Rights of Indigenous People in Bangladesh

A Case Study in CHTs (Chittagong Hill Tracts)

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADB</td>
<td>Asian Development Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASA</td>
<td>Association for Social Advancement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBS</td>
<td>Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BDT</td>
<td>Bangladesh Taka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRAC</td>
<td>Bangladesh Rural Advancement Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHT</td>
<td>Chittagong Hill Tracts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHTDF</td>
<td>Chittagong Hill Tract Development Facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>Focus Group Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOVT</td>
<td>Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INGO</td>
<td>International-Non-Governmental Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPRSP</td>
<td>Interim-Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSS</td>
<td>Jana Samhati Smmiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KII</td>
<td>Key Informant Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGED</td>
<td>Local Government Engineering Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Government Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCJSS</td>
<td>Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Smmiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDB</td>
<td>Power Distribution Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRSP</td>
<td>Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TR</td>
<td>Test Relief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nation Development Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASA</td>
<td>Water Supply Authority</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Abstract

The CHT peace accord signed between the Government of Bangladesh and the PCJSS (Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanhati Samiti) in 1997 which recognized the re-establishment of the rights of indigenous people with the formation of local and regional councils as controlling and supervisory bodies over land and land management, law and order, civil administration, development programs; food, health, education, water and sanitation, forest and environment and many more. After more than a decade of signing the peace accord, it did not implement as historically the people are exploited. Human rights have been severely violated in the region for many years of the peace accord though the area is economically sound. In relating to the peace accord, the main argument of this thesis is to present the nature of the exclusion, deprivation, protect and prospects, economic rights of the ‘adivasi’ people especially Chakma in the CHTs in food and social security, health, water and sanitation, education and income via social policy perspective through using both of qualitative and quantitative method. In concerning to the objectives, the study has exposed that the income of the Chakma people in Sonai and Mayni is lower than the rest of the people of the country. They excluded from social safety net program and they have lack of social security. The study has also evidenced that the people have no access to safe drinking water and hygienic sanitation. They live in the fragile houses where have no any necessary household chores or furniture. In comparing to the education of the country, their literacy rate is lower than the mainstream people. In the Sonai and Mayni, health related service providing quality is not so good. The indigenous people need more care and the ‘social policy’ perspective has helped to play vital role in such situation.

Key words: Peace Accord, Indigenous People, Human Rights, Exclusion, Deprivation, Problems and Prospects, Economic Rights, Social Policy.
Chapter One

1.1 Introduction and Background

The idea behind the study is to evaluate the ethnic minority situation in Bangladesh, in particular the state affairs of Chakma people belonging to the CHTs. The CHTs is blessed with beautiful natural surroundings, hilly topography, gardens, forests, green zones and winding roads. In addition, its cultural assets make the CHT attractive to visitors. The prospect of new economic activities and harvesting of natural resources are also well known. The CHTs timber is of the best quality in the country and many other cash crops including rice, turmeric, pepper, vegetables and fruits are also cultivated. It is also major supplier of hydroelectric power to the country. And many other industries such as Karnafuli Paper Mill, Rayon Mill, and jute mill have been established in this region. In this way, the CHT is a strategically important region for the Government of Bangladesh both economically and militarily. But historically, the ethnic minority people in this region are exploited by the different ruling class. The overall situation of the different ethnic groups of this area is not satisfactory with an agonized state of human rights, extreme poverty, imminent ethnic conflict, political unrest, and legal and illegal expropriation of lands and a steady influx of Bengali settlers in the region.

1.1.1 Ethnic Minorities in Bangladesh

The accuracy of data about the total ‘adibasi’ population and the number of ‘adibasi’ groups in Bangladesh is subject to doubt. Bangladesh is inhabited by approximately 2 million ethnic minorities.1 The Census of 2000 reported that the CHT tribes consist of 501,144 persons which is only 0.5% of the total population of Bangladesh. According to Rahim, the ‘tribal’ population of Bangladesh is concentrated in the CHT and in the Mymensingh, Sylhet and Rajshahi regions.2 The total ‘adibasi’ population in Bangladesh was 897,828 in 1981.3 Adnan using this data reported that during the time the total CHT ‘adibasi’, population was 455,000, or 61.07 % of the total population of the CHT.4 In 1991, the total ‘adibasi’ population of the CHT had increased in

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3 Peiris 1998, p.34, Political Conflicts in Bangladesh” Ethnic Studies Report xvi (1)
number, but decreased as a percentage to 51.43% of the total population of the area. The reduction in proportion is due to the influx of Bengali settlers.⁵

1.1.2 Indigenous People and Chakma in the CHT

The CHT is still unofficially treated as a restricted and administratively unique region. Sometimes, it is portrayed by governmental security forces and officials to people from other districts as an unsafe, dangerous and very remote hilly area. It portrays the hill people as a local majority ethnic group who are unfriendly to the Bengali people. Some media news and programs on ethnic minority people have contributed to a more positive mindset among readers and viewers about CHTs. The ‘adibasi’ student forums are also working to communicate a more accurate portrayal of the CHTs and its people. It is noteworthy that some scholars, NGOs, members of civil society and some politicians are advocating a more sympathetic view towards the indigenous people of the country. There is another school holds that as a densely populated country, Bangladesh cannot allow a separate hilly area only for indigenous inhabitants and they assert that all Bangladeshis should have the right to settle in the CHTs and no distinction should be made between ‘adibasi’ and newer settlers and Bengali settlement in the CHTs has started from 1960s.

There are two schools of thought as to the origin and background of the Chakma. Most evidence suggests that they came from central Myanmar and Arakan with groups such as the Sak (Chak, Thek), and subsequently intermarried with Bengalis. Chakma are known as Thek by the Burmese, and Tui-thek by the Kuki, another aboriginal group in the CHT. Van Schendel (1992) described one interview in detail taken by Francis Buchanan. During his journey to the area in 1790s Buchanan interviewed people and inquired them about their own ‘nation’ or ‘tribe’ as well as about others in the hills. Buchanan wrote:

“I found that the men, except a few words, understood no other language [than Bengali]. They say that they are the same with the Sak of Roang or Arakan: that originally, they came from the country; and that on account of their having lost their native language, and not having properly acquired the Bengalese, they are commonly called in ridicule Doobadse. They call themselves

Saksa, which word corrupted has, I suppose, given rise to their Bengalese name Sagma or Chakma.”

Indeed, this quotation claims a historical root of the Chakma population in CHT. This source claims Arakan as the place of origin of Chakma population, an alternative theory holds that the Chakma migrated to the Chittagong hills from Champaknagar in northern India (Banglapedia 2006), acquiring their name from their place of origin. The theory claims that the Chakma left Champaknagar for Arakan in Burma where they lived for around a century, before leaving for Bangladesh in or around sixteenth century when Bangladesh was governed by Muslim rulers, i.e. before the arrival of British. Whatever their precise origin, it is evident from both the above-mentioned theories that the Chakma lived in Arakan before they migrated to Bangladesh.

At the time of the Burmese wars (1784 A.D.), Chakma were driven out from Arakan by the Mughs and forced to enter into the CHT. Bessaignet (1958) states that, “By the end of the eighteenth century, as a result of Burmese invasions, two-thirds of the population of Arakan is supposed to have fled to Chittagong Hill Tracts.” They dwell in the central and northern portions, or rather less than half of the district.

The Chakma are Buddhists, having followed the teachings of Gautama Buddha for centuries. The vast majority are followers of the Hunyan sect of Theravada Buddhism, which incorporates aspects of Animist and Hindu beliefs, such as worship of Siva and Kali, and indigenous gods and spirits. Some foreign and local missionaries are evangelizing in the CHT. This occasionally leads to tension; misunderstandings and unrest, as the traditional Buddhist Chakma perceive these activities as a threat towards their religion.

The Chakma language is called Changma Vaj. They have their own script known as Ojhopath, the language belongs to the Indo-European family of languages and has close links with Pali, Assamese and Bengali, as well as similarities to Mon Khmer and Burmese. It is heavily influenced by neighboring Chittagonian, an Eastern Indo-Aryan language closely related to

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8 Ishaq, 1971, p.33, Bangladesh District Gazetteers: Chittagong Hill Tracts, Establishment Division, Ministry of Cabinet Affairs, Government of Bangladesh
9 Ibid 1971, p.33
10 www.nationmaster.com 2009
Bengali. Many elderly Chakma still sign their names in the Chakma script, but most Chakma youths learn only Bengali and English at school, and thus no longer use the script. Not even pre-primary level or house and community-based education offer Chakma language training or education.12

There are approximately 300,000 Chakma living in the Rangamati and Khagrachhari districts of the Chittagong division. Another 80,000 Chakma live in the Indian State of Mizoram and another 20,000 are found in Myanmar. There are further around 100,000 Chakma people in the foothills of the Himalayas in Arunachal Pradesh in India. Some Chakma have also migrated to Australia, Canada, Britain and the USA in recent years.13 The following table shows the number of Chakma Population in the CHT:

**Table 1: Chakma Population in the CHT, 1872 -1991**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Chakma population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1872</td>
<td>28097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>44392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>124,762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>140,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>230,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>239,417</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Adnan (2004. p.15)*

This table has shown the remarkable increase in the population of Chakma. Based on this source, I calculate the following mean yearly rate of Chakma population growth in the CHT.

