

**TRANS-BORDER MIGRATION AND  
POLITICAL CONFLICTS : A CASE  
STUDY OF CHAKMAS**

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**CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled **TRANS-BORDER MIGRATION AND POLITICAL CONFLICTS: A CASE STUDY OF CHAKMAS**, submitted by **LALTANLIEN KHOBUNG** in fulfillment of Nine Credits for the award of the Degree of **Master of Philosophy (M.Phil)** of this University, is his original work and may be placed before the examiners for evaluation. This dissertation has not been submitted for the award of any other Degree of this University of any other University to the best of our knowledge.

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*To my parents  
with warm regards*

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## PREFACE

The trans-border migration in the form of undocumented or illegal and refugee migrations are an increasing phenomena in different regions of the third world. The migrants entering the receiving countries not only put the pressure on the limited resources, but also causes various socio-political problem and conflicts. One such case in the recent years is the exodus of Chakmas of Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh to different North Eastern region of India. The Chakmas are entering into India, crossing the border from Bangladesh due to socio-economic and political reasons of the country of origin. This have generated socio-political problem in the host country. The safe return of Chakmas to their original home is the major concerned of India. The issues relating to Chakmas have a great impact in the bilateral relation between India and Bangladesh.

The present study focus on the trans-border migration and the ensuing political conflicts in different region of the third world with a special reference to Chakmas. The trans-border migration of Chakmas resulted in political and bilateral issues in the concerned Countries in the South Asian region. The study goes, into an indepth analysis of Chakmas: origin, forces of migration and the resulting political issues in the North Eastern region of India. It

also examined the bilateral relation between India and Bangladesh over the issues and possible solution to the Chakmas problem.

The volume is divided into five chapters.

Chapter 1. deals migration, ethnicity and conflicts in general. Chapter 2. discusses the trans-border migration and its political implication. Chapter 3. traces the Chakmas origin, their socio-cultural characteristics and spatial distribution. Chapter 4. examines the political issues and conflicts relating to Chakmas. Chapter 5. highlighted the India and Bangladesh relations and Governments stands on the Chakmas.

Suggestions are made for an early just solution, which is the interest of India and Bangladesh and above all, the Chakmas of Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh.

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## Chapter I

### MIGRATION, ETHNICITY AND CONFLICTS: CONCEPTUAL FRAME WORK

#### INTRODUCTION

Human migration has been a subject of interest to many scholars. Its study is of great importance in the social sciences, which deal with the general processes of social changes as well as specific geographic movement. Migration of population is a national and international phenomenon. International migration often results into softening by marked spatial variation and in bringing the gap among the people.<sup>1</sup> It is important to the understanding of continuously changing space-content and space-relationship of an area or areas<sup>2</sup>. Migration in the international level has played an important role in the development of socio-cultural economy and development along with creating understanding among the people. However, it does have considerable negative impacts on the people and on the receiving and sending countries. It is significant and needs full appreciation.

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1. R.C. Sharma (1992) Reading in General Geography and Geography of India, New Delhi: Jawahar Publishers and Distributors, p. 125.
  2. G.S. Gosal, (1961), "Internal Migration in India- A Regional Analysis", Indian Geographical Journal, vol. 36. p. 106.

There are significant trans-border crossing in different parts of the world; on account of variety of reasons and compelling situation. Mostly not only has the total world population increased so greatly, but there has also been a sharp change in the geographical pattern of its distribution on the surface of the earth.<sup>3</sup> Migration have a considerable bearing on population growth and distribution throughout the world.

Given the existing population imbalances and the socio-economic disparities among countries and between particular region and sub-regions, there has been a large-scale movement of population. The movement of people may be within the national state, inter regional or trans-border, intra-continental and inter-continental. The people may be migrated from less developed countries to developed countries and from an insecure place to secure place. Migrations due to natural catastrophes or calamities, upheaval, economic compulsions, political in security and torture are also very important.

Migration is also conditioned by the factors<sup>4</sup> like:

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3. R.D. Dikshit, (1987), Political Geography: A Contemporary Perspective, New Delhi: Tota McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, p.50.
  4. P.K. Debbarma and Sudhir Jacob George (1993), The Chakma Refugees in Tripura, New Delhi: South Asian Publishers, p.1.

- (1) Disproportionate, insufficient and inadequate economic development of a regions within the country.
- (2) Seasonal or recurring labour shortage in particular areas regions both within and outside the country.

The emergence of a large number of nation-states specially after the Second World War, cultural diversity and political conflicts within this nation-states also important in causing trans-border migration.

Migration in the international senses of the word is a comparatively recent phenomenon, dating back no more than the two or three hundred years. Since the concept of nation - state both hold in Europe and spread across the world.<sup>5</sup> In modern times migration are borne out of the growing process of industrialization, technological advancement and changes that taking place in the social and economic sphere. In addition, wars, political events, regional disparities in wages and availability of agriculture land.

The stagflation and gradual recession with which the industrialized countries had to contend, especially from

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5. W.R. Bohning (1984), " International Migration: implications for development policies", in International Conference on population, 1984, population Distribution, Migration and Development, United Nations, Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, New York, P: 379.

1974 onwards. This prompted one host country after the other to tighten the admission of immigrants workers, and eventually, to stop it altogether. With minor variants and exceptions, some developed countries continuing to receive immigrants and refugees. One of the major consequences of this development in developed countries as regards immigrants has been the sharp and alarming rise of undocumented or illegal migrants or migrants in an irregular situation.

Trans-border migration in the forms of refugees has increased during the past decades. These are the displacement of people due to various reasons, like wars, modern dictatorial regimes, by the national awakening of the people and also the closed frontiers characteristics of the twentieth century nation-states. For examples, Europe in the twentieth century, has a vast sea of refugees movement which set in motion by the disruption of wars, the break up of empires, the impact of violent nationalism and the arbitrary actions of dictatorial regimes. The political turbulence in the Balkan and Asia minor resulted in the movement of hundreds of thousands of people from one country to another, culminating in the large exchange of population, in particular of Greeks, Bulgars, Serbs, Armenians, and the Turks. The Conventions of Lausanne, January 30 1924, stipulated a compulsory exchange of populations between

Greece and Turkey. A total of 1.3 million Greek including terms of thousands from Russia and Bulgaria were transferred to Greece, and about 400,000 Turks to Turkey.

Between 1933 and the outbreak of World War II, more than a million refugees, most of them Jews left Germany. Many succeeded in fleeing to Western Europe or across the seas, but nearly 700,000 by them remained in the territories subsequently occupied by Germany and its allies. Refugees from Italian dictatorship numbered 65,000 - 70,000 in 1938, many of them sent to North Africa.

In the second half of the twentieth century, the scene of mass population movements has shifted from Europe to Asia. Following the partition of British India, in 1947, into two sovereign states of India and Pakistan about 15 million people crossed the newly defined borders. Further, uprooting though on a much smaller scale took place as a result of the hostilities between India and Pakistan over Kashmir in August 1965.

Another important refugees movement in South Asia region was from Tibet. The communist China's assertion of authority over Tibet in 1950 and the Lhasa uprising in 1959 resulted in the movements of thousands of Tibetans over the Himalayas. There are about 40,000 Tibetan refugees in India, 7,000 in Nepal, some 3,000 in Bhutan and 3,000 in Sikkim.

