat Abdullah, chair of the parliamentary committee formed to resolve the issue, while Mr Jotyirindro Bodhipryo (Shantu) Larma, the chair of the PCJSS, signed on behalf of the Jumma people of the CHT (Chowdhury, 2012). However, many other local political parties such as the Hill People's Federation, Hill Students' Federation and Hill Women's Federation rejected the treaty, protesting that the Accord failed to endorse many important demands including self-recognition of the Jumma people. They continue to demand to be recognized as *adibashi* ('indigenous people'), not as 'tribal' (*upo-jati*). Their ongoing resistance on behalf of the cultural rights of the Jumma people has created further conflict between them and the security forces.

5.2. When Resistance Turns into Massive Conflict

Although the Jumma people have been severely victimized by militarization and the Bengali resettlement project, they have not ceased acting as agents of resistance. Indeed, they have a long history of resistance, ranging from the Shanti Bahini insurgency to grassroots-level movements. The Peace Accord controlled the Shanti Bahini's armed movement, but many grassroots organizations have developed their own forms of resistance against Bengali domination. Building on historical perspectives, I argue that the Jumma rejection of domination by the state has resulted in incidents of conflict between the two groups, which continue to occur at the village level. Moreover, village-level resistance has even expanded into conflicts in other villages or across the entire CHT region. One incident in Mahajan *Para* is notable in this regard:[7]

In response to the Bengali attack on their traditional system of land ownership, culture, and religion, Jummas have resisted in various ways, i.e., organizing meetings, rallies, or protesting [against] the attackers physically. On February 23, 2010, [these] kind of rallies were organized by Jumma people in the Shapla Square area of Khagrachari town for protesting [against] the land-grabbing activities of Bengali settlers. Especially, Jummas called the rally for protesting [against] the illegal settling of Bengalis in another area of the CHT region, named Baghaichari in Rangamati district. However, during this rally, [the] Jumma people of Khagrachari town witnessed an incident of large-scale violence. The conflict began when groups of the Bengali settlers belonging to the Sama Odhikar Andolon ("Equal Rights Movement") and Parbatya Bangalee Chhatra Parishad (PBCP) or ("Hill Bengali Students' Council") chased a procession at Shapla Square area of Khagrachari town. Settlers were in [an] aggressive mood, and had started to beat the Jumma protesters arbitrarily. [The] Jummas also initiated counter-attacks on the Bengalis. Then the conflict spread out into [the] whole Khagrachari town including other localities. Within six hours of this incident, many of the settlers came forward to attack Jumma villages. A huge communal attack was initiated on the Mahajan Para ("village") in Khagrachari district town by Bengali settlers. Six other villages in the city were attacked on a similar scale. The attackers were organized and well equipped. Around seven of the Jumma houses were burnt down and 40 Jumma people of the Mahajan Para ("village") were injured in this attack. On the other hand, some Jumma villagers captured some Bengali attackers. The situation turned into a huge conflict. A Bengali was killed and many other Bengalis were also injured. After the death of a Bengali person, a new style of violence was initiated by the settlers. This was obvious in the use of kerosene oil that they shipped to their attack location. The typical scenario of this new style of violence involved looting Jumma houses, then burning them up with this makeshift but extremely powerful fire. Settlers then set fire on Milanpur, Madhupur, and Upali Para areas where at least 40 houses were set on fire. At least seven injured Jummas were admitted to the Khagrachari General Hospital while 12 others recovered after receiving first aid. This was followed by setting fire [to] Sat Bheiya Para area where at least 25 houses of the Jumma people were completely burnt to ashes. Residence staff quarters of Khagrachari Government High School and the PCJSS office at Larma Square of Khagrachari town were set [on] fire.

These attacks showed not only careful planning but also an elite level of support, without which it would have been impossible for poor Bengali settlers to collect a large amount of fuel. As reported by villagers of Mahajan *Para*, this kind of violence on the part of the Bengalis could be carried out only with active military cooperation. All these initiatives have been designed to establish Bengali domination or militarization.

This collaboration between the army and Bengali settler organizations has frequently hampered the Jumma people's resistance in recent years. When the Jumma people have declared a protest meeting or procession, Bengali settlers would announce another programme at the same place in order to disrupt the Jumma event. Jumma resistance to such behaviour would result in an incident of conflict between the two groups.