**Table 2: Mean Yearly Rate of Growth**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Mean yearly rate of growth (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1872-1901</td>
<td>1.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901-1951</td>
<td>2.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951-1981</td>
<td>2.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-1991</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Adnan (2004. p.15)*

This figure shows that the mean yearly rate of growth has declined to 0.40 percent in 1981 to 1991 from 2.07 percent during 1951-1981. Such declining rates in 1981 to 1991 might have been
the consequences of political oppression, unrest, and insurgent during military government of Bangladesh.

The Chakma were originally shifting cultivators, however, nowadays they practice both shifting and permanent agriculture. They traditionally used hoe cultivation but have recently begun to use the plow (Encyclopedia 2008). The Chakma make many of their household items such as beds, boxes, and storage receptacles using bamboo. The houses themselves are predominantly made of bamboo and for so many uses of it in the lifestyle Chakma, the Chakma has been described as a ‘bamboo civilization’.

1.1.3 Chakma Population in Sonai and Mayni

According to an official document, the ‘tribal’ population in Langadu Upazila is 17,204 out of a total population of 66,470 and the ratio of Bengali to indigenous inhabitants is 75:25. The ratio of ‘adibasi’ inhabitants to Bengali settlers has decreased sharply in the study area. The official data source states that the total population in the Maynimuk union is 13,587. The ratio of Bengali to tribal people in the union is 91:9. This proportion is not evenly representative of the entire CHT region.

In terms of total population of Bangladesh, the ethnic minorities are not a big number, but they are very much significant in the context of their cultural heritage, tradition, strategic setting especially due to border areas of Bangladesh. I will look into the current situation of Chakma ethnic minority of Sonai and Mayni locality, Langadu, CHT to understand and analyze the State’s views towards the ethnic minority of Bangladesh.

The majority Bengalis and historically British and Pakistan hold hegemonic power over the ‘adivasi’ in the domain of politics, economics and administration through various state machineries including constitution, formal and informal laws and policies. National and local level business, enterprises are fully occupied and controlled by the Bengalis. For these reasons poverty level and development of indigenous people vis-à-vis national average is quite low.

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14 Banglapedia, 2006, Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Dhaka, Bangladesh
15 Statistics Section at Langadu Upazila Parishad, 2001, Basic Statistics of Langadu Upazila (Langadu Upazilar Moulik Porishonkhan shomuho), Upazila Statistics Office, Langadu, Rangamati
There are significant differences in human capital assets (education and health) and occupational attainment between the Bengalis and the ‘adivasi’. There is also discrimination in public social assistance and services, labor market for the indigenous people.

Ethnic conflict is a recurrent feature in South Asian politics. Bangladesh is no exception in this regard, having already suffered a long-drawn conflict in relation to ethnic minorities in the CHT; a conflict which remains continuous. This is manifested in the forms of numerous killings, oppression from the government and the settlers and in mistrust among different groups in this region. Such conflicts also create barrier to economic development and upward social mobility. Chakma is one of the main victims among different ‘adibasi’ group. This study intends to look closely at the conflict and its consequences, as well as into possible strategies of conflict management after signing peace accord in 1997.

1.2 Social Policy and Exclusion

Social policy has evolved from Fabian social administration to social policy. The idea of looking at the CHT situation from a social conditional point of view was developed from a sociological standpoint. It is clear that as an academic discipline in social sciences, economic history cannot play the roles of practitioners or activists. However, economic history can play a vital role in highlighting the real problems of a particular society, their causes and possible remedies. Economical inquiry is designed to observe as neutrally as possible the ethnic life, as well as the economics, power issues and political aspects, which are closely linked with social policy.

Well-designed ‘social policy’\textsuperscript{16} can foster the upward social mobility of disadvantaged ethnic groups. By providing the services and shelter required by marginalized groups within a nation, an appropriate ‘social policy’ can ameliorate contemporary ethnic tensions while also fostering if not nationalism, at least loyalty to the country. Contrary to some rhetoric, not all ethnic minority groups around the world are claiming independent nationhood or contesting the boundaries of sovereignty. On the contrary, many of them aim only to minimize their vulnerability within the society and nation in which they exist. Thus, social policy can play a crucial role in defusing

\textsuperscript{16} It can refer to guidelines, principles, legislation and activities that affect the living conditions conducive to human welfare, such as a person's quality of life.
tensions by promoting upward mobility of marginalized ethnic groups, thereby promoting sustainable social development.

Moreover, social policy is needed to establish and promote ‘civic nationalism’\(^{17}\), which in my understanding is more liberal and secular than ethnic nationalism. “Civic nationalism is deemed to be more virtuous and liberal, whereas ethnic nationalism is generally seen as dangerous and exclusive”\(^{18}\).

The multidisciplinary approach is conceived in the social policy arena in such a way that the language of ‘policy transfers, policy learning, pathway dependency, policy laboratories, virtuous circles and other political science terms are being adopted uncritically’.\(^{19}\) Social policy is more than that and includes some essential aspects of social structure, economy, development, security and individual and collective life. Social policy also indicates a revisiting of issues of social divisions, social inequality and social justice; of class, ethnicity and race, gender and other exclusionary positioning.\(^{20}\)

To me, social policy simply denotes programs for development, cohesion, unity and welfare of the nation and the society. Social policy provides a variety of welfare programs including efforts to improve the current status of human rights issues, ensure a tolerable level of inequality in a society, regulate uncontrolled capitalist expansion and reduce state policies which disproportionately favor selected groups. In a sense, social policy is connected with nationalism and national security and is able to perform a significant role to strengthen the base for nationalism.

‘Social exclusion’ is the process in which individuals or people are systematically blocked from (or denied full access to) various rights, opportunities and resources that are normally available to members of a different group, and which are fundamental to social integration and observance of human rights within that particular group.\(^{21}\)

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17 ‘Civic nationhood’ is a political identity built around shared citizenship in a democratic state
19 Williams and Mooney, 2008, p.503,
1.3 Democracy and Peace Accord

Bangladesh emerged as an independent state in 1971 after 225 years rule of British and Pakistan. The motto of the Republic is that the entire citizen would enjoy equal rights and opportunities and for the undeveloped section the state would provide special opportunity and privileges. The Chakma nation has severely been suffered from economic exploitation and human rights violation after the independence. After 1975, the Chakma started armed struggle and loss of huge life and property and then the historic Peace Treaty was signed in 1997. The people of Bangladesh and international community has praised the accord and the Prime Minister of Peoples’ Republic of Bangladesh Shiekh Hasina received the UNESCO Peace Prize in 1999 but the peace was not established in CHTs. The law and order situation have been severely deteriorated since the peace accord has not been implemented yet. Kaptai Dam development introduced displacement and arms conflict in Bangladesh. People face a wide range of impoverishment, homelessness and marginalization, food insecurity, forced migration, loss of common resource which results huge socio-economic loss.

1.4 Sociological Inquiry

A vital question for sociologists is how far to go in policy studies, analysis, formulation and so on. Marston referring to Jacobs and Manzi holds that the question of marinating the neutrality and objectivity of the subjects has led to:

“An attachment to ‘objectivity’ within a positivist paradigm has meant that many policy studies have ignored the effects of policy language, particularly the passing of certain words from policy discourse and the introduction of new terms that feature prominently in contemporary debates.”22

In the above statement emphasis is on objectivity and neutrality in policy studies and research and I argue the integrating objectivity and neutrality strengthens of policy research. As Smith comments:

“In the last three decades of the twentieth century, all the disciplines in the social sciences have experienced a fundamental reappraisal of their basic assumptions, theories and methods. The most significant common feature of this reappraisal is the recognition that ‘culture’ deserves

much more serious attention as an object of study in its own right and this has produced a reassessment of the linguistic, discursive and cultural conditions of social research.”

The statement identifies ‘culture’ as the central point of social research which I see as the vital aspect of livelihood as well as a crucial force of social and economic strength for any particular groups. The policy study also concentrates on culture and society maintaining the neutrality and objectivity as well. Marston notes:

“In short, a positivist epistemology is not an adequate position for researchers and policy analysts aiming to explore and understand how policy meanings are discursively constructed, how regulatory functions of the state are being transformed and how policy actors represent and articulate policy problems and solutions.”

The above statement is used to illustrate some basic factors of how to conceive the positivist epistemology in policy research and how to proceed towards maintaining validity and neutral stance in social research. The notion and epistemological evolution of critical social theory and post-structuralism allow subjectivity in relation to the study, formulation and discursive analysis of policy. To explore the social condition in resolving problems related to ethnic issues of a state, I will provide a detailed discussion on the concept of social condition; food, health, education, water & sanitation and income of ‘adibasi’ people in CHTs.

1.5 Ethnic Minority, Social Policy and the Role of the State

The Bangladesh region was governed as part of greater India during British rule. Later, in 1947, British India was divided into India and Pakistan and it was included with Pakistan. Soon after, the East Pakistani people realized that the new national entity created purely on the base of religion and felt relative deprivation in every sphere of life; suppression of political, economic, social and cultural rights. As a result of the exploitation and deprivation, the then East Pakistan started to struggle for liberation and was finally achieved through a 9 months bloody movement. In 1971, Bangladesh achieved its independence and was separated from Pakistan.

The cherished dream of establishing a new, democratic state was fulfilled. In economic policy, Bangladesh has followed its Five-Year Plans, Interim-Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (IPRSP)

and a full Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). A new model was spelt out in detail in the PRSP (2005) and got established as the national policy framework for poverty reduction in Bangladesh. The new government declared in April 2009 that they will return to a Five-year planning process in 2013. In the coming years, both the PRSP and Five-year plans will coexist (Webster, Khan et al. 2009, p.9). However, there is little opportunity for civil society to contribute to policy formulation, which is mainly handled and monitored by bureaucrats, politicians and a few advisors of the party in power. The process has also been heavily influenced by donors and international organizations like the World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF) and Asian Development Bank (ADB).