The refugees movement in African continent owed much its origin to the political development within the continent. The attainment of independence by more than 35 African countries during the period 1951-1966 has been accompanied by a complex displacement and uprooting of peoples, which has in turn has resulted in severe problems. Deep-seated tribal and ethnic rivalries in many of the newly independent territories, adding to the long existing tendency to economic migration since 1961, an estimated 50,000 persons have fled to adjacent territories.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to the above reason, the ethnic conflicts and re-assertion of their cultural rights by different ethnic group causes migration. The modern nation-state encompasses a varied member of ethnic groups which are distinct in their character. The diverse manifestation of ethnicity and associated phenomenon has a profound disturbing on the nation-state which leads to conflicts between groups and questions the unity and integration of the state. The multi-ethnic, cultural minority people and of social movement based on those demands, are a common phenomenon of the contemporary world. Many major political

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. Louise W. Holborn, (1968), "Refugees World Problem", David L. Sills (ed.), International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, vol. 13. New York: The Macmillan Company and the Free Press, p.361-67.

conflict that the world has witnessed a clear-cut ethnic dimension. The inter-ethnic group problems and conflicts within a nation-state are becoming increasing series in different parts of the world resulting many times in trans-border migration and bilateral problem between the countries involved. For examples, in South Asia, the Tamils in Sri Lanka, the Chakmas in Bangladesh and the Nepalese in Bhutan not only causes problem for these countries, but there are refugees from Sri Lanka and Bangladesh to India. The Bhutan Government did not want to recognised many Nepalese in Bhutan and her citizen. And also the Chakma refugees in 5 camps in Tripura, state India are a problem for India and Bangladesh bilateral relation.

Further, vulnerable border with either where the frontier is very extensive or where frontiers areas not well defined, relatively unguarded and thinly populated facilitated illegal or undocumented and refugees migrations. For examples, Sudan - Ethiopia and Rwanda - Burundi borders in Africa; Argentina-Bolivia - Paraguay border in Latin America and the Indo-Bangladesh border and also certain South Asian countries in Asia.

Continuing political instability, the disparity in incomes and standard of living between the rich and the poor countries, a rise in ethnic tension and a precarious global

economic situation - which is currently reflected in prevailing low national growth plus high unemployment rates - makes it very likely that mass exodus of and uncontrolled population movement in the near future.

#### **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

Migration is a complex phenomenon. An enquiry about the motives behind is the most difficult part an analysis of the process of migration. And also the studies that have been conducted in this field are mostly of specific in nature and the factors controlling migrations vary from area to area and from case to case. This makes it difficult to generalised their finding so as to make some applicable in different situation. The causes of migration are varied and complementary. And the factors involve acting both at the origin and destination of the migrants defy simple distinction.

With regards to the determinants of population movement distinction has been made between 'PUSH' and 'PULL" factors. PUSH factors are those that operate in areas of out-migration and compels the people to other areas. 'PULL' factors are those that operate in areas of in-migration and attracts the people to these areas. It is not however necessary that in an area only PUSH or PULL factors should



operate. In fact both push and pull factors operate simultaneously in the same area. It is because of this that it sometimes become difficult to differentiate between push and pull factors. There are many factors which may stimulates the migrations and also influences in choosing the destinations. For examples, graduation, marriages, employment opportunities, sale of business, medical care, political, racial or religious oppression, natural disaster etc., stimulates the migration. And the factors like cost of moving, presence of relative or friends, physical environment, population composition, information etc. decided in choosing the destination. Bogue<sup>7</sup> listed 25 migration stimulating situations for persons, 15 factors in choosing a destination. Further Bogue has recognised 10 socio-economic conditions which can or retard mobility among a population. For instance, major capital investments, major business recessions or fluctuations, social welfare, tolerance of minorities of all type, migration policy etc. For the simple understanding of this complexities a scheme of 'push' and 'pull' has been made for the detailed inventory of the determinants of migration.

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7. For detail please see, John I Clarke (1972) Population Geography, Oxford: Pergaman Press, p. 133-34 (A lists of 25 migration stimulating situations for persons, 15 factors in choosing a distination, and 10 socio-economic conditions which can stimulate or retard mobility among a population given by Bogue).

The push forces work at the source region. This may be caused by pushing out of population from their origin. They are growth and increasing size of population, destabilising land relation, unemployment, poverty, food shortage, religion, and social oppression, ethnic composition, consistent impact of drought and flood, insecurity, political causes etc. The 'pull' forces on the other hand flows at the destination it attracts population for inhabitants. There are many causes generating pull forces. The most important pull factor is job opportunities. Another important factors are better job and remunerative, employment facilities, better living conditions in general, like economic and favourable political environment. Both 'push' and 'pull' factors explain the migration at the national as well as in the international level. For instance, at the national level rural influx to cities. And at the international level migration has caused from the relatively resource poor and under developed region to the resources rich developed region, e.g. Brain-drain from developing to developed countries and labour migration from South Asia to Middle East.

But it is important to know that migration is the manifestations of both the two forces. Some push forces are essential to functions at the sources and some pull forces at the destinations. It can never be one way function.

The study of international migration is broadly be divided into past and present trends. The post 1960s clearly show migration structurally, qualitatively and spatially a different one in comparison to the earlier trend. The present trends have shown highly selective, restrictive, oppressive, and economic in nature. For example, the past international migration was mainly from European countries to North America, Australia, New Zealand, and within the European nations. The post 1960's migration was from developing countries to developed world. Recently, much of migration has been taking within developing world i.e. from labour surplus South and South-East Asian nations to West Asia as labour migration.

In modern times migration seem to be more and more influenced by political factors and less a matter of individual choice.<sup>8</sup> The traditional characteristics of migration was movement of workers from the less developed to more developed area or countries. There are temporary and permanent migrants, intra-regional and inter-regional movement of people. Recent migration movement shown increasing members of undocumented or illegal and refugees migration which are mainly influenced by political causes. This two types of migrations are important, as it involves

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8. Clarke, n.7 p.141.

the 'space-content' and 'space-relation' and the basic rights of the two nation-state system that all the sovereign State have a right to decide who may enters and under what conditions.

International migration in the form of illegal or undocumented and refugee migrations have been taking place in different part of the world. The illegal or undocumented migration has been occurring in many regions of the world. This type of migration are a typical of Latin America and the Caribbean, Northern Africa, Western South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. In Americas, Canada, Venezuela, Argentina the United States are the chief recipients of illegal or undocumented migrants from countries like, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua etc.

Illegal migration are also common to Europe. But since 1974 strict policies are adopted by most of European Countries to control illegal immigration.

Even the developing countries are not free from illegal or undocumented immigration. Countries of Western South Asia, South and South East Asia and several African countries have been receiving illegal immigrants. The magnitude of illegal migrants in these countries as generally small but quite often are the products of political factors. For instances, in India large scale

infiltration of Bangladesh owes its origin to political factors.

International migration in the form of refugees is a world-wide contemporary phenomenon. This refugee movement are a prominent feature in the third world. The refugee migrations are different fundamentally from other types of migration. It is not a voluntary movement. It involves the sudden uprooting, movement of large members of persons, including children and the aged. The members are in a constant state of flux, for while certain groups are being repatriated, new political conflicts, springing up elsewhere and adds to the total.

The illegal or undocumented and refugee migration which are, the typical in different parts of the third world, caused political instability in those countries. It has forms the scope of political movement in the form of nativist movement. As Weiner points out, political conflicts between Malaysian and Chinese migrants in Kualalumpur, Indonesian versus Chinese in Jakarta, anti-Chinese movements in Manila; are all manifestations of nativists conflicts.<sup>9</sup> In Malayasia the Malays speak of themselves as Bhumiputra

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9. Myron Weiner, (1978), Sons of the Soils: Migration and Ethnic conflict in India, Delhi: Oxfor University press, p.13.

(Sons of the Soil) in opposition to migrant Chinese, demanding that they be given special rights to employment, education and land.<sup>10</sup> Similarly, political conflicts have arisen between Sinhalese versus Indian migrants in Burma.

In South Asia, large scale migrations took place in the past. This was mainly from India in the forms of labour migration to work in the plantation estates of tea, coffee, rubber etc. in the countries of Sri Lanka, Malayasia etc. For examples, Tamils who entered Sri Lanka particularly to Jaffna State, from India in the past have caused intense ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. A large scale trans-border migration in the form of refugees took place within South Asia region from Bangladesh to India, particularly in the North-Eastern part of the country. Another stream of migrants crossed the border and entered Bhutan from Nepal.<sup>11</sup> Nearly 40 percent of the population of south Bhutan constituted by Nepalese from Nepal. Those migrants in Bhutan have led to ethnic conflicts and causing political instability in the Himalayan region.

The trans-border, migration have also brought political conflicts at the local scale within Indian territory. It is

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10. *ibid* p.16.