6. IMPACT ON LOCAL POLITICS

The Peace Accord failed to establish peaceful co-existence between different political stakeholders within the Jumma people. Varying levels of satisfaction and dissatisfaction among different groups have resulted in within-group feuds between Jumma political stakeholders. When the conflict between the United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) and the PCJSS began, the ordinary people in the Jumma communities termed it a 'brotherhood conflict'. On the other hand, some of the Bengali settlers' organizations such as Sama Adhikar Andolan and the PBCP rejected the Accord, arguing that it granted 'too many allowances to the tribal interests'. The conflict is not only inherent in the Bengali–Jumma or army – Shanti Bahini dichotomy, but it is also prominent in different in-group feuds at various cross-cutting layers. Without an investigation of the different layers of the conflict, the context cannot be properly explained.

6.1. Politics of Bengali Organizations

Since 1997, some groups of Bengali settlers have opposed the peace process, contending that the Peace Accord is too concerned with the Jumma people. Sama Adhikar Andolan (Equal Rights Movement) was later established to ensure the rights of Bengali settlers. The number of Bengali organizations has now increased to six: Parbatya Gono Parishad (Hill Tracts People Council), Bengali Chhatra Parishad (Bengali Students Council), Parbatya Nagorik Parishad (Hill Tracts Citizens Council), Parbatya Bengali Chhatra Oikya Parishad (Hill Tracts Bengali Students Unity Council), Parbatya Juba Front (Hill Tracts Youth Front) and Parbatya Chattagram Sama Adhikar Andolan (CHT Equal Rights Movement). The Jumma people have claimed that this growing number of Bengali organizations is due to support from the military,[8] who want to

foment conflict in the CHT region because the strife would justify the army's continued presence in the region in the name of maintaining law and order. The constant military support given to Bengali settlers has succeeded in achieving this goal, creating an unbreakable cycle which only brings suffering to the Jumma people.

In recent years, Bengali organizations have frequently hampered democratic and peaceful programme held by Jumma organizations. If a Jumma organization announces a meeting, a Bengali organization declares that it will hold a programme at the same place; in most cases, this situation compels the authorities to impose legal action, invoking Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code,[9] under which they can ban all programme by both parties. For instance, when the Jumma people of Dighinala Upazilla scheduled a rally on 3 July 2014 to protest against the establishment of BGB camps in Jumma villages, the Hill Bengali Students' Council organized another meeting at the same time and at the same venue. The local administration in Dighinala clamped down, citing Section 144. The main objective of the Bengali organization was actually to motivate its own populace with its ultra-nationalist and communal slogans to achieve its desired objectives. The leaders of Sama Adhikar Andolan, which demands 'equal rights' for Bengali settlers in the region, has called for the re-establishment of army camps in the CHT region in order to establish these so-called equal rights. When the government initiated actions to implement some clauses of the Accord, the Bengali organizations protested by observing a day-long strike in the whole CHT region. I frequently observed similar behaviours during my research. For example, after the Bangladesh government initiated the CHT Land Dispute Resolution Commission, the Bengali organizations declared a dawn-to-dusk general strike in Khagrachari on 2 June 2013. All modes of motor vehicles stayed off the roads and highways, and all shops and markets were closed during the strike.

According to informants from Mahajan *Para*, the administration has not been active enough to handle the groups from both sides. Moreover, the Bengali organizations have gained strength, growing in members and branches all over the CHT region, leading the settlers into violence and serving as an instrument of the militarization policies in the CHT. Moreover, the settlers' organizations have initiated attacks on human rights activists attempting to conduct fact finding. Although the Bengali attacks have been inspired and supported by the army, many Bengali settlers have participated quite willingly, believing that this is their only way to protect themselves or to establish their right to exist in the Jumma region. The army and other security forces have exploited such occasions of violence to justify their presence. The settlers and national security forces have created networks and alliances to advance their own interests and to maintain their presence in the CHT. These complex mechanisms

of power have only served to exacerbate regional conflicts. As the headman of Mahajan *Para* argued, 'If the government does not handle the Bengali organizations seriously, we are going to see them in a more violent form.'