The above mentioned national policy framework has been mainly followed since independence. Several governments of Bangladesh have introduced and applied their own economic policies to reduce poverty, deprivation and hunger, yet the situation did not improve exactly as per its expectation, though some sectors have shown its progress including education rate, decreased child mortality, women empowerment, health care etc. However, providing and executing social policy has been relatively neglected in national policies. It would have been fruitful to reduce absolute poverty and exclusion among different deprived and marginalized groups through social policy as national policies were mainly designed with an emphasis on economic aspects while social policy for the marginalized and deprived groups. The government’s Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) of 2009 has clearly admitted ‘the indigenous peoples’ history of exclusion and their experience of discrimination by the mainstream society’.25

Social policy can help to amalgamate and integrate the members of nations. A ‘nation-building process’ signifies the national consolidation and integration process which can be seen as an extension of the ‘state-building’ efforts. Martinussen makes the following comparison:

“State building aims at securing territorial integrity, creating institutional capacity within the state apparatuses to handle both political and economic development task. In comparison, the main purpose of nation building is to integrate the population of a certain territory into a cohesive unit.”26

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Martinussen refers ‘state building’ and ‘nation building’ as two separate aspects. Integrating the whole population of a certain state is purposes of nation building, thus, nationalism achieve a solid ground in some basic issues. He also mentions that nation-building projects have not succeeded in all countries of the Third World as in many countries, large population groups are not accepted within the political community, forced upon them by the state and yet, other population groups may recognize the sovereignty and legitimacy of the state, but at the same time distinguish themselves as disfavored and excluded minorities. The ‘adibasi’ of the CHT in Bangladesh are belonging to the latter category. During the liberation movement of Bangladesh there was no proper integration and cooperation with other non-Bengali and non-Muslim ethnic communities and the ethnic minorities in Bangladesh were however politicized during the British regime and this politicization continued parallel to the development of Bangladeshi nationalism. The nationalist movement initiated was based mainly on the interests of the majority Muslim and Bengali ethnic community of the country. This politicization fostered a sense of deprivation among the several small ethnic groups in Bangladesh. The newly created state was more concerned about protecting its own fledgling nationality in a broader, international perspective. Bengali nationalism has combined administrative, civil and military efforts to assimilate ethnic identities into the mainstream nationality, in the process denying and ignoring many demands and deserving issues of small ethnic groups of Bangladesh.

In this study, I will look into whether the ethnic minorities are receiving and are being benefitted in the present social condition from the ‘social policies’ of Bangladesh and whether any special ‘social policy’ exists or is implemented for the marginalized ethnic minorities in the CHT.

1.6 Aims of the Study

This study has conducted to explore the social condition of Bangladesh in the perspective of ‘social policy’ with special emphasis on indigenous people in the CHTs. The main objective of this study was;

- To explore the food and social security, education, health, water & sanitation and income of the indigenous people in the CHTs.

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To examine the suitability, supporting capacity and strength of social condition in relation to ethnic minorities in the CHT, Bangladesh after 1997 accord.

1.7 Questions at Issue

As a member of a society, people have right of social security such as; the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for the dignity and personality. Vulnerable segment such as children and the elderly, the sick and the unemployed the services provide called social security. The mutual relationship between social security and economic growth are seen. A country’s economic growth depends on the government’s economic and social policies as well as fiscal policies which promotes social security. An efficient delivery system helps to step up the level of social security. As the better availability of social security leads to higher human development which in turn leads to higher economic growth.

In this microscopic and in depth study the following questions are scrutinized through the study period:

- Is there any discrimination between indigenous and mainstream people in access to water and sanitation, education, earnings and or consumption, food and major social program?

1.8 Rationale of the Study

Bangladesh is a very densely-populated country with a population of 160 million and around 40% of the total populations live below national poverty line. About 25% of those are classified by governments as ‘extreme poor’. The people who cannot afford an adequate diet are considered as extreme poor. However, the ethnic minorities of the CHT are not only living in poverty, but also suffer from additional problems, which are not commonly evident among the Bengali settlers, or the ones residing in the plain districts of the country. The economic condition, political freedom, and the state of human rights are sharply different in the case of the ‘adibasi’. These aspects raise the issues of citizenship, political identity and the belonging of the ‘adibasi’ to the mainstream nationality. This study also has boiled down the access to social

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30 Extreme poor is defined by the United Nations in 1995 as “a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information.
31 Holmes, Farrington et al. 2008, Extreme Poverty in Bangladesh: Protecting and Promoting Rural Livelihoods, Project Briefing
policies of that people and their equal participation in state benefits as well as other welfare activities.

1.9 Previous Studies

‘Socio-economic Baseline Survey of Chittagong Hill Tracts’ in 2009 has revealed that CHTs is one of the most disadvantaged areas in Bangladesh in term of the most development indicators such as income & expenditure, food & nutrition, employment, poverty, health, water, sanitation, education etc. Between Chakma and Bengali people, the Chakma people are living miserably which indicates the peace accord has not implemented properly.32

Saila Parveen & I. M. Faisal in 2010 South East University Dhaka, on a research paper named ‘People versus Power: The Geopolitics of Kaptai Dam in Bangladesh’ examines the impacts of the Kaptai dam, in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh especially on the tribal communities of that area. This study has focused on that recently the Power Development Board (PDB) of Bangladesh has announced a plan to install two new 50 MW units that will bring the capacity of the dam to 330 MW. This plan will cause the reservoir water level to rise may take away about 7500 ha of the fringe land and cause permanent flooding.33

Zahid Hassan in 2011 on ‘Institutional Responsiveness to Indigenous Rights: The Case of Chittagong Hill Tracts Land Dispute Resolution Commission’, has focused on the Chittagong Hill Tracts Land Dispute Resolution Commission. CHT Regulation District maintained the traditional institutions like the Circle Chiefs and Headman but executive, judiciary and financial power vested in the Deputy Commissioner. The power of Circle Chiefs is limited to the collection of taxes and though the Chiefs are playing an advisory role to assist the Deputy Commissioner in the administration of their respective circles, the Deputy Commissioner is not obliged to take their advice or heed their decisions.34

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32 Dr. Barakat, 2009, Socio-Economic Baseline Survey of Chittagong Hill Tracts, Human Development Research Centre (HDRC) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Bangladesh
Two legal regimes of customary land law and formalized state laws on lands and forests are coexisted in CHT.\textsuperscript{35} Lack of democracy and absence of democratic values is one of the major causes for the non-implementation of the CHT Accord and this accord has failed to build trust. The CHT leaderships needs to develop a meaningful partnership not only with the progressive section of Bangladesh society but also with mainstream Bangladesh society.\textsuperscript{36}

After singing the Peace accord in 1997 between the PCJSS and the Government of Bangladesh the \textit{Chakma} people hope to back their historical, political, social and economic rights. But killing, torture, firing, land grabbing has increased in the CHT. A. A. Md. Tuhin in 2015, on his Master’s thesis in UiT The Arctic University of Norway named “Health Discourse in Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh” has revealed the role of government and non-governmental organizations in working with different projects based on indigenous health issues in the CHTs as well as how does health become a development issue in Bangladesh especially in indigenous communities.\textsuperscript{37}

After peace accord in 1997, health has become a development issue in Bangladesh especially in Chittagong Hill Tracts.\textsuperscript{38} Different health intervention program of government and INGOs, NGOs has marginalized and replaced the traditional medicine by modern biomedicine. As a result, the traditional medical system has faced different challenges in the CHTs. In fulfilling Millennium Development Goals, both government and INGOs, NGOs has concentrated on international donor prescriptions rather than local need-based demands and only represented a small section of people who have taken advantages by these intervention programs only.\textsuperscript{39} In the CHTs, INGOS, NGOs and government actors have worked with similar health related issues rather than demand-based diseases which indicated the duplication of health intervention programs.\textsuperscript{40}

\textsuperscript{36} Md. Zahid Hassan, 2011, Institutional Responsiveness to Indigenous Rights: The Case of Chittagong Hill Tracts Land Dispute Resolution Commission. Centre for Peace Studies
\textsuperscript{37} A.A.Md. Tuhin, 2015, Master’s Thesis on Health Discourse in Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh
\textsuperscript{38} A. A. Md. Tuhin, 2015, Master’s thesis, Master’s Thesis on Health Discourse in Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh
\textsuperscript{39} A. A. Md. Tuhin, 2015, Master’s thesis, Master’s Thesis on Health Discourse in Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh
\textsuperscript{40} A. A. Md. Tuhin, 2015, Master’s thesis, Master’s Thesis on Health Discourse in Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh
1.10 Research Methodology

The aim of this section is to present the research methods and tools used and also to briefly discuss the sources of inspiration, and the obstacles encountered during the field work.

1.10.1 Mixed Methods

The study has followed a mixed method approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative analysis. The exercise of mixed methods involves the collection, analysis and mixing of both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study. Several methodological tools; participant observation, census, survey, interviews, group discussions, narratives and formal and informal dialogues has been used. Visual documents have used to accumulate data and to gain an accurate idea of the lives of ‘adibasi’ people in the study area. This method has been selected particularly, to gain a comprehensive understanding of social exclusion and poverty among the Chakma which constitutes the core objective of the study. Primary data collection has involved field work at grass-root level in Sonai and Mayni. Traditional sources of secondary data included published literature such as academic books, journal articles, development reports, newspaper articles and editorials, government documents and electronic resources. In addition, the study has gathered information through attending various seminars, cultural shows, rallies, round table discussions, and conferences held in Dhaka, the capital city of Bangladesh.