11. S.C. Dube, (1994), "Ethnicity-Myth and Reality World Focus, vol.15, no.4-5, April-May, p.4.

in the form of nativist movement in different cities. For examples, in Bombay nativist sentiment has found explicit political expression in the form of a political party Shiv-Sena which formed in 1966, to safeguard the interest of the Son's-of-the-soil. Political protests were launched by native Marathis against South Indian migrants, particularly Tamilian in Bombay.

The above examples are the testimonies to the trans-border migration (international and national) and ensuing political conflicts. Besides, trans-border migration has a long term impact in the process of development. The trans-border migration therefore, has bearing over the issues of development, ethnic conflict and political conflicts.

In recent past a prominent large-scale refugee migrations in the forms of trans-border occurred due to various reason, especially in South-Asian countries and posed problem in the host country. For instance, thousands of Tibetan refugees from Tibet (China), Tamils from Sri Lanka and over 64,000 Chakmas<sup>12</sup> from Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh crossed the border into India, for political

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12. The Telegraph, Calcutta, April 25, 1990, on 24 April 1990, the Home Minister of India informed the Lok Sabha that there were 64.000 Chakma refugees in India. Here the Chakmas in Arunachal Padesh were not included as refugees.

reason and these generated political conflicts within Indian territory. The trans-border migration of a particular ethnic group has also its own ramification and impact on the bilateral relations between the countries involve. Thus we want to place trans-border migration and political conflict of Chakmas tribe of Bangladesh for our study and analysis the bilateral relation between India and Bangladesh on Chakmas issue.

#### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The purpose of the literature review is to analyse how they differ each other in method and focus and what is their perspective on the subject.

A survey of literature on the proposed topics give important facts. On the general study by United Nations and its agencies, Commissions reports (by Government and Non-Governmental Organisation) and scholars have undertaken the problem, the process, nature and types of migration. There are quite a large number of works available on migrations at different level; international, regional and local. Many social science researchers have been interested as it is important in dealing the general process of social change as well as specific geographic movement. However, their interests, finding, analysis and conclusion are specific and different which defy the general classification.



At the international levels sustained international efforts have been made to bring out the various causes, types and effects of migrations. These are being substituted by giving statistics, number of migrants, refugees, undocument or illegal migrants through reports, researches, articles etc, for different countries and regions. This initiative are ndertaken by the United Nations; through its various agencies, like UNESCO, ILO, UNCHR, etc.

In addition to the above the study, information, policy and programmes of the United Nations are important for understanding the world population problems like, the relationship between population and resources.

United Nations, International conference on population (1984),<sup>13</sup> contributed to great deals in the study of different forms of migration. It was the proceeding of the Expert Group on Populatoin distribution, migration and development highlighting the distribution, migration and development especially stressing the problems of world-wide migrations. The themes of the study includes, the international migration implications for development policies; general objectives of National and International

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13. United Nations, "International Confernece on Population, 1984", Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, (Proceeding of the Export Group a Population Distribution, Migration and Development), Hammamet, Tunisia, 21-25, March 1983, New York.

policy. The world-wide situation and problems of undocumented migration are reviewed. Brain-drain, refugees migrations and implementation of the population plan of Action; supplemented by relevant data for each forms of migrations.

United Nations, world population trends and policies (1989)<sup>14</sup> gave the major flow in the international scale. Here, voluntary and forced migration are discussed. The migration movement in broad term are generally from the economically less advances to the more advanced countries. The undocumented or illegal migrations may occurrd without the approval of either the sending or the receiving countries. And refugees which the movement may be strictly control by potential receiving countries. The affects of migration on the receiving countries and its diversity are given in detailed.

Reginald T.Appleyard (Ed)<sup>15</sup> (International Migration Today: 1988) is a collection of articles on the movement of people within and across national boundaries. Migration has

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14. United Nations, World Population Trends and Policies, 1979, Monitoring Report, vol.11, (Population-Policies), New York 1980, pp.51-71.

15. Reginald T. Appleyard (ed.) (1988), International Migration Today, vol.1, Trends and Prospects, UNESCO: Centre for Migration and Development Studies, University of Western Australia.

been an enduring components of human history. Whatever forces are of particular significance for specific outflows, migrations entails a number of distincts, though complex, consequences for countries districts, though complex, consequences for countries both of origin and distribution, as well as for the people involved in this processes: the migrant and family. This book takes stock of international population movement as they affect the different majors regions of the world and focuses on the evolution of migratory flows, overtime in Africa, Asia, and the pacific, the Arab States, Latin America the Caribbean and North America and Weteren Europe.

The UNHCR, ILO are engage in bringing out the problems faced by displaced people, refugees etc. Refugees and displaced persons,<sup>16</sup> during 1992, the world's refugee population increased by almost 2 million, to 18.9 milion. In the post-cold era, resurgent nationalism, together with the economic and social consequences of the collapse of the old world order, ad led to multiplication of conflicts, many of which also resulted from ethnic, tribal or religious tension.

The office of te United Nations Hig Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) undertook to strengthen it emergency

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16. United Nation, Year Book, vol.46, New York, 1992.

preparedness and response capacity, and to couple it with political initiatives to promote the safe voluntary return of refugees to their countries of origin.

For refugee movements, various Human Right Organisation like, Amnesty International, Anti-slavery Society etc. gave regularly the refugee problems and Human Right abuses in different part of the world.

At the National level census records, sample survey, and work of scholars on migration are important. The main emphasis on the national level are the pattern of movement within the territorial boundaries of a country. The movements are generally reorganised in rural-urban, urban-urban, rural-rural and urban-rural emphasizing economic motive, and age-sex constitutes of the people. For example, in the Indian Census Report Migration tables<sup>17</sup> constitute an important data. The table on migration are presented to give the distribution of population by place of birth, place of last residence, duration of residence, reasons for migration and economic activity of migrants. The migration data have been further cross-classified by rural-urban,

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17. In India the population of data are collected at the national level every decade. In census of India migration tables constituted an important variabus i.e. for 1981 we have migraton tables in, Census of India 1981. Series-1. Part-V- A and B (vi) Migration Tables [Table D-1 to 15) for different States/Union Territories.

educational level, seeking available for work etc. the data have been presented for States/Union Territories and Urban Agglomerations/Cities having a population of 1 million and above.

The ethnic conflicts and problems which we deals in the conceptual framework in relation to migration is very important phenomena in modern time. Brass (1991)<sup>18</sup> presented a theory concerning the origins of ethnic identity and modern nationalism. The ethnicity and nationalism interethnic conflicts and secessionist movements have been major forces shaping the contemporary states. In the closing decades of the 20th century, such forces and movements have emerged with new intensity. The multiethnic situation are prominent in South Asia, Eastern Europe, and the Soviet Union.

Paul Brass bases his theory on two focal arguments: one that ethnicity and nationalism are not 'givens' but are social and political constructions, and two that ethnicity and nationalism are modern phenomena 'inseparably connected' with the activities of the modern centralizing state. He tests his theory and discusses the various patterns ethnic mobilization and nation-formation through case studies.

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18. Paul R. Brass (1991), Ethnicity and Nationalism: Theory and Comparison, New Delhi: Sage Publication.

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Y; 394.(U,4)



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Micheal Howard C, (ed.) (Ethnicity and Nation-building in Pacific: 1988)<sup>19</sup> takes the stocks and examined the important of ethnicity in the process of nation-building in Pacific countries. The ethnic resurgents and cultural demands by minority people are linked with socio-economic problems. The immigrants controls over the political, economic life of the Island. Protests and demand for equal share are important in the struggle for power or larger share of apportunities.

Myron Weiner<sup>20</sup> (Sons of the Soil: Migration and Ethnic Conflict in in India: 1978), throws light n the typical problems faced by the region (South Asia) especially in relations to ethnic conflicts. Urmila Phadnis...et.al (ed.).<sup>21</sup> (Domestic Conflicts in South Asia, vols. 1 and 2: 1986 and by the same author, Ethnicity and Nation-building in South Asia: 1990), examine the challenges faced by the South Asian Countries.

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19. Michael C. Howard, (ed.), 1989, Ethnicity and Nation-Building in Pacific, Tokyo: The United Nations University.