6.2. Experiences of In-group Feuds at the Village Level

Although the Peace Accord disarmed the Shanti Bahini rebels, the dissatisfaction of different stakeholders has increased, with conflict distributed in multiple layers. More specifically, conflict between the UPDF and the PCJSS has seriously affected the livelihood of the ordinary Jumma people. The UPDF believes that the Accord has failed to address the basic demands of the Jumma people. These demands, which have also been articulated by the PCJSS, include regional autonomy, constitutional recognition of the indigenous Jumma people, restoration of land rights, withdrawal of the military and withdrawal of the Bengali settlers from the CHT. Moreover, the Accord contains no reference to accountability for past human rights abuses, which have bordered on genocide. The UPDF has argued that, without fulfilment of these basic demands and accountability for human rights abuses, a genuine and permanent peace cannot be established in the CHT. The UPDF was born as a result of this perception.

In recent decades, both Jumma groups have displayed their military power as part of their determination to control the Hill region. According to the villagers of Mahajan and Lamuchari *Paras*, to maintain their party organizations, the activists and leaders of these groups have extorted financial support under the name of 'protection money' from the ordinary Jumma people. This scenario is prominent in the whole CHT region. Where the UPDF dominates a village, its activists forcibly squeeze money from the inhabitants. Similar practices can be seen in the PCJSS-dominated areas. Those who refuse to pay the extortion money risk torture or abduction by the party activists. It was reported to me that when a person is employed in Dhaka city or in another plains area, his family members are forced to pay extra as his economic condition is comparatively better than that of other Jumma people. As Shuprem Chakma (age 28), a member of a Jumma family in Mahajan *Para*, explained:

> Most of the families of our village are forced to pay pressure money to the political leaders. While I am doing a job in Dhaka city, my family have to pay extra extortion money than other families who are residing in the Mahajan Para ("village"). My parents could not save their lives without paying this extra money. My case is not rare one: it is happening to every family whose members are engaged in any job in other cities.

In the CHT, it is hard to find a village where the people are not dominated by either UPDF members or PCJSS members. However, there

appears to be no overlap between the two areas of control. If a village is captured by the PCJSS, the UPDF workers are unable to collect extortion money from the PCJSS-controlled area. Moreover, opposition workers have no justification for going into the village for any ordinary purpose.

The dominant activists are on patrol all the time, searching for opposition workers in the respective villages. The common people who do not belong to either side cannot go to other villages at night due to the patrolling activities of the activists or their leaders. As stated by a villager from Mahajan *Para*:

> Last year [in the] winter season (January 2014), at night-time, when I was coming back from Mahalchari, my brother in-law's place, some young people captured me by saying "you look like a member of an opposition party". I was forced to stay [the] whole night in a house. Next morning, when they found my details as I am an official of [a] non-government organization, I was free from them.

On the other hand, Jumma villagers involved in agri-business have to pay illegal tolls to local political leaders in order to take their goods out of their villages. As reported by villagers, the PCJSS and the UPDF have accused each other of attacks, killings, abductions, death threats and other such activities. The situation has become extremely tense as the UPDF and the PCJSS are locked in a long-standing clash and have turned the whole CHT region into a 'valley of death'. Nobody comes forward to file any complaints with the police about the murders or illegal tolls.

The realm of UPDF-versus-PCJSS politics is strongly bipolar and extremely confrontational in nature. Since 1997, the almost equal strength of the two major local political parties has contributed to the emergence of a duopoly over the CHT's regional political system. This 'winner-take-all' power game in the CHT is based not on ethnic or class differences, but on each group's ability to acquire land and business licences and tenders, collect extortion money, gain power in institutional bodies, etc. The nature of these power grabs, to use a Bengali term, looks like the politics of *char dokhol*[10] (the occupation of *char* lands), which is more typical of a thriving peasantry than of a burgeoning bourgeois democratic movement. To date, the Regional Councils have been dominated by the PCJSS and government-nominated members. When the chair of the PCJSS is selected as the head of the Regional Council, this selection violates a clause in the Peace Accord, which states that this post is to remain unelected. Moreover, the Peace Accord could not satisfy ordinary people in the CHT who are not affiliated with the PCJSS, due to the domination of the PCJSS in the Regional Council and Hill District Councils. The Jumma people who were not actively involved in regional politics felt deprived and betrayed due to their poor representation on the Regional Council. Similarly, the stakes of the competition between the PCJSS and the UPDF have helped to institutionalize political violence as an instrument of power seeking. In this political culture, the rest of society is forced to

side with the more powerful party if they wish to participate in and receive benefits from the system.