1.10.2 Quantitative and Qualitative Data

Understanding the processes of social exclusion and the dynamics daily necessities food, water, sanitation, health, income and expenditure are the core aims of this research. The social exclusion process is manifested observation, case studies, semi-structured and un-structured interviews, informal discussions and other official records collected at the field, generated qualitative data. For quantitative data, a survey with a semi-structured questionnaire and a census has conducted.

41 Blaikie 2010, p.218, Designing Social Research: The Logic of Anticipation. UK, Polity Press
42 Focus on the lives of individuals as told through their own stories which is also considered “real world measures” that are appropriate when “real life problems” are investigated
43 Formal interviews are based on a fixed list of question to which all interviewees respond and which is verbal and face to face.
44 Informal interviews are not based on a fixed list of question and generate quantitative data but generates a greater degree of trust which can allow for the exploration of more sensitive issue.
1.10.3 Getting Permission from the Local Administration

Sonai and Mayni communities (mauza) were my study areas. It was difficult to enter the ‘adibasi’ living areas for any non-native researchers as a few decades ago, particularly before the signing of Peace Accord in 1997; the area was unofficially restricted to outsiders. Today the situation has improved and trusts has created even the local administration did not welcome the entrance of a researcher.

To establish trust with the studied group is an obvious priority for a researcher. I have tried to gain trust from the traditional Chakma leaders and seek permission from local officials. Although I was succeeded in gaining trust of the Chakma but the civil administration was not fully confident on me. I have received permission from a section of administrative officers. They also have facilitated interaction with Bengali settlers of the nearer region of that particular locality. However, at one point of my study, the local administration particularly the administrators within the Upazila (sub-district) have expressed their disapproval of granting me further permission to stay for a prolonged period in that remote region.

1.10.4 Selection of Research Areas Para (Hamlet) wise Distribution

There are three districts in the CHT consisting of 25 sub-districts (Upazila) in total; there are 10 Upazila in Rangamati, 8 in Khagracahari, and 7 in Bandarban District. I was eager to select an area for fieldwork where both ‘adibasi’ and settlers were living, since I aimed at constructing my research around both the majority and minority of ethnic groups. A large number of households were needed for information collection. In considering all; time, budget, and accessibility of interviewees I have selected two localities (Sonai and Mayni) of Longdu Upazila in Rangamati District.

Table 3: Para (Hamlet) wise Distribution of Households

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Para (Hamlet)</th>
<th>Percent of Household (Numbers within brackets)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memberpara</td>
<td>10.9% (25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headmanpara</td>
<td>13.0% (30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duluchoripara</td>
<td>13.9% (32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bogapara</td>
<td>11.7% (27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karbaripara</td>
<td>22.6% (52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lamapara</td>
<td>14.8% (34)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The two mauza of Sonai and Mayni is consisted of nine small hamlets. The hamlets are known as para. There are seven para; Lamapara, Bayddapara, Karbaripara, Headmanpara, Bogapara, Duluchoripara, Memberpara in Sonai Mauza. Byttapara and Tintilapara is situated in Mayni Mauza. The Karbaripara is the largest and Tintilapara is the smallest ‘adibasi’ Para (hamlet) of the study area. The hamlets mostly is located in the hilly terrain, surrounded by plains and occupied by the Bengali settlers.

**Table 4: Age wise Distribution of the Household Members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Category (Years)</th>
<th>Percentage (Respondents Number)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 10</td>
<td>24.8% (282)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-20</td>
<td>19.4% (221)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>22.0% (250)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>12.8% (146)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>7.5% (85)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>8.4% (96)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-70</td>
<td>3.4% (39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 70</td>
<td>1.7% (19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100% (1138)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following table has depicted that a large portion of the study population is young. Children between the age of 0 and 10 are almost one fourth, 19% of the respondents has belonged to the age of 10 to 20. Almost 35% of the respondents has belonged to the 21 to 40 years of age group. About 7.5% of the respondents are older than 50. Almost 12% respondents has belonged to the age range of between 51 to 70 years and 1.7% above 70 years of age group. The average age of the respondents are 44 years.
1.10.5 Participant Observations

‘Participant observation’\(^{45}\) has been used to gathered in-depth information on ethnic minority communities especially *Chakma*. Participant observation in the research area provided deep insights into *Chakma* everyday life, food habits, social organization, attitudes towards outsiders, government and NGOs activities as well as physical health, illness, social networking and organizational efforts and activities of the ethnic minority people. In addition, this approach has given insights into ‘*adibasi*’ school and education system, water supply and sanitation, medical and health-care and other social services.

1.10.6 Research Period and Journey to the Field

Data has been collected from Sonai and Mayni in two phases: first in 2013 and second in 2015. One of the research team members belonged to the *Chakma* community and was sometimes stayed at the ‘*adibasi*’ residences. We started our first journey from the University of Chittagong. It took about 3 hours by bus to reach Rangamati district headquarters. Thereafter, we have journeyed by boat and reached at Langadu after 5 hours. It took another few more hours to reach Sonai or Mayni by *baby-taxi* (A three-wheeled scooter). We crossed many small canals, bar rivers, hill slopes and muddy roads inside the jungles to gather information from *Chakma* in Langadu.

1.10.7 Sampling, Census and Survey

After receiving permission from authorities, I carried out a household census and survey with the assistance of research team and local persons of Sonai and Maynimuk Union. There are 250 ‘*adibasi*’ household in the study areas. According to the random sampling method with the hand of 99.999% confidence level and 5% error or confidence interval from total household of ethnic minority people in the study area, the sample size = 223. But to conduct this study, it has taken round off 230 household for survey.

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\(^{45}\) Participant observation is one type of data collection tool typically used in qualitative research where observation enables the researchers to describe existing situations using five senses.
1.10.7 (a) Rationale for the Census

Besides formal and informal discussion with ‘adibasi’ local leaders and civil administrators and ‘adibasi’ students at Chittagong University it was very important to census in Sonai and Mayni. This census has provided me a preliminary idea on the research area as well as guide lines for further steps towards information collection.

1.10.7 (b) Census Sheet

The census was conducted in Sonai and Mayni and I used a separate Identification (ID) number for each question sheet. I further recorded the interview date on the sheet. The respondents were mainly the household heads, both male and female. When the household head was not available, other adult members of the household were chosen. The name of all the members of each household and information about their gender, age, educational qualification, marital status, occupation, income and expenditure were collected. Information was also collected on the respondents’ health, housing situation, water and sanitation and daily necessities, ownership status and duration of stay at the current residence and former abode and causes of internal displacement and migration, if any. We further enquired about participation in governmental or non-governmental support programs, about food security and daily food intake.

1.10.8 Survey Questionnaires

The survey questionnaire was more detailed than the census sheet. However, after completion of the census, I had doubts about the reliability of some parts of census data and decided to cross check a few aspects by means of the survey questionnaire, among others, income, number of households and members (in order to be able to estimate the total population). The survey further aimed to explore all the information mentioned in the census sheet in details.

1.10.9 Interviews

In addition, I conducted face to face interviews; formal and informal conversations with the ‘adibasi’ people, arranged meetings with settlers, interviews with elected officials and the acting chairman of the Union Council. The interviewees consisted of 22 people (18 were chakma and 4 were mainstream) from the study areas. The ‘adibasi’ interviewees were in the different age group (24 to 80 years old). They were also from different hamlets within Sonai and Mayni.
localities. When referring to these, I name the village as follows; AA, BB, CC, DD and EE. AA is referred the Karbari hamlet (*para*), BB is Battyapara (a small hamlet), CC is secret meeting held in outside Sonai and Mayni, DD is Tintila hamlet and EE is Bengali settlers in Sonai and Mayni.

1.10.10 Group Discussion

I arranged three group discussions conducted in the Sonai and Mayni localities; village AA, BB and DD. AA was held in Karbari hamlet (*para*) in 15 May, 2013 and was attended by seven male members of *Chakma*. The participant members in this group discussion were from different age groups ranging from 28 to 61 years old.

Group Discussion BB was held with six Chakma in Battyapara (a small hamlet) in 10 March, 2013. All participants were ‘adibasi’ peasants solely dependent on agriculture. They expressed grievances about agricultural land losses, industrial development, Bengali settlement, and Govt. discrimination politics and also described the problems in ‘adibasi’ daily life. As my core objective of this study was to focus on food security, social security, water, sanitation, income, expenditure, and health issue so, I heard the ‘adibasi’ people comprehensively.

The group discussion DD was held with two Chakma in Tintila village on 12 April, 2013. Both I arranged this discussion at night when they had more free time than daytime. During group discussion the interviewees conveyed their problems in a direct way concerning livelihood and so on issues.

1.10.11 Ethical Consideration: Interviewee Confidentiality

I promised my respondents and interviewees to keep secret their name and the information only used in the research purpose. Sometimes, I have consulted over telephone to conduct the research. Some of interviewees have shared information on torture of ‘adibasi’ people by the army and settlers and other sensitive issues.
Chapter Two

The aim of this chapter is to highlight the real facts of social exclusion and deprivation in terms of land grabbing, deprivation of basic human needs and shelter, economic constraints, lack of social policies and the situation of human rights etc.