20. Myron Weiner (1978), Sons of the Soil: Migration and Ethnic Conflict in India, Delhi: Oxford University Press.

21. Urmilla Phadnis... et.al (1986), Domestic Conflicts in South Asia, vols. 1 and 2, New Delhi: South Asian Publishers and the same author, (1990), Ethnicity and Nation-Building in South Asia, New Delhi: South Asian Publishers.

The Chakmas of Chittagong Hill Tracts Bangladesh, and their problems come to prominent in recent years, when a large scale of Chakma come to India in April-May 1986. The ethnic tribal group of Chakmas are living in Chittagong Hill Tracts and are spreading over Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh, North Eastern States of India and smaller number in Arakan Hill, Myanmar. A large number of Chakmas and other tribal group had crossed the border and lived as refugees in India due to political conflicts in the Hill Tracts.

The earlier records of Chakmas history are found in the Imperial Gazetteers of India.<sup>22</sup> Sneyd Hutchinson<sup>23</sup> (Chittagong Hill Tracts: 1909) describe the physical aspects, and an account of history, the people of Hill Tracts. Here and account on public health, agriculture and forests, natural calamities, occupation and trade, communication, Land and administration during the early British are given. Lewin,<sup>24</sup> (Wild Races of the Eastern

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22. Gazetteer of Bengal and North-East India, Delhi: Mittal Publication, Reprinted in India 1979, and The Imperial Gazetteer of India, New Delhi: Today and Tomorrow's printers and publisher (originally at Clarendon Press, Oxford 1908).

23. R.H. Sneyd Hutchinson, (1978), Chatogong Hill Tracts, Delhi: Vivek Publishing Company (originally printed in 1909).

24. T.H. Lewin, (1984), Wild Races of the Eastern Frontier of India, Delhi: Mittal publication, (Originally Published in 1870).

Frontier of India : 1870), traced the origin of Chakma and the British relationship with the Eastern tribal groups of India.

S. P. Talukdar<sup>25</sup> (The Chakmas: Life and Struggles: 1988 and the same author., Chakma: An embattled Tribes: 1994) gave an account of the Chakmas. The Chakmas earlier settled in Chittagong Hill Tracts without much interference from outsiders. Talukdar has given their socio-cultural life in the Hill Tracts. When the Sub continent of India was devided into two states, the Chittagong Hill Tracts was given to the then East Pakistan. The Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation, 1900, which restricted the outsider living in the Hill tracts during the British time changes. Their growing struggle for existence rapidly increased beyond all proportions due to accupation of their lands forcibly by the people from the plains. As a result of this, there was wide-spread violence all over the Chittagong Hill Tracts. As a result 60,000 Chakmas had to cross over to India and took shelter in the refugee camps. After 8 years of living in refugees camps, the repatriation could not be completed.

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25. S.P. Talukdar, (1988), The Chakmas: Life and Struggles, Delhi: Gian Publishing House, and by the same author, (1994), Chakma: An Embattled Tribe, New Delhi: Uppal Publishing House.



P.K. Debbarma and Sudhir Jacob George,<sup>26</sup> (Chakmas refugee in Tripura: 1993), traced the causes, and consequences of the Chakmas refugees which are now living in five refugee camps of Tripura. And it also give suggestion for the solution of the Chakma problems.

The Chakma unrest in the Chittagong Hill Tracts<sup>27</sup> (Spotlight: on Regional Affairs: 1987), this issue was devoted for in bringing out the Chakma problem in the Hill Tracts. It gave an accounts of the political development in the Hill tracts region. The Chakma problems are discussed from the Bangladesh policies and programmes and Indo-Bangladesh because of the Chakmas refugee in Tripura. It also Highlighted the two government stands on the Chakmas.

A reports on accounts of killing torture, rape, arson, forced relocation and the cultural oppression of the hill peoples of the Chittagong Hill Tracts in angladesh. This accounts are reports, published by Amnesty International, Anti-Slavery International, the Organising Committee Chittagong Hill Tracts campaign (Netherland), International Working groups for Indigenous Affairs (Denmark),

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26. P.K. Debbarma and Sudhir Jacob George, (1993), Chakma Refugees of Tripura, New Delhi: South Asian Publishers.

27. "The Chakma Unrest in the Chittogong Hill Tracts", Spotlight: Regional Affairs, Islamabad, vol.6, no.4, and 5, April-May 1987, pp.1-33.

Parliamentary Human Rights group and Survival International (UK) among others. The Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission<sup>28</sup> of 1990-91 was an attempt to investigate alleged on human rights violation in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. This groups comprises of European, Canadian and Australian Non-Governmental Organisation under the name of "Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission". The Commission report issued in May 1991, was the first attempt at a consise report on the human rights situation in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The report was critical to some aspects to the bangladesh Government's past and present policies.

The report concluded that the Bangladesh Government has militarized all facets of life in the Chitagong Hill Tracts and is destroying its tribal Society and culture as well as its indigenous economy by concentrating the population, tribal and settlers into cluster villages as part of the government counter-insurgency strategy. The Commission notes that all parties to the conflicts suffer violence and human rights abuse, it is most critical to the effectss of continued settlement and government policies on the indigenous tribes in the Tracts.

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28. 'Life is not Ours', Land and Human Rights in Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh; The Report of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission, May 1991.

There are articles and Newspaper reports discussed, and reporting the problems faced by Chakmas. Most of my work are done through newspaper and articles which are included in the bibliography.

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

The basic objectives of the proposed study are:-

1. to analyse the past and present nature, causes of trans-border crossing of the people, specially the tribal like Chakmas.
2. to examine the volume, directions and spatial location of refugees, both legal and illegal/undocumented and to nature of ethnic conflicts arising out and causing political instability in a region like South Asia with special reference to India and Bangladesh in the context of Chakmas.
3. to examine the bilateral relations between India and Bangladesh over the issues of Chakmas and their joint concern and search for possible solution.

#### **HYPOTHESIS**

In the present study the basic hypothesis which one would like to tested is:

1. the trans-border movement is a bid to have an unified geographical space for a particular ethnic group of people.

2. does the problem relates to inequalities of living conditions and is further aggravated due to the varying political process in the two areas.
3. greater the ethnic diversities in a region or country higher will be the chances of political conflicts.
4. more the volume of trans-border ethnic migration the (refugee migration) higher will be the propensities of political instability in the host country.

#### **SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND METHODOLOGY**

The research work is primarily based on secondary sources of information the major sources of the information have been books, Journals, census data and monograph, United Nations publication, reports, newspaper, report, and some government documents.

The methods employed includes descriptive and analytical. Attempt are made recognised what factors determine the people to more out from their place of origin. Extensive literature survey has been taken up in order to get a clear picture and to avoid prejudices in the the study of the Chakmas problem. Major part of the study is descriptive in nature, though quite a few sections are based on empirical data.

## Chapter II

### **TRANS-BORDER MIGRATION AND POLITICAL IMPLICATION**

The movement of people within and across national boundaries has been an enduring component of human history. Whatever forces are of particular significance for specific out flows. Migration entail a numbers of distinct though complex consequences for countries, both of origin and destination, as well as for the people involved in the process; the migrants and his family.