7. MAINTAINING LAW AND ORDER

In the post-Accord period, the CHT Regional Council has been provided with a legal basis from which to exercise supervisory authority over the traditional legal authorities (i.e. the local headmen or *Karbari*) in place of the tribal chief or central government authority. Although the Accord recognized customary laws with its reiteration of the administrative roles of the chiefs and the headmen, it failed to clarify how the problem of land occupied by the Bengali settlers would be addressed. As the *Karbari* of Lamuchari stated:

> Legally, I am the authorized person to maintain the law and order of the village but my power is decreasing day by day. After the Bengali resettlement project, many Bengali people start[ed] to live in this village. The Bengalis do not know the traditional system of local administration and they do not accept us as [the] leader of their community. The Bengali people are the majority in this village and they are ignoring our traditional laws. Moreover, in the cases of conflict and resettlement, the administration and military are always interfering in making decisions. [The] effective traditional administration system does not exist in recent years.

One key problem at the village level relates to customs and traditions governing the ownership of land. The inadequate protection of customary rights over the land has caused complex difficulties in the CHT region. Whereas the Jumma people have managed the land in accordance with customary common property rights, the Bengalis have frequently claimed parcels of land by defining them as *khas* or 'unused land'. New settlers, with the help of Bengali officials and the earlier Bengali settlers, have continuously occupied the Jumma land during the post-Accord period. As reported by the *Karbari* of Lamuchari village, at least half a dozen Bengali cluster villages[11] have already been established in the Lamuchari area. Most of the land occupied by these clusters was previously agricultural land of the Jumma people, which the Bengalis have forcibly occupied. The Accord did not refer specifically to land-based violence and no provision was made for punishment of the guilty; however, the Jumma people have been suffering from the loss of their traditional culture with regard to their customary land rights.

In the post-Accord context, the Jumma people have suffered heavily from the attacks by Bengali settlers. Villagers argue that the attacks are legitimized by police negligence towards the violence. Rather than directly controlling the attacks so as to safeguard Jumma cultural rights, the state government tended to simply set the agenda and to define the important 'other' in the state. The state and its ideology have thus contributed further to legitimizing attacks on the Jumma people. This ideology is shared by

the administrative sectors of the CHT population, including government officers and the army and police personnel. This has led to situations in which police and security forces have made no attempt to stop acts of violence taking place against the Jumma people. The problems now plaguing the CHT would not be so difficult to resolve if the Jummas' customary land ownership system and a balanced, just legal power system were established.

8. CONCLUSION

This study has investigated the consequences of the CHT Peace Accord, with special reference to the dynamics of the negotiation process among the local people through their everyday life experiences and realizations. Ethnographic evidence has suggested that different stakeholders have played very different roles at the grassroots level. The process of surveillance and the application of power have been executed mostly by military operations. On one hand, the Peace Accord has reduced the extent of the armed conflict between the army and Shanti Bahini, but on the other hand, many in-group feuds have been ignited due to the dissatisfaction felt by various Jumma political stakeholders. The ordinary Jumma people have believed that the government is seeking to provoke or support these various Jumma political organizations in an attempt to 'divide and conquer'. Thus, the Jumma people have become victims of many forms of unlawful activity, such as forced evictions, harassment by the police and army, and false police cases–all of which have resulted in severe insecurity for their families, especially the Jumma women.

Safety has been a major concern for both the Jumma people and the Bengali settlers. Although the Bengalis have had a privileged relationship with the army, they have had to negotiate in the context of the historical legacy and the current reality. Land ownership is still perceived as the key area of conflict between the Bengali settlers and the Jumma people. Everyday forms of conflict, such as communal violence, verbal abuse, physical torture and vandalized religious programme, have aimed at disrupting the basic rights of ordinary people. Like the UPDF, some Bengali organizations have also not been in favour of the Peace Accord. Although their narrations of the same event have been different, their positions in the peace discourse have been similar. In this regard, it is important to recognize how identity politics plays out in a real-life setting. Structural bipolarity, as I have argued, does not result in bipolarity in the field, among the common people; surveillance has not only created fear for certain groups of people, but has negatively affected the whole community.