2.1 Exclusion of ‘adibasi’ in Sonai and Mayni

2.1.1 Land Grabbing, Land Loses and Social Exclusion

Land loss without remedy is an essential way of excluding poor people. At the beginning of the 1980s, the government invited to the settlers to come into the CHT, through methods such as announcements over loudspeakers in the local plain areas. At that time the arm forces were in armed conflict with the JSS and ‘adibasi’. Following the advice of the military, the then government agreed to bring a huge number of settlers from 61 different plain districts of the country. The settlers captured government-own forests as well as ‘adibasi’ customary land. As a result of this state sponsored population transfer, ‘adibasi’ now become a member of minority group in the CHT, especially in the study area. Though the exclusion of ethnic minority people is notoriously difficult to define but sometimes, social exclusion is considered ‘as an extension of the study of ‘marginalization’.

The ‘adibasi’ are deprived and excluded from their land not only due to settlers, but also because of government schemes and projects. The people are in the ‘condition of multi-dimensional

cumulative disadvantage’.\textsuperscript{48} Two major events have resulted in widespread land losses. The first one was the construction of Kaptai dam in 1963 when huge tracts of land were flooded that causes many ‘adibasi’ families to flee to Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura and Mizoram in India. Social exclusion is seen in the losing of property; not getting informal work and losing or not finding an affordable place to live.\textsuperscript{49} The ‘adibasi’ has become internally displaced and refugee due to unrest and oppression by the army and settlers as well as poverty is a distributional outcome, whereas exclusion is a relational process of decline participation, solidarity and access to basic human needs.

When the market economy is no longer regulated by social institutions, the ideology of market becomes the dominating principle of society.\textsuperscript{50} Thus, the market economy even with its full-fledged expansion of often causes poverty and hardship for a section of underprivileged people due to labor exploitation and monopoly dominance over the market. Such socio-economic situation further creates sharp differences and discrimination which has been found in the CHT between ‘adibasi’ and settlers.

Respondent A has said that he and his relatives had to leave their homes due to dam construction. The project caused enormous suffering as they lose their land and shelter. He relocated from the Kaptai area to Tintilapara in 1980 but fled his home between 1989 and 1991 out of fear of attacks by settlers and the army (Personal interview in village DD, 12 April 2013).

Most of the ‘adibasi’ were not even informed about the dam construction. They were astounded when they saw that the dam was under construction and that huge areas of plain land had been inundated. They watched their houses, lands, forests, and assets disappeared as a result of the project of dam. Consequently, thousands of families of chakma had forced to leave their homeland.

The establishment of army camps and training centers has caused further land losses. The ‘adibasi’ has claimed that these occupied areas were once their forests, gardens, cultivated areas and their ancestor’s house plots. Land losses have severally disrupted the ‘adibasi’ life and their

\textsuperscript{48} Daly and Silver 2008, p.549, Social Exclusion and Social Capital: A Comparison and Critique.” Theory and Society: Renewal and Critique in Social Theory
\textsuperscript{49} Steninert, 2003, p.52, Participation and Social Exclusion: A Conceptual Framework Welfare Policy from Below: Struggles Against Social Exclusion in Europe
economy as a whole. In such situation, ‘social exclusion’ indicates not the person but the resource to which access is sought. Respondent B has stated:

“We lost our assets once during the Kaptai dam construction and again later after the settler and army arrival. Many of our relatives left the CHT for these two main reasons. Most of them did not come back again in the CHT. How would they return? Where would they live and how would they survive? It is very tough for us even to stay here” (Group discussion in Village AA, 15 May 2013).

The above excerpt makes evident, land loss as a crucial problem in ‘adibasi’ life. Kaptai dam project during Pakistan period and Bengali settlement policy in the CHT during Bangladesh period are identified as two main causes of land losses. Moreover, there are official declarations by the Government on the hilly land of Bangladesh.

The CHT land is divided into three different classes by the Government: reserved forest, restricted and unclassified, state forest. The reserved forests are fully under government control, and the forest department operates plantation programs in them. In restricted forests, where the government has slated for plantation development, ‘adibasi’ do not even have any legal access for plantations or settlements. The remaining unclassified state forest areas are for the settlements and plantations of ‘adibasi’, settlers, and army camps and so on. The declaration of forces and other land as restricted has also severely constrained ‘adibasi’ land ownership and use. Land reservations have resulted in land disputes, mistrust, and losses of forest and hill resources. Land disputes are the root cause for conflict between Bengali settlers and ‘adibasi’ of Sonai and Mayni, as well as many parts of the CHT.

During British rule, land was sanctioned by the headman following customary rules and the 1900 Act. Later during the Pakistani regime, the very same lands were partially restricted by the Government through the so-called B-form, as compensation for land losses due to Kaptai dam. On top of it, the same land was re-allocated by the Government of Bangladesh to the settlers. The overlapping allocation of same land has created severe confusion regarding ownership of the land. Respondent C has mentioned;

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“During the Pakistan regime, when the Kaptai dam was built in Rangamati, many ‘adibasi’ families goy into severe crisis. In 1965, the Government had decided to create the “B-form Settlement” or “General Settlement” whereby the ‘adibasi’ family displaced by the project was allocated a fixed amount of land. In most cases, land was granted for house settlement and cultivable land. Many of the affected ‘adibasi’ families applied for B-form settlement, but only a few were allocated land” (Personal interview in village BB, 10 April 2013). Such cases of land disputes and the flow of settlers into the CHT caused massive displacement and forced migration for the ‘adibasi’. The Chakma of the study areas tend to live at the top of the hills, whereas previously, they lived in the plain lands or alongside rivers or canals. The later areas have been taken over by the settlers and army. The ‘adibasi’ claim that they occupy marginal land and deep hilly lands where they settlers could not survive.

Respondent D has depicted that prior to settler’s arrival in the 1970s, there were at least 200 ‘adibasi’ families living in Gathachora mauza but none of them live there since settlers entirely occupy the region. The Adibasi have been forced out of these areas since 1979 and became refugee (Personal interview in village AA, 16 May 2015). Forced migration is a common phenomenon in the CHT among ethnic minority people. Respondent E has expressed their helplessness with exhausted breath; “What can we say? Settlers have occupied land that legally belongs to us. There were many people who had the official papers to prove their ownership of land. In spite of these papers, many settlers illegally occupied Pahari land. They just held and captured the land after their arrival wherever they found land, forests and plain spaces” (Group Discussion in village AA, 15 May 2013).

Table 5: Status of Land grabbing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status of Land grabbing</th>
<th>Percent (%) of Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grabbed</td>
<td>86% (198)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not Grabbed</td>
<td>14% (32)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own Survey and Census

The respondents have described a large number of incidents of land grabbing by the settlers in the study areas. The survey data from the study has revealed that about 86% of the respondents faced problems such as land grabbing, disturbance and oppression by the settlers.

Table 6: Year wise Distribution of Land Grabbing
In the Sonai and Mayni regions, the land grabbing problems pecked in 1979-80 and 1989-90. According to the table 5, about 63% respondents stated that settlers have grabbed their cultivable land in 1979 to 1983. According to their responses, 13% of the total land grabbing cases occurred during 1979 to 1988 and 10% cases happened during 1989 to 90. Some of them had lost their original plots. Bengalis once were even not permitted to enter the CHT without the permission of King (Raja). This was maintained until 1947-48. The greatest influx of settlers occurred in the CHT during 1981-82. Respondent F has described the situation;

“Look at Bagahichori. Pahari people are severely tortured thereby both the army and settlers. Army personnel frequently conduct their operations in that place. Settler’s frequently burnt adibasi houses. The army inspired such acts and supports and allows the settlers to do so. They have already burnt army adibasi ancestral para in Bagahichori. Their main target is to force the ‘adibasi’ to vacate that they can occupy the land. What an attitude!” (Group Discussion in village AA, 15 May 2013).

The above passage describes forceful inhuman activities along with land grabbing by the settlers and armed force have also been reported in different daily newspapers and other media including several internet sources, but proper initiatives are not taken by the government and thus the incidents are gradually spreading. The ‘adibasi’ are powerless to oppose the settlers. A local ‘adibasi’ leader describes how he himself had become internally displaced person (IDP). He had been forced to leave his original house and cultivable lands and now living in village DD. Respondent G has claimed;

“Personally, we have lost much of our lands both in the plains and hills. We are also refugee here. Our main land has been grabbed by the settlers. We cannot go that place. The settlers have built their houses in our original ancestral home. We do not go there: we do not even try to reclaim that land. We have abandoned our hopes for that land and now we are living in these small houses as internal refugee. Even we have the land documents in our possession, the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percent (%) of Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1979-183</td>
<td>63% (125)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-1988</td>
<td>13% (26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989-1990</td>
<td>10% (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own Survey and Census
situation would not change, as the settlers have occupied those areas – how would we be able to return them? It would create another war situation for us. Instead, we acknowledge our losses and abandon our hopes for those lands” (Group discussion in village DD, 12 April 2015).

We can see in this interview that even the ‘adibasi’ local leaders are helpless and have become internal refugees. He has abandoned his hope to get back his ancestral land which has already been grabbed by the settlers. The panicked ‘adibasi’ are now bound to live and move within very limited areas. Respondent H from Sonai stated; “The army will enter into this village and they will beat us if we protest against anything regarding the settler’s activities. They have very good connections. We cannot go the army” (Personal interview in village BB, 10 April 2013). Another respondent H has mentioned in such perspective; “Recently we are a minority in the CHT. Settlers are the majority and they control money, trade, and the local administration. We do not have any life, any right to our lands even in the hills and forests” (Group discussion in village DD, 12 April 2013).