Under this heading we include all those movement involving the crossing of one or more frontiers not merely between two adjacent states, but also from one continent to another. The trans-border migration is closely linked with the process of socio-economic, political, technological and industrial development and also the policies and programmes of the world as a whole, and in individual sending and receiving countries. The trans-border denotes the territorial movement of people from one region to another crossing the adjacent or neighbouring countries. Migration play an important instrument, of cultural diffusion and social integration and a meaningful redistribution of population. It is also most fundamental to the understanding of continuously changing space-content and space-

relationship of an area/areas.<sup>1</sup>

The migration is of different types and forms which are not uniform in nature. There is a growing diversity in migration especially in regard to cause duration, distance, direction, selectivity etc.<sup>2</sup> Migration has often been classified into various types on the basis of motivation distance and time. On the basis of motivation, migration has been classified as economic migration, social migration depending on the factors that make the migrants move. And on the basis of distance, distinction has been made between long-distance, short-distance migration. Similarly, short term and long-term migrations have been recognized depending upon the period of stay.<sup>3</sup> We read of seasonal, temporary, periodic and permanent migration, of spontaneous, forced, impelled, free and planned migrations, as well as of internal, external, inter-regional, internal- continental and international migration.<sup>4</sup> In the case of forced

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1. G.S. Gosal (1961), "Internal-migration in India -A Regional Analysis", Indian Geographical Journal, vol.36, p.106.
  2. P.K. Debbarma and Sudhir Jacob George (1993), The Chakma refugees in Tripura, New Delhi: South Asian Publication, p.4.
  3. R.C Chandna, (1992), The Geography of Population, New Delhi: Kalyani Publishers p.151.
  4. John I. Clarke (1972), Population Geography, Oxford, New York: Pergamen Press, p.130

migration, the migrants has no decision of his own or has no say in the decision to migrate. In case of voluntary or free and planned migration, it is the people or community who decide or select to migrated to some other better place for specific reasons such as, the availability of fertile land, better economic condition etc.

With respect to trans-border migration, undocumented or illegal migration and refugees movement are important. The movement of undocumented migrants and of refugees are increasing in number.<sup>5</sup> Undocumented migration may occurred without the approval of either the sending or receiving countries, while refugees movement may result from unforeseen natural disaster, political upheaval, wars etc. All this types of migration - involving undocumented or illegal migrants and refugees - affects the governments policies, decisions with respects more traditional immigration. For examples, a country that has large number of illegal migrants may change its perception of desirability of future immigration. Similarly, refugees often settle permanently in a receiving country and are in the sense competing for a limited number of places with more traditional migrants. Each migrants depends crucially on the

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5. "International Migration", World Population Trends and Policies, 1979 Monitoring Report, vol.II, Population - Policie, United Nations New York, 1980 p.67.

types of movement involve having distinct effects in the receiving as well as sending country. The process migration has impacts on: the area experiencing in migration, the area experiencing out-migration and the migrants themselves. In another word, it modifies the areas of origin, the area of destination as well as the way of life of the migrants.<sup>6</sup>

The government policies on international migration are characterized by a wide diversity. For instance, the policy may be adopted for demographic or non-demographic ends or both. It may be a substitute for an unsatisfactory rate of population growth - a country that desires to increase population growth in short term - may choose to increase immigration because an increase in fertility might take several generations. Conversely, a country with rapid population growth, high unemployment etc. may opt for increased emigration. On the other hand, an international migration policy may also be adopted for purely economic end. For example, for temporary adjustment of labour shortages, with expectation that migration will return to their countries of origin.<sup>7</sup> In recent years, there have been-substantial changes in regards to international

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6. R.C. Chandna n.3. p.149.

7. "International Migration" n.5, p.5.



migration policies, where a majority of receiving countries desired neither immigration nor emigration.

We can distinguish different types of international migration. For instance, those whose presence/or employment in the receiving country is legally sanctioned, those whose status in the receiving country is illegal or without legal sanction, and those who have been admitted as refugees.<sup>8</sup> On the broad categories we can have regular and irregular migration.<sup>9</sup> Regular migrants are non-nationals who process the authorization of the state in whose territory they are that are required by Law in respect to entry, stays or work, and fulfill the conditions to which their entry, stay or work are subjected. They are shaped by economic, political and social forces primarily those of migrant receiving countries. The irregular migrants differs from regular migration. They are also non-nationals enters in the state without possessing the authorization in which territory they are. They are unplanned, mainly cause due to political

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8. "International Migration" The World Population Situation in 1983, United Nations New York, 1984, p.39.

9. W.R. Bonning (1984), "International Migration: Implications for Development Policies",.

International Conference on Population 1984, Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, Hammamet (Tunisia) 21-25 March 1983, United Nations, New York, p.384.

events, natural disaster, war etc. Regular migration is what might be called "demand-determined" that is resulting from a deliberate decision on the part of the receiving country to admit a foreigner in fulfillment of a specified economic, social or humanitarian objective. Irregular migration on the other hand, with very exception, "supply-determined" by reasons of the facts that a foreigner enters stay or works in spite of contrary policy assumption.<sup>10</sup>

Looking from the view point of migrant-receiving countries two broad categories can be distinguished in regular migration each of which have several categories. The first category relates to a policy that does not subject either the stay or work of non-national to restrictions, (excepts in respect to work that involves the exercises of official authority). Three sub-categories can be differentiated. First, there are free migration policies under which countries abolish substantive entry, residence and labour market controls for specified nationals. This hold true in, for instance, the European Economic Community (EEC); the Nordic Common Labour Market; the Trans-Tasman Agreement between Australia and Newzealand; and the Syrian Arab Republic, in respects of Arab nationals. Secondly, foreigners may be admitted with a view to permanent

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10. *ibid* p.387.

residence and in the hope that they would become future citizen. Australia and many English-speaking and Spanish speaking countries of Americas are perhaps best known for having pursued such a policy, although this was by no means the only type of policy they have adopted at one time or another. Thirdly, non-nationals may be permitted to stay indefinitely. For instance, in many Western European countries after the period of general restrictions on stay and work are lifted, disregarding formal requirement to have permit extended at certain intervals many foreigners are able to stay in, as in the United States of America.

The second category of regular migrants are that regularly admitted migrants and are subjected to limitation on work or stay. They can be differentiated into at least two sub-categories, the first is contract migration and usually involves only wages and salary earners. It can take several forms, individual, collective, groups etc. The second sub-category is official and business migration. It covers all economically active persons and comprises for example, diplomats or assimilated personnel, transport or media representatives, entertainers or sport men, investors or traders etc.

Irregular migration can similarly be typified in terms of several categories and sub-categories. In order to

characterized different types of irregular migrants, it is useful to distinguish between the different ways in which the regulations of the countries of immigration are contravened. There are essentially two broad categories to be considered. The first is exemplified by the migrant who crosses the border into or enters the receiving country in defiance of the laws and regulations of that country, lacking appropriate documentation and for without being authorized to do so. The second is that of the migrant who, having entered a country with a tourist or temporary visa there after remains in that country on the expiration of his visa.<sup>11</sup> The best example of trans-border movement or arrive in clear contravention of national regulation of host countries are the Mexican workers entering the United States of America without visas or authorization.

Besides, the refugees movement are very important. They are unpredictable occurrence and temporary in nature. The movement of refugees have been so frequent, often massive and involved a startling tragedy. The United Nations Documents define a refugee as every person who, owing to well counted fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of particular social group

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11. W.R. Bohning (1984), "The World-wide and Problems of Undocumented Migration", op cit n.9. p.41.

or political opinion is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.<sup>12</sup> The 1980s witnessed a steady increase in number of refugees, from some 8.5 million in early 1980 to approximately 12.3 million in early 1987 excluding Palestinian refugees, who amounted to 2.2 million in mid-1987.<sup>13</sup> The Chakmas of Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh who come to India in May 1986 unwilling to go back seeking shelter from India government and now lived in five refugee camps in Tripura state is good example of refugee migration.

The above typification of international migration has indicated the diverse nature of the contemporary international migration.

On the whole however, we have two distinct areal types of migration i.e. migration within the country and migration across the international border.<sup>14</sup> All those

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12. Charles Keely (1984), "Refugees Movements and their Implications", op cit n.9, p.447.

13. "Refugees" World Monitoring 1989, Special Report", The Population Situation in the Least Developed Countries, United Nations, New York 1990, p.222.

14. R.C. Chanada and M.S. Sidhu (1980), suggested that since Geography was a Spatial Science, the parameter of space was sacred to any geographical classification of migration. It was suggested that area must form in the basis of differentiating between one type of migration and another type.

migration that taken place within an area lying within the territorial jurisdiction of a country and are known as internal migration and the migrants move across the international border are known as external migration. Further, the term emigration refers to out-migration from the country to another and immigration refers to entry from across an international border into a country. These terms are generally used in the context of international migration, for instance, emigration of Indian to United Kingdom and immigration of Hindus from Bangladesh to India.