Religious and ethnic differences were found in the CHT region at every moment and in every sphere of life, but such differences also exist in the plains region of Bangladesh. My research sought to address the question

of why the CHT has become a particularly hot conflict zone, as well as investigating why Bengali nationalism and Jumma nationalism have created a dichotomous conflict. I have found that the historical process and certain politico-economic goals have resulted in the construction of this dichotomous conflict and have shaped the discourse on the root causes of the conflict.

Even a simple disagreement between two people from different ethnic communities can lead to violence on a massive scale. However, the Jumma people feel especially bitter frustration due to their consensus that the administration has failed miserably to protect their rights. Identity recognition, protection of customary rights and establishment of a stable legal system are absolutely imperative to stop these types of conflict in the CHT region. However, applying too dichotomous an understanding of the conflict is in itself inefficient because it falls into the trap of the dominant peace discourse, which has failed to locate the ever-evolving characteristics of conflict and co-existence in the CHT.

NOTES

1. The findings of this research are based on several periods of fieldwork from 2011 and 2015. The research used mostly qualitative methods, including interviews, focus group discussions and participant observation, analysed by multiple means ranging from a functional approach to discourse analysis.
2. The Jumma people are not homogeneous in terms of their religious and ethnic backgrounds. Hierarchical relationships exist within the 12 ethnic communities among the Jumma, and the identity of the Jumma people is dominated by the one of these 12, the Chakma population. Although the Jumma people have several ethnic factions, politically they function in a more collective fashion in pursuing their rights in the region. The notion of 'Jumma' has a strong political meaning (van Schendel, 1992). The PCJSS was formed as a political party by activists who came from different ethnic groups of the Jumma people. The activists were unified under the umbrella of Jumma nationalism, and the establishment of constitutional recognition of the Jumma people was their main demand.
3. The important legacy of colonialism was rooted in cultural superiority and changed the economic mode of life of the colonized people. At the most basic level, cultural superiority was dependent on the 'divide and conquer' policy and on the distinction between 'tribal' and 'non-tribal' colonized people (Dirks, 1999). 'Tribes' were seen as savages with immoral, exotic religious and sexual practices (Marriott, 2003; Xaxa, 2005). They were also represented as practising primitive modes of subsistence agriculture. For this reason, colonial rulers forced them to change their existing economic arrangements, although the extent of these demands varied from area to area (Prakash, 1992).
4. Hundreds of families from the coastal areas of Chittagong and Noakhali and from the areas of Chandpur affected by river erosion were transported by the truck to the CHT. The families were housed first in makeshift camps and were later given housing materials and cash. They also received land for cultivation under the land lease laws. See Ziauddin Choudhury, http://archive.thedailystar.net/forum/2010/april/broken.htm.

5. On 18 July 1996, the Government of Bangladesh stated that about 8,000 Jummas, army members and civilians had been killed in the CHT to date. However, the PCJSS challenged this figure, claiming that the number was much higher than declared. See Mohaimen (2010).
6. Interview conducted with Babul Chakma (48) on 6 October 2011. This name is a pseudonym, used at the informant's request to protect his anonymity.
7. The information in this case study is based on interviews with the villagers of Mahajan *Para* in September 2011.
8. As Chowdhury argued, 'the army in its bid to repress the demands of tribals, formed and patronized different settlers' organizations to create communal tension and conflict' (2012:115). The CHT Commission also stated that the Bengali organization was still active in the CHT and was backed up by the army (CHT Commission, 1994:32). The alliance between the army and Bengali settlers has been observed on several occasions in the CHT. On 11 May 2008, Sama Adhikar Andolan organized a seminar at the National Press Club in Dhaka. The speakers at this seminar urged the government to re-establish army camps in all sensitive areas in the CHT in order to secure so-called equal rights for the settlers (see PCJSS report, 2008).
9. Section 144 is a section of the Indian/Pakistani and Bangladeshi Codes of Criminal Procedure which prohibits the assembly of five or more persons, holding of public meetings and carrying of firearms, and which can be invoked for up to two months. It also gives the magistracy the power to immediately issue an order in urgent cases of nuisance or apprehended danger.
10. Mohsin and Guhathakurta (2007:50, cited in Islam, 2013) used the term *char dokhol* to discuss the bipolar political system of Bangladesh.
11. Bangladesh attempted to control its urban population growth by resettling thousands of migrants in special villages, which are known as cluster villages. The project was an attempt to resettle landless peasants and create employment through new farming methods. For details, see http://www.irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/.

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