2.2 Economic Freedoms are Becoming Constricted

This part illustrates how social exclusion and deprivations are manifested in living conditions and economic activities of the ‘adibasi’.

Most ‘adibasi’ remain dependent on agriculture and do not have the opportunity to diversify their livelihoods. The main occupation of the ‘adibasi’ in the study area is plain land cultivation. Some of the also cultivate small plots in the hills as well as practice slash and burn (jhum) cultivation. The survey data findings show that almost 78% of the total respondents grow their products on the plain or valley bottom land, with 19% using a combination of plain and jhum lands. Only 3.6% were found to depend solely on jhum cultivation. However, there are some areas in the CHT where the ‘adibasi’ are involved in jhum cultivation to a larger extent than in the study areas, but there is a growing trend among the ‘adibasi’ to abandon their traditional jhum cultivation mainly due to land loss and insecurity.

Though agriculture is their main occupation, some ‘adibasi’ have recently diversified into small-scale agricultural trade, selling cash crops such as bamboo and turmeric, but also other crops and fruits. Both male and female ‘adibasi’ have been engaging in non-farm work. At the time of study, the ‘adibasi’ were encountering problems when trying to scale up these livelihood
activities. A few are working in government institutions as school teacher or policeman, while others are employed as village level workers by UNICEF or NGOs.

Chakma both men and women also works as laborers in agricultural fields on plains or in jhum lands when not cultivating their own gardens. They provide their labor for the sowing, cleaning, and harvesting of other’s agricultural products. Yet, due to various economic and socio-economic barriers and seasonal character of such work, this is a precarious way for ‘adibasi’ to make a living. Respondent I, have described the difficulties of not having social support or savings to help with living expenses. Her children work as day laborers nearby. Sometimes her elderly husband tries to find work as wage laborer, but this is not always available. Agricultural work is seasonal and other jobs depend on the various development programs run by the government. For him, the only opportunity to work comes with roads development or construction in the locality. Occasionally, work is available at other ‘adibasi’ homes but on the whole year, the ‘adibasi’ remain poor (Personal interview in village BB, 10 April 2013). In this perspective, the most important respondent J has exposed;

“We cannot grow sufficient food anymore for ourselves due to land losses. A large part of our cultivable plain and hilly lands is out of our hands now. Large portions of land have been grabbed by the army and settlers were submerged into water due to Kaptai Dam. Moreover, floods often affect this area…. We cannot purchase our daily needs from the market. Where we will get the cash money for doing that?” (Personal interview in village AA, 16 May 2013).

As can be seen from the quote above, life in the hills is perceived to become harder for ‘adibasi’ day after day. They claimed that their economic situation has been deteriorated in recent years. They used to hold social and cultural gatherings, but now many of they cannot afford such programs. Sometimes they can still arrange such events, but they are forced to do with very limited fund. Thus, they feel helpless and poor. They estimate that almost two-thirds of their land has been occupied by the settlers. When they had all that land their economy was much better. In the Group Discussion, the loss of land and the consequences of this were a topic of constant debate:

“We had good lives earlier; we used to arrange several social events each year. But now we cannot afford to. Pahari people love to sit together at various social and cultural gatherings, but
we cannot implement or organize these because of our financial condition. Who would pay for them?” (Group Discussion in village AA, 15 May, 2013)

The lifestyle of the huge majority of ‘adibasi’ in Sonai and Mayni is utterly poor. There has been no apparent economic progress for decades rather, the economy according them is declining. The poverty among the ‘adibasi’ can be further illustrated by some of my quantitative results.

2.3 Lack of Social Policy to Ensure Basic Human Needs

The quantitative data suggests that the ‘adibasi’ are unable to fulfill basic human needs; they have to endure food shortages and poor housing. They lack access to adequate health services and medicine, get sick from poor water and sanitation, lack access to education etc. this clearly shows both their vulnerability and the lack of proper policies to make up for this. In the following discussion, the above-mentioned themes are explored in detail.

2.3.1 Food Insecurity

The census data reveals that 19.5% households’ have two meals a day. Though they have used to three meals a day, most can no longer afford this. The study showed that the rice was the staple food of the ‘adibasi’. The poor ‘adibasi’ have one meal at around 9 or 10 am and have dinner 7 to 8 pm. ‘Adibasi’ generally only eat meat such as pork, chicken, snake, frog etc. at festivals.

Even those who can afford three meals a day consume insufficiently nutritious food. 10 households reported that most of the time they are restricted to low-calorie items. A significant proportion of ‘adibasi’ families eat only rice and salt. 51 households mainly survive on rice and vegetable. Some can occasionally afford pigeon peas with rice and vegetables. Only 11 households said that they often can afford some fish. Only 8 households said that they can afford some meat.

These findings were consistent with data from interviews and group discussions regarding their daily meals and food habit. I interviewed a 26-year-old chakma woman at Karbaripara, Sonai in mid-2015. At that time, she told me that generally her family eats twice a day. Most of the time, they only eat rice and greens. They try to buy fish one or two times a month. Normally, they get Gura (small) and Tilapia fishes from local market. Sometimes, she collects bamboo shoots to add to their rice. When she does not manage to find anything, they eat rice with salt.
The participants in group discussions also mentioned their poor meals and food shortage. They expressed their helplessness to provide sufficient food for their children. In the words of respondent K; “Often an ‘adibasi’ mother offers her children only salt and rice as the main meal in daytime as she does not have other items to offer her kids” (Group discussion in village BB, 10 March 2013). The respondent L has portrayed in such way;

“For family consumption, I need at least 2kg cooked rice every day, that is, around 60kg rice in a month. The market price of 60kg rice is around 1800 BDT. Additional monthly costs are around 1300 BDT for salt, oil, and kerosene, and around 500 BDT for dry fish and vegetables. When on extremely tight budget I buy only these essentials. We take meat or fresh fish not even once a month. I cannot provide good or new dress for my children, and can hardly afford healthcare if they become ill. I am also worried about how I will bear the educational costs of my children” (Personal interview in village BB, 11 March 2013).

The above statement clearly shows the vulnerability to food shortage. An interviewee from Memberpara claimed that a budget of 100 BDT (1.5 USD) per day for a family is difficult for them to maintain and for what they take formal and informal loans from banks, NGOs or other people. Thus, they fall into deeper poverty. I learned more about their hardship and loans for food shortage from another interviewee from AA who was 26-year-old chakma woman. She borrowed money from the NGO of BRAC and ASA for food and without those loans she would have starved. She repaid her debts with the money she can earn as a day laborer.

The chakma of the study areas suffers hardship with respect to food shortage and hunger. They do not have access to produce food as well as ability to purchase. Adequate social policy as well as land issues and cultivation can alleviate poverty.

2.3.2 ‘Adibasi’ Houses and Household Materials

The majority population in the study areas live in jhupri (made of earthen or mud-built floors, mud or wooden walls, roof thatched with chon- ‘tied of sun grass or tin) houses. I have observed inside and outside of the houses and seen that there are no valuable household resources as well as they live on a damp floor. On it they keep a rag made of patched cotton cloth, the pillows are dirty and hard like a stone. Besides, household appliances are made of mud and scattered inside the houses. On average a Bengali household owns assets worth BDT 61,730 which is 30% higher
than indigenous people. The majority (93%) indigenous houses are kancha (made of straw, jute stick, chan and mud) house whereas 86% Bengali houses are kancha. And more than 80% of the households in CHT do not have any electricity supply among 70% are indigenous house. About 80% of the indigenous people still use open field for feces desertion as well as collect drinking water from river or cataract far from houses as there is no tube well in their households. However, ‘adibasi’ houses are made of low quality of material as well as there is no sanitation system, pure water supply and electricity connection.

2.3.3 Health and Illness

The ‘adibasi’ have a high incidence of malaria. Mosquitoes in the area are very dangerous and spread fever among the inhabitants. About 80% of the respondents said that at least one of their family members had suffered from malaria. People also often mentioned water borne diseases like diarrhea, dysentery, cold and skin diseases as they use dug-well, ponds and canals water for drinking and cooking. The canal water contains decaying plant materials during summer. This causes growth of micro-organisms and stomach problems and diarrhea for ‘adibasi’ people when they drink it. Drinking pit water also predisposes their children to other contagious diseases.

Many of the ‘adibasi’ first try to use their indigenous knowledge for recovery from illness and diseases. In severe cases, they go to the hospital or medical camps operated by the army, to Rabeta hospitals, the pharmacy, or the folk healer for treatment. Almost 43% of the respondents clearly stated that they cannot afford the medical expenses if someone in their family becomes sick. A respondent said that he needed to sell household items like hen and rice to buy medicine or meet the doctor for the sickness of his family member. Sometime, they are forced to sell or mortgage their land to recover from illness.

Aging also brings healthcare challenges, since the elderly people lack assistance, treatment facilities or support either from the state or from their community. I met with 71 years old ill person who was ex-headman of a community. Recently, he has come to need help from others to walk, cannot recognize people well and unable to express himself fully. His family is unable to bear expenses for his proper treatment and cannot hospitalize him due to high expenses for treatment, medical tests and medicine. Respondent M who is 50-year-old ‘adibasi’ female has described her health problems;
“I often feel dizziness and drowsiness and thus assume that I might have some disease. I went to folk-healer for my treatment and took some indigenous medicine, which did not cure me. After a year, I went to local pharmacy, which made me a little better, but did not completely resolve the problem. I had to cease taking the medicine, as it is so costly and did not help fully” (Personal interview in village DD, 13 April 2013, 2015).