#### **INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION**

The migration of those across the border or boundary are of greater significance than internal migration. It brings a gain or a loss in a country's population. The migratory movements take many different form. Unfortunately, the study of these movement is often made difficult by the scarcity and patchiness of the data, which made it difficult to put the complete picture of migration across the region and states in a right perspective.

The movement of international migration generally is from economically less advanced to the more advanced countries, and countries which are characterized by different levels of demographic transition. In other words, international migration took place voluntarily in response

to spatial inequalities in the distribution of physical and human resources.

Since 1950, important changes have occurred in the character of the main currents of international migration. The resettlement of refugees from the Second World War and others uprooted as a result of political changes occurring in the early post-war period carried over into the 1950s. There was also a continuation of the traditional migration from Europe, which had resumed following the war to such overseas destinations as North and South Americas and Occania-Australia and New Zealand -on the part of individuals seeking economic betterment. With the recovery of Western Europe and the rapid growth of the economics of countries in that region in the 1960s, several new migration streams made their appearance while some traditional currents effected. Formerly, the mainly migratory streams were from Europe to the New World, but the direction has shifted, and the main currents are now towards the industrialized countries from the less developed countries. These recent trends are largely a product of differential economic and demographic conditions between the more developed and less developed nations.<sup>15</sup>

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15. "International Migrationz",

World Population Trends and Policies 1977, Monitoring Report, vol.I., population Trend United Nations, New York 1979, p.90.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR MIGRATION: The European overseas expansion of the 17th century and after perhaps constitutes the world largest human transplantation.<sup>16</sup> In order to meet the labour demands of there newly discoursed lands, cheap labours had to be imported. A great deals of international migration took place from Europe to other parts of the world including third world countries-during the period of 1800 to 1939.<sup>17</sup> The flow of international migration did not subside even after the Second World War. In fact after the Second World War, there was a compounding the problem of international migration. There were mass of displaced persons, expelees, refugees, etc. about 600.000 displaced person were enrolled by the international organization in 1946.<sup>18</sup>

The contemporary international migration shows a temporary labour migration, those which proceed largely from the economically less advantaged to more advantaged countries. The poles of attraction in 1978 are - the oil-producing countries of Western South Asia and Northern,

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16. R.C. Chandna, n.3, p.171.

17. For general pattern and the number of international migrants please see, R.C. Sharma, (1982), Reading in General Geography and Geography of India, New Delhi: Jawhar Publihers and Distributors, p.125.

18. P.K. Debbarma and Sudhir Jacob George, n.2, p.7.



Africa; South and western Africa; Latin America. The western Europe, an area in which the flow had largely stabilized and in which policy decisions related largely to the "temporary" migrants remained. The traditional poles of attraction for permanent settlement, (such countries as Canada, the United States of America, Australia and New Zealand) and with a few countries at world level still desired to attract permanent immigrants.

One of the striking changes that has occurred in the past several years with respect to international migration has been the increasing attraction of oil-producing Arab States of western South Asia and Northern Africa for migrant workers. There are about 2 million "guest workers" in those countries.<sup>19</sup> The movement of temporary working to the Gulf states differed from the previously migration of foreign workers to the western Europe not only in terms of relative number but in the fact it was a far more organised movement. The migrants are from a number of countries and geographical regions. There are large contingents of temporary workers from Asia - Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, the Philippines, and the Republic of Korea. Smaller number from Indonesia and Thailand, Southern Europe, Turkey and from Northern Africa, Egypt and Somalia.

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19. "International Migration", n.5, p.53.

A second major area in which the migration of temporary workers pre-dominated was Africa, where workers from a number of the poorer countries migrated to two major regions of economic attraction - South Africa and economically more advanced countries of Gabon and the Ivory Coast. The migrants in South Africa are from the neighbouring countries a Botswana, Lesotho and Switzerland, the peripheral areas of South Africa.

There was a large-scale movement of migrant workers among the various countries of Latin America, including the countries of Central America and the Caribbean. The number of workers involved was large not only by absolute standards but in proportion to the population and labour force of many of the countries involved. The geography of labour movements in Latin America was fairly simple. In the north, the main attraction was towards Venezuela and they came mainly from Colombia. In the central region, there were lesser movement among other countries of the Andean groups and between Brazil and its neighbouring countries and in the south, Argentina was the main in migration country, and received an inflow from its neighbours.

The situation in Western Europe-formerly a major pole of attraction for migrant labour had changed considerably. Since around 1973, when the economy in these developed

countries slow-down, many countries that had previously accepted immigrant labour had stopped active recruitment and restricted access to their territory to foreign workers, (excepts for nationals of countries in the European Economic Community), specially, the Federal Republic of Germany had suspended the recruitment of immigrants in November 1973. Different restrictive measures to limit and control migrants were taken in Switzerland, Sweden, Norway, Austria, Belgium, Netherland and France. These measures on migrants were adopted as its migrants posed problems to the respective receiving country, in term of political and social tension, sub-standard living conditions cultural difference and so on. Currently, there are bilateral attempt of the possibility of negotiation with the former sending countries in order to facilitate to return of immigrants workers, especially in France and United Kingdom.

The present situation in the Western Countries clearly shows that the over all economic situation in this region would not permit a significance new recruitment of foreign workers. Almost all countries had banned recruitment or had reduced immigration by fixing levels of saturation.

In addition to the flow of temporary migrants workers in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and United States of America, the immigration of foreigners were allowed or

encouraged on permanent basis. This can include Israel who accepted Jews from different countries to stay permanently. The magnitude of immigration for permanent settlement has been declining in almost all the receiving countries except, in United States of America. The decline is associated with the new immigrants policies adopted by these countries during 1871-80. The immigrants coming to these traditional receiving countries have a vast majority from developing countries, though United Kingdom still constitute the main source of migrants to them.

Table 1 shows the volume of immigrants<sup>20</sup> to the traditional countries like Australia, Canada, Israel, New Zealand and the United States<sup>a</sup> during 1971-80 from the individual country of origin.

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20. The World Population Situation in 1983, United Nation, New York, 1984, p.4.

**Table 1. Immigrants in the Traditional Countries, 1971-80.**

Country of origin	Immigrants (Thousands)
1. United Kingdom	752.0
2. Mexico	586.6
3. Philippines	388.9
4. Cuba	262.0
5. Republic of Korea	254.3
6. Vietnam	250.2
7. United States <sup>b</sup>	245.1
8. India	243.2
9. USSR	201.2
10. China	194.0
11. Italy	188.6
12. Portugal	179.1
13. Jamaica	175.7
14. Greece	143.9
15. Hong Kong	136.3
16. Dominican Republic	131.1
17. Canada	116.7
18. German Democratic and Germany, Federal Republic of...	98.9
19. Yugoslavia	97.8
20. Lebanon	81.2

Source: United Nations: The World Population Situation  
in 1983, New 1984, p.41.

- a. For the United States of America, Australia and New Zealand, data are classified by place of birth: for Canada and Israel, the Classification is by place of previous residence.
- b. Immigration data for the United States of America refer only to 1971-1979.

#### ILLEGAL OR UNDOCUMENTED MIGRATION:

There is another flow of international migration which has received of increasing attention: Undocumented or illegal migration. The large-scale traditional and well characterized flows of the 1950s and 1960s, due to the prosperity in major developed countries as reflected in a high rate of economic growth and increasing skilled and unskilled man power requirement created favourable conditions for a large intakes of migrant workers. The migrants come mostly from developing countries with surplus population and widespread underemployment.