2.3.4 Water and Sanitation

The absence of pure and fresh water is rampant among the ‘adibasi’ people. They use deep dug well (Kua) water for drinking and cooking.

Figure 1: Local Source of Water

But they use river water for bathing, washing and other household activities which is not really safe for their health. No deep tube well has been found among the ‘adibasi’ households. But the Bengali people who live in the plain land and CHT are facilitated with good water supply system of WASA (Water Supply Authority) and some other use deep tube well. The dug well which the ‘adibasi’ people use to collect water is an open place where small plants, insects, and other dirty things can easily be placed into. Almost 80% of my respondents reports that the number of dug well has been decreased and they are facing water crisis especially for drinking. WASA does not supply water to the ‘adibasi’ and also, they have no ability to pay the bill.

The people collect and preserve the water into mud jar and use their indigenous methods to purify this water which actually does not purify the water. Although some households are now using tablets to purify the water that make them confident to drink water but many others do not
understand the meaning of it. They also do not know the importance of boiling water. Most of the ‘adibasi’ drink water of Kua. Local government and NGOs have provided some tube wells which are not enough and most of the tube wells are already broken and dysfunctional I have observed.

The ‘adibasi’ people in the CHT use open place for excretion which are washed away to the river, ponds, and dug well water. And they use such river, ponds, and dug well water for drinking, cooking, bathing and washing. Most of the chakma are now using unhygienic latrines which are hanging and linked to the river. Most of the chakma and other indigenous people cannot afford to make hygienic latrines. Some chakma are now aware of the health benefits of sanitary latrines. Recently some NGOs are working to provide sanitary latrines in the area which a chakma in Rangamati has mentioned. The Govt. has allocated such wells for many poor people with joint sponsorship by LGED and the CHT District Council which is not that much effective.

The evidence has shown clearly that the ‘adibasi’ for example chakma of the study area have no access of drinking pure water and using hygienic sanitation. They drink water collecting from kua and river. Bangladesh government as well as local government has not taken sufficient action on the issue of sanitation and pure drinking water.

2.3.5 Education

The ‘adibasi’ have lack of opportunity to receive quality education in the region due to limited school in the areas and most importantly due to financial problem and insecurity. However, the chakma have been kin interest in being educated, in sending their children at school and thus to explore other formal and informal work for their survival.

In 2001, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS 2001) estimated the literacy rate to be 89% in chakma community while the Primary and Public Education Department (2001) revealed the literacy rate to be 65% in Bangladesh.\(^{52}\) A study shows that during 2001-2005, the youth literacy rate in Bangladesh has been 72.73% with 75.03% of them males and 70.36% females. For the same group the literacy rate was 25.8% in 1974 and it has risen to 47.5% by 2001.\(^{53}\) Alarmingly, the literacy rate is decreasing among the chakma community while the rate is improving in the

\(^{52}\) Mondol, Khan et al. 2009, Family Structure, Economic Security and Educational Status of Rural Chakma in CHT of Bangladesh

rest of the country. A study conducted exhibits that the literacy rate is 76% among the chakma community and my own survey finds 72% literacy rate in Sonai and Mayni in 2013 whereas according to the BBS report the rate was 89% in 2001. Indeed, literacy rate among the chakma community was historically much better than the overall rate in Bangladesh. Respondent N has opened; “The dropout scenario among the CHT students is highly unacceptable, 65% children discontinue their education before completion of primary schooling and 19% after completion of the same. Economic distress is the main reason for school dropouts” (Personal interview in village BB, 11 March 2013). Another respondent O has said; “The decreasing rate of chakma literacy presents a picture of the frustratingly limited prospects for education especially at the tertiary level and financial barriers, security problems among the ‘adibasi’ (Group discussion in village AA, 15 May 2013).

There are two government primary schools in Maynimuk Union. A study conducted by UNDP in July 2006 reveals that ‘only one in five villages had a primary school in the CHT region, compared with two schools for three villages in the rest of the country. Not only Maynimuk Union but also in the Sonai the picture has been seen. The UNICEF report in 2007 has revealed that the percentage of working in the agricultural sector is higher for ethnic minority boys (48%) and girls (41%) than the majority Bengali population – boys (31%) girls (18%). For poverty and lack of social security, the people remain without education.

The Sonai Government primary school was established as a private school in 1952. It was incorporated into a government scheme in 1972. There were only two male teachers in the school during my field period in 2013 and one female teacher who was on deputation. However, the school has three vacant posts for teachers. The male teachers were from the ‘adibasi’ society. The total number of students was 126, of which 72 were boys and 54 girls. The school provides primary education from class one to five. Respondent P has claimed;

“Most of the students who attend primary school has completed their primary education. Both boys and girls attend, and the ‘adibasi’ girls are performing well compared to the boys. Of those who complete primary school, however, only 80% enter high school. However, for the estimated

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55 Nasreen & Tate 2007 p.30, Social Inclusion: Gender and Equity in Education Swaps in South Asia: Bangladesh Case Study
56 Nasreen and Tate 2007 p.30, Social Inclusion: Gender and Equity in Education Swaps in South Asia: Bangladesh Case Study
10% who are able to finish their high school education and enter college” (Personal interview in village AA, 16 May 2013).

In Sonai and Mayni mauza there are no high schools. Students who complete their high school education are mainly admitted into the Langadu Government High School situated in Langadu headquarters. Most of the students has drop out after completing primary education the reason of poverty as the parents cannot afford the education expenses for so long. Respondent Q who was local ‘adibasi’ leader has expressed his concern about the ‘adibasi’ education and suggested that changes and development are needed in the curriculum, facilities and general structure of education. He has argued;

“There are too few schools for their children. Some children must walk around 3 to 4 hours to reach their school. He hypothesized that education may change the whole lifestyle of the ‘adibasi’, since their children would be able to explore new economic activities to improve their livelihoods. The children whose parents are involved in jhum cultivation are deprived of education facilities. They are moving from one hill to another” (Personal interview in village BB, 10 April 2013).

The same concern has been expressed by a senior ‘adibasi’ leader. Respondent R has explained; “We need more ‘adibasi’ teachers at hilly schools. The rules and qualifications to appoint school teachers should not be same as those for the schools in the plain districts” (Personal interview in village BB, 10 April 2013). He further has remarked; “To establish a new school for ‘adibasi’ children, we first need suitable land in the areas. It is hard to obtain such land for ‘adibasi’ children. Moreover, most of the para are situated on the top of hills” (Personal interview in village BB, 10 April 2013).

Henceforth, the chakma people have no affordability to bear educational expenses. Most of them are aware of the importance of primary education both for boys and girls. Withdrawal of children from primary and secondary level education is mostly happening due to financial pressures and insecurity.
2.3.6 Income

The census and the survey investigated income and expenditure, loans and debt status. In the survey area, the average household based monthly income is BDT 2333 (33USD) with a range of minimum from BDT 300 (4.28 USD) to maximum 26500 BDT (378 USD). With Comparing to the annual household net income of rural Bangladesh which is BDT 84,000 (1200USD).\textsuperscript{57} It means that the monthly net income is that of BDT 7000 (100 USD).

Household survey data has portrayed that 22.5% family income of the \textit{chakma} is 0 to 500 BDT, 20% family is above 500 to 1000 BDT, 21.7% family has earned above 1000 to 2000 BDT, and 15.7% family is above 2000 to 3000 BDT. Only 6.1% family income is 4000 BDT and 2.8% family earned 8000 BDT. The monthly average income of the \textit{chakma} is very low. The lowest income group is considered as the poorest of the poor on the basis of monthly income. Furthermore, most of the ‘\textit{adibasi}’ are in the lowest income group who can be considered as the poorest of the poor.

2.4 Excluded from Local Governance and Development

According to the speech of interviewees, “We are discriminated against and do not benefit from development programs and other facilities” (Group discussion in village AA, 15 May 2013). They think that in many cases it is intentional, because government officials and local administration favor Bengali settlers. Both the \textit{Union} level local administration and \textit{Upazila} level administration have the same biasness against the ‘\textit{adibasi}’. The interviewee S has pointed; “The settlers in the Union Council, local administrative authorities and even programs operators of non-governmental organizations dominance the ‘\textit{adibasi}’ in the CHTs” (Personal interview in village DD, 13 April 2015). The ethnic minority people has expressed; “The local as well national government did not ensure the engagement of them in the development programmes from past to present” (Group discussion in village AA, 15 May 2013).

2.5 Exclusion from Infrastructural Development and Communication

Roads transportation and communication within the ‘\textit{adibasi}’ living areas is of poor quality and old-fashioned. There is no metallic road within ‘\textit{adibasi}’ \textit{para}. The various \textit{para} is situated

\textsuperscript{57} Barakat and Halim et. al. 2009, Socio-Economic Baseline Survey of Chittagong Hill Tracts, Human Development Research Centre (HDRC) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Bangladesh
mainly in hilly areas. There are no good roads connecting one para to another. Instead, people must pass through canals, waterlogged fields to Pahari (hilly) neighboring para. An 80-year-old respondent T has stated;

“In 1965-66, during the Pakistani regime, the government planned and built a dirt road from Sonai to Langadu sador (sub-district headquarters). In 2003, this road was developed to a semi-metalled state” (Personal interview in village AA, 16 May 2015).

There is no telecommunication system in the Sonai and Mayni mauza. Only a few land phones are available in Langadu headquarters and nearby areas, but these connections are in a poor condition. In the government offices, only a few private users have access to land lines. In March 2008, the then Caretaker Government of Bangladesh had declared that they would bring the CHT areas under mobile network (Phone.com.bd 2009), but this had not been achieved in the Sonai and Mayni locality at the time of the field work. Respondent U has mentioned;

“In the CHT, we do not have a mobile network, unlike every other district in the country. The army does not want to provide this facility. When we raised the matter, the army and other governmental offices blamed the security issue. They assert that the CHT is a sensitive area and that a mobile network connection may create a security problem in region” (Personal interview in village BB, 11 March 2013). The study has revealed that the ‘adibasi’ do not have equal access to the local civil and army administration as the Bengali settlers have.

### 2.6 Participation of ‘Adibasi’ People in Social Security Program

Poorer ‘adibasi’ are mostly excluded from social security programs given by the Government. Many of them do not even have adequate information about the support programs. The survey reported that only 5% of the respondents had received monthly government allowances for the elderly and widows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Support</th>
<th>Respondents in % of Households 230</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elderly allowance</td>
<td>3% (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widow allowance</td>
<td>1% (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous allowance</td>
<td>1% (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not received</td>
<td>95% (219)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interviewees have reported that the annual budget for the union council was insufficient. According to the table, about 7 households have received elderly allowance, 2 households widow allowance and also 2 households received indigenous allowance. The most significant findings of this study here that 95% of the households did not received and allowance.

Food for Work (Kabikha–Kajer Binimoye Khaddo) and Test Relief (TR) are regular programs of the union council. TR is larger. It allocates around 17 metric tons of rice per year for each union council. The settlers regularly receive rations from the government office. The armed forces also help them to establish and run businesses. In contrast, the fertility of the land belonging to the ‘adibasi’ is decreasing due to over use and decreased sustainability from jhum cultivation. The Paharis are being forced to abandon jhum cultivation as it does not meet their subsistence requirements. Respondent V has said:

“We have to build up a representative local government system in the CHT. It is essential to strengthen local government so that it can protect citizens’ rights and build good relations with the central administration. However, the development policies should be formulated based on local needs and desires. It is not fair to follow all the decisions made from the capital city, which fails to understand grassroots’ needs” (Secret interview in Dhaka, 5 March 2013).

Government has a lack of democratic values in social security program. As a result, chakma do not get old allowance, widow, education and indigenous allowance as well as food ration. It is necessary to include chakma people under social security program.

2.7 Consequences of Land Losses and Social Exclusion

Migration and internal displacement are widespread problems in the study area. The survey revealed that about 93% of the households has migrated or been displaced. Many of them fled to the deep forest. Some of them also migrated temporarily for jhum cultivation. The following table shows findings on the causes of migration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons behind Migration</th>
<th>Percentage (Respondents’ count in brackets)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For Jhum cultivation</td>
<td>2% (5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own Survey, 2013
The following table has shown the yearly incidents of forced evacuation of ‘adibasi’ houses. The survey also revealed that almost 62% of the household members of the study area has forced to leave from their permanent houses because of army intervention. Another 34% of the respondents has migrated for the settler’s intervention and land grabbing. The other reason behind the forced migration of the ‘adibasi’ people in the study area are; ethnic conflict (5%) and jhum cultivation (5%).
Chapter Three

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendation

To conduct this present research, both of qualitative information has been gathered among ‘adibasi’ people in the Sonai and Maynimukh Union of Langadu Upazila in Rangamati District. By using random sampling method, 230 household has been selected to collect the empirical data for this research. Fieldwork have been paid among the people of selected areas in different time of 2013 and 2015. After signing the peace accord in 1997, the suitability, supporting capacity and of social condition of ‘adibasi’ people has been portrayed through the food crisis, social security issue, education, water & sanitation, health & diseases, household and its materials and income of the study people. Also, the changing situation of ‘adibasi’ people after peace accord has been seen. Discrimination has found between the ethnic minority and mainstream people in CHTs in the various issue of basic human needs. As the social policy foster the upward mobility of disadvantaged ethnic minority people but the empirical data has revealed that the social policy in the CHTs has excluded the ethnic minority people from their basic human rights after signing the peace accord in 1997.

Food and Social Security

The Chakma are excluded from the social safety net program although social safety net program has been ongoing in Bangladesh after 1990. Under this program, old and widow allowance, educational benefit, sick assistance, indigenous allowance as well as FFW projects has been taken for implementation. But 94.7% chakma people do not receive any kind of these allowances.

In fact, many interventions made in the name of development have excluded and marginalized the people of the Hill Tracts and stymied their self-development to the benefit of the state and the dominant ethnic group that is the “Bengali”. Thus, a sharp contrast and mistrust between the
dominant group and the minor ‘adibasi’ have created in the Chittagong Hill Tract. The adibasi’ need more attentiveness at the social security level for their survival as social and human being. They need a set of social policies to ensure the fulfillment of their basic human needs such as food, shelter, education, health and security.

**Education**

The ‘adibasi’ has keen interest in education. The rate of primary education among chakma in Rangamati is lower than the Bengali people as well as other districts of Bangladesh. 8 years old above ‘adibasi’ children have completed primary education and 2.4% finished their secondary education (CHTDF). The primary dropout rate in the CHT is 59% and secondary and higher secondary education rate is very low among chakma and the other ethnic communities in the CHT are out of education program. About 65% ‘adibasi’ children discontinue their education before completion primary schooling. In most of the Universities in Bangladesh very few ‘adibasi’ girls and boys study through Govt. quota system. The principal reason of dropout is as their poor financial condition, long distance of schools from their home and communication problem, insecurity of ‘adibasi’ girls as well as language barrier. Social security and economic solvency as well different governmental programs will rise the education rate among the ‘adibasi’.

**Health**

The key objective of UN program is to improve public health situation in Bangladesh as well as to confirm emergency health service to the people. To confirm the quality of health services and prevent infectious diseases is another goal of UN program. In this perspective, there are huge differences found between health services and service providers among indigenous people in CHTs of both plain and hill areas in Bangladesh. The national health policy in this country is not supportive for indigenous people where indigenous people are 5% of the total population. This indicates the indifference and unwillingness of Govt. in health issues of indigenous people.

It is familiar among indigenous people to cure diseases by natural ways. In critical situation, they go to the hospital of military camp. Otherwise, they go to the village healers or local pharmacists who are inefficient of curing disease. The 57% of the indigenous people go to the Govt. hospitals and other 41% go to the pharmacy to cure diseases. But among them most of the indigenous
people initially utilize their indigenous knowledge and experiences or go to the local healers in curing diseases. There is a high occurrence of malaria and the local govt. has not taken any step to destroy mosquito. The ‘adibasi’ are unable to purchase medicine and they took loan or mortgage house and other assets.

**Water and Sanitation**

People have no access to drink pure water and use of hygienic sanitation for what they frequently suffer water borne diseases. ‘Adibasi’ people use open field for latrine and make water pollutant which is used by the ‘adibasi’ for various purposes like drinking, cooking, washing, bathing etc. for what they are suffering much in health insecurity. Set up of deep tub-well or supply water from WASA as well as provide sanitary tools can remove the ‘adibasi’ people’s miseries.

**Income**

The monthly average income of *chakma* is very low. The lowest income group is also called the poorest of the poor on the basis of monthly income. Average household based monthly income of the *chakma* in Sonai and Mayni is 2233 BDT (33 USD) with rang from minimum 300 BDT (4.28 USD) to maximum 26500 BDT (378 USD) compare to the annual household net income of rural people in Bangladesh is 840000 BDT (1200 USD). Income generating activities and their traditional ‘jhum’ cultivation can improve their socio-economic condition.

**Housing**

The ‘adibasi’ people in the Sonai and Mayni live in houses are made of low quality of material. The houses have no sanitation system, pure water supply and electricity connection.

**Adibasi Need More Care**

*Chakma of Sonai* and *Mayni* localities, *Langadu* are living in poverty and exclusion. They are excluded from their own land in many senses. Also excluded from their house plot, cultivable land. The people are secluded from economic activities and trade rights. The ‘adibasi’ people are further deprived from social policies. Housing, health facilities, water and sanitation, education, economic development and other programs have been initiated and handled very poorly by the various governments of Bangladesh.
Unless proper care is taken and a set of social policies for the ‘adibasi’ are implemented, they would become either extinct as a group or they might need once again to rise and rely on their own efforts. However, the attempts to organize such efforts have been systematically broken by the governmental policy, e.g. by inviting Bengali settlers from various plain districts into the CHTs region, granting land, assets and ration food to them, not preventing conflict between settlers and ‘adibasi’, permitting army dominance over the ‘adibasi’, withholding development activities in the CHTs, keeping them isolated from the mainstream economic activities like trade with agricultural and other products, depriving many of their voting rights, not allowing them free movement like that enjoyed by the majority population, allowing barriers to be created by the settlers and by the civil and military administration, preventing the participation of the ‘adibasi’ main development programs in the CHTs, not initiating the infrastructural development in the ‘adibasi’ living areas, not supplying energy for the ‘adibasi’ and not allowing them to receive higher education. Most importantly, insecurity is a recurrent and major concern among the ‘adibasi’.

Social policy could have played an important role to solve the diverse CHT problems by accumulating the excluded and marginalized people. At least, it could have prevented the enormous poverty among the ‘adibasi’. The missing social policy in the CHT may have contributed to the social insecurity and unrest among the ‘adibasi’. A set of social policies along with good governance are essential aspects for the real development of the CHTs. Moreover, the human right situation is dreadful in the area. Poverty, food insecurity and poor access to education and health services clearly shows the need for social policy and good governance as the current governance situation is uneasy and inherently unstable in that areas.
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