The 1970s and 1980s did witness stagflation and gradual recession. The industrialized countries had to contend, especially from 1974 onward and restricted the entry of immigrant workers. This development had lead to the sharp and alarming ties of undocumented migrants or migrants in an irregular situation.<sup>21</sup>

The undocumented movements very often occurred between neighbouring countries, either where the frontier is very extensive or where frontier areas are not well-defined, relatively unguarded and thinly populated. The migrants who have entered the neighbouring countries were without visas, appropriate travel document or due authorization. The

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21. W.R. Bohning, n.11, p.406.

illegal or undocumented migration is typical of Latin America and the Caribbean. In Americas, Argentina, Canada, Venezuela, the United States of America are the chief recipients of illegal migrants from countries of Boliva, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nica Naguragua.<sup>22</sup>

In Northern Africa, there are reports of undocumented migration into the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya from Sudan and Tunisia. In Sub-Saharan Africa, much of the migration across borders by land has been undocumented. Many countries have tolerated and even welcomed these movements, but there have also been a number of attempt to control borders and expel undocumented aliens. The expulsion of large number of foreigners from Ghana in 1969 under the Alien Complain Order was a notable one<sup>23</sup>

The largest number of known undocumented migrants who crossed the border or arrived in contravention of National Regulation are the Mexican workers, entering the United State of America, crossing the border without any authorization. Undocumented Bolivian, Paraguayan or Chilian migrants are found in large number in the frontier region

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22. R.C. Chandna n.3, p.174-75.

23. United Nations, 1980 n.5, p.122.

of Argentina. Colombian migrants move to Venezuela or Ecuador. Various Latin American nationals, crossed different borders for either political or economic reason (to seek employment) to Brazil.<sup>24</sup>

Besides, there are undocumented migrant flows in Asia and the Middle East and to lesser extend, it concerns immigrants in an irregular situation in Europe. There exists a large number of North and Central Africans, Turks, Pakistanis, Philippines and other Asians in European Countries illegally. It is difficult to give a correct estimation of the volume of undocumented migration. There are obviously no statistical data based on census or immigration requisition which could be used. From different government sources and recent scholarly research, some broad estimates can be made, with all due reservation as to the accuracy of the figure quoted.

W.R. Bohning<sup>25</sup> has provided an estimate of undocumented migrants for different region for 1984. The table 2 shows that there are 5 million migrants in an irregular situation in North America, mainly in United States. For Latin America, estimate are of 3 million, Europe 1.5 million and the Middle East 500,000. For Africa the assumed figure was 3 million at the end of 1982 and Asian continent has an estimated number of 1.5 million.

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24. W.R. Bohning n.11, p.410.

25. *ibid* p.413.



**Table 2. Estimated undocumented Migrants in  
Different Regions, 1984**

CONTINENTS/REGIONS	ESTIMATES (in thousands)
1. North America	5,000
2. Latin America (South/Central)	3,000
3. Europe	1,500
4. Africa	3,000
5. Asia	1,500
6. Middle East	500
Total	14,500

Source; W.R. Bohning (1984), "International Migration: Implications for development policies" International Conference on population, 1984, Departments of International Economic and Social Affairs, Hammamet, (Tunisia), 21-25, March 1983, United Nations, New York p.413).

**REFUGEES:**

The other important type of migration in irregular situation is refugees movement. The refugee movements differed fundamentally from other types of voluntary international migration. They are a fact of life in the contemporary world. Different regions of the world witnessed refugees movement in different period of time. The refugees are involuntary migrants mainly political reason, war, natural catastrophe etc. It resulted in the sudden uprooting

of a large member of persons including children, and the aged, making homeless, and lack national protection and status.<sup>26</sup>

The refugees migration has increased during the past decade. The office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has estimated that during the period 1980-85 the number of refugees in the developing countries increased from about 6.5 million to about 8.2 millions, while their numbers remained roughly constant in the industrialized countries at 2 million, so that at the beginning of 1985 the total member of refugees was estimated at 10 million. Some 50 percent of these refugees are in Asia and 30 percent in Africa.<sup>27</sup>

The office of the United Nations High commissioner for Refugees estimates the member of refugees in African Continent at the beginning of 1985 at 2.9 million. The main host countries are Somalia (700,000, primarily from Ethiopia, the Sudan (approximately 700,000, primarily from Ethiopia and Leganda), Zaire (approximately 320,000, primarily from Angola and to a lesser extent from Burundi

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26. Louise W. Holborn (1968) "Refugees: World Problem," David L. Sills (ed), International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, vol.13, R. New York: The Macmillan Company and the Free Press, p.362.

27. "International Migration", United Nations, 1989, p.63.

and Uganda Burundi (approximately 260,000 primarily from Rwanda and to a lesser extent from Zaire), the United Republic of Tanzania (180,000, primarily from Burundi and to a lesser extent from Zaire), Uganda (150,000 primarily from Rwanda and to a lesser extent from Zaire), Zambia (95,000 primarily from Angola and to a lesser extent from Zaire, Namibia and South Africa), and Angola (92,000, primarily from Namibia and to a lesser extent from Zaire and South Africa). The countries of origin of refugees, in order of magnitude, include Ethiopia (1,200,000), Rwanda (350,000), Uganda (274,000), Zaire (95,000) Namibia (77,000 and the Sudan (59,000).<sup>28</sup> The inter-regional movement of refugees are a common phenomena in African Continent.

Refugees migration within the Asian region since 1945 includes the estimated of 7 million of Hindus who moved from Pakistan to India and the approximately equal number of Muslims who moved from India to Pakistan following partition in 1947, the 5 million Japanese repatriated from countries in Asia and the Pacific after the Second World War, the 4 million Koreans who moved from the north to the south of the the country during the 1950, the 60,000 Tibetans who moved to India and 100,000 Chinese expatriated from Indonesia to

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28. World Population at the Turn of the Century, United Nations, New York, 1989, p.118.

the mainland.<sup>29</sup> The recent refugee movement in Asia was 170,000 Rohingyes, the Muslim people from Arakan region who have continued to migrate into Bangladesh.<sup>30</sup> And also the presence of about 50,027 to 60,000 Chakmas refugees in Tripura State India from Bangladesh are important.<sup>31</sup>

All this are causes reflected a mix of political economic and ethnic circumstance. The genesis of many refugees flows from and within the Africa and Asia was colonialism especially decisions by 19th Century Colonial rulers to bring worker from other Asian countries to mines and plantations. In Africa the important political causes have been the demarcation of boundaries which cut across ethnic groups artificially.

Many conflicts during the ensuring century between minorities and host population were the direct result of differences in religion ideology and economic achievement.

#### **FACTORS OF TRANS-BORDER MIGRATION:**

The factors influencing the movement of people from one place to another are difficult part in the analysis of the

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29. "Refugees" World Monitoring 1989, Special report, no.13, p.224-25.

30. S.P.Talukdar, (1994), Chakma: An Embattled Tribe, New Delhi: Uppal Publishing House, p.80.

31. R.C. Chandna n.3, p.155-56.

process of migration. Large scale migration of people from one place to another is determined not by a single factor but by a combination of factors viz, economic, demographic, cultural, political, social, geographical and insecurity. Besides, other factors include population pressure and growth, availability of land in areas of departure and destination, transportation facilities, harvest, ethnic, cultural affinity. A distinction has been made between the factors that compel the people to enter a country i.e., push factors and those which attract the people - pull factors.

Since both positive and negative factors operate simultaneously and are difficult to differentiate from each other. For the purposes of generalisation therefore the discussion on the factors effecting migration can not follow exclusively the push-pull or positive negative scheme. And also the studies that have been conducted n this field are mostly of specific nature and it is difficult to generalize their finding so as to made the same applicable in different situation. Not only the factors controlling migration vary from area to area, but also the significance of the same factor varies from person to person.

All migration in the modern context are borne out of the growing process of industrialization, technological advancement and other changes that are taking place in the social and social spheres. In addition wars, political

event, regional disparities in natural resources, increase in employment potential, in wages and in availability of agricultural land are other stimuli for population movements.<sup>32</sup> The factors conditioning migration both internal and international are to a large extent similar surface on the basis we can arrive at certain generalization for better understanding of the problems some of the important factors causing migration are -

1. ECONOMIC FACTORS :

The primary causes of emigration and immigration is economic. Generally the currents of migration originate from the areas of depressed economy with bright future and are directed towards areas of greater economic prosperity with increasing employment potential. However, within the general from work of the industrial "pull" has to be more dynamic than agricultural "push" both in industrial and agricultural countries. The availability of good agricultural land continues to be the most powerful economic factor determining magnitude and direction of population migration. Heavy pressure on the limited land resources compels the people to migrate and they move out to the places where new agricultural lands are available. In India, where the process agricultural development are in progress with the

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32. *ibid* p.157.

newly reclaimed areas and where extension of irrigation has improved are witnessing such migration which has improved the general condition of agriculture significantly. Since types of migration are noticed in Danda Karanya of Madhya Pradesh - Orissa, Terai region of Uttar Pradesh and Northern part of Rajasthan.<sup>33</sup>

Non-availability of proper job and unemployment are also the economic reason which compels the people to leave their home for the places, areas, regions and countries where employment may be found. The labour movement to the industrialized countries and oil producing countries has economic aspect. The movement of Tamil of the former Madras state to migrate to Sri Lanka as estate labourer during the British Colonial period. The Indo-Nepal Treaty of 1950 which provided for free movement of Nepalis and Indians in each other country together with the continent facilities and privileges (except political right) was reckoned to be necessary for each other economic development.<sup>34</sup> The movement of Indian migrants to South Africa as estate labourer, England, Fiji, and other Eastern African countries and South East Asia countries reveals the motives behind of the migration was economic. Besides the development of means

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33. P.K. Debbarma and Sudhir Jacob George, n.2, p.10.

34. *ibid.*

of transport and communication in recent time stimulated migration tendencies. Thus, the economic poverty, unemployment and attraction for better economic opportunities always motivated and force the peoples to emigrate from their native places.

2. DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS:

The demographic factor play an important role in governing migration stream. The population pressure and regional disparity in the rate of natural increase of population provide the basis for all movements of people especially in the third world - India and China. There is a close relationship between the resources of the areas and the population growth. The great historic movement of the European across the Atlantic ocean was an expression of increasing pressure of population on the resources base of Europe. In the same way through on smaller scale as a contemporary movements of people from South and South-East Asia to the Gulf countries. Similarly in India the large scale out-migration from the densely populated parts of Orissa, West Bengal, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh in largely due to a poor population-resource ratio in these area.<sup>35</sup>

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35. Majid Husain, (1994), Human Geography, New Delhi: Rawat Publications, p.133.



### 3. GOVERNMENT POLICIES :

In recent time, the government policies and programmes of a country or a region influence the pattern of migration especially the trans-border crossing. The large scale traditional migration from developing countries of surplus population and wide spread underemployment to major developed countries changes due to stagflation and gradual recession. With the industrialized countries had to contend especially after 1973 onward. The developed countries British, France, German, Russia, U.S.A, New Zealand, Canadian and South Africa Governments have specific policies and most of them discourage and tightened the admission of immigrants workers. This consequence in a sharp and alarming rise of undocumented migrants or migrants in an irregular situation in these countries.<sup>36</sup> The government devised the immigration policies which facilitated and enhanced their position by rapidly changing patterns of economic and political powers. For example, the movement of immigrants towards the developed and Gulf countries is to supplemented the population growth where immigration policies were evolved according to it needs.

### 4. POLITICAL FACTORS :

There are important mass exoduses of migration which

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36. W.R. Bohning n.11, p.409.

owe nothing to the desire for economic grant. The search for political or religious freedom accompanied. Sometimes by the need for self-preservation in the face of persecution quite contrary to the economic interest of migrants. Political total totalitarianism when it menaces the consciences and the lives of individuals cause migration. One and three quarter million Russian fled from their homeland at the time of the Bolshevik Revolution and many hundreds of thousands of Spanish Republican have fled Franco - Spain.<sup>37</sup>

In political factors, especially after the Second World War political refugees is a world wide phenomenon today. One can list numerous examples of political migration. For instances, European Jews after the Second World War Palatines, Chines, Hungarian (freedom fighters), Cubans, Indians, Kurds, Serbians and Bosnians. All these are the example of forced migration induced by political factors.

Another forms of involuntary migration is the expulsion or exchange of minorities by nations. For example, the Muslims and Hindus exchanged when India and Pakistan were created by the Partition of the sub-continent. And also the forced and compulsory migration in medieval period was the

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37. S.H. Beaver (1970), Geography of population, London: Longman Group Ltd. (translated) p.217-18.

slaves trade (Negroes) from the western coast of Africa to the European countries and United States of America.

5. SOCIAL CAUSE:

The socially rooted determinants of migration are also very important. The social custom of a bride living with her husband after marriage and female offsprings residing with their parents. Besides the quest for religious free down are important social cause of migration. This type of migration owe nothing to the desire of economic gains. People leave their original place when when there is a rigid social restriction and closed system of society which do not give much scope for the upliftment and development of the individual. A persistence social conflict may also cause people to migrate to other place. Among other social factors contributing population movement include, socio-economic status, information network, cultural contract, desire for social and community development and above all the governmental policies are considered important. Closely associated with this factor is the factor of information network, transportation development, new trends of development in the field of science and technology. For instance one may say that the great surge of migration coincide with the development of railway.

6. ETHNIC FACTORS :

There is probably a natural preference on the part of most people live in a locality where they share the same language religion and culture with their neighbour. A minority ethnic or religions groups is much encouraged to migrate to the place or country where their over people have already settled. For instance, there was a tendency for initial overseas of Pakistan settlements in Britain to be attractive to latter Pakistani immigrants.

One way in which ethnicity is an incentive of ethnic causes that make it possible for migrants to move into localities in which people of their over language and culture already reside. Some border district have large spill over populations from earlier migrations while in some instance state boundaries arbitarely cut through cultural linguistic communities. Many border districts are accepted by people who speak the language of the neighbouring states, like the Kurdish in Central Asia, the Chakmas, in India and Bangladesh the Nepali to Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri districts in West Bengal. For instance since a certain section of the Chakmas had already settled in the Indian state in Tripura during latter phase of the 19th century the recent Chakma migrants from Bangladesh migrated to Tripura. The person of ethnic minority or religious background and cluster of people of similar background performs social political and

cultural functions and the socially the groups affords an assimilation into the host society.

**CONSEQUENCES OR IMPACT OF TRANS-BORDER MIGRATION:**

The process of migration have effects on the people at the origin, at destination, migrants themselves and the relationship between the receiving country and country of origin. The consequences can be observed and measured in demographic, economic, socio-cultural and political terms. It is logical therefore, that wherever there is migration from one place or country to another, the population into recipient place or country increases and the population of the place or country of the refugees/immigrants origin, decreases. For instance, over fifty to sixty thousand Chakma refugees in Tripura has increased the population of India while it had decreased the population of Bangladesh correspondingly.<sup>38</sup>

The important and at the same time most relevant to the geographer, are it spatial and numerical consequences. They face into two complementary series:

- (i) The reception areas absorb people, the towns expand, the country side fills up and new land are opened up; statistics record the changes in member, and the map

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38. P.K. Debbarma and Sudhir Jocab George, n.2 p.14.

shows the modifications in distribution, the increased densities;

(ii) Conversely, the sources areas see their population diminishing, their towns vegetating, their country side employing and their fields going to waste.<sup>39</sup> For instance, in 1819 the United States had 5,800,000 inhabitants, at the beginning of the twentieth century 76 million, and in 1960 180,529,000. The growth in population was mainly due to the influx of immigrants from Europe.<sup>40</sup>

With the movement of population from one area to another, it leads to, the reallocation of human resources with a view to achieve a better balance between human resources and physical resources. Consequently, the population-resources relationship of the two areas involved in the process of immigration gets modified significantly as a result of the movement. For instance, in the wake of major oil price increase of 1973/74 and 1979, the scale and significance of international labour flows accelerated dramatically in the Middle East Country. This area have rich oil resource but limited supply of skill indigenious human capital. They labour supply mainly come from populated

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39. S.H. Beaver, n.36, p.221.

40. *ibid* p.197.

developing countries of Asia. The population of South Asian in the region in 1981/82 exceed 2 million (Pakistan 1.2 million India 900,000 Bangladesh 160,000 and Sri lanka 13,00.00.<sup>41</sup>

The migration of people from the place to another also bring a tangible transformation in the demographic characteristics. All the attributes of population such as number of population, its density, growth, fertility, mortality, age, sex, literacy and occupational structure get transformed. These, like the numerical consequences of migration, reveal themselves at once, and are traceable not only in statistic but even in the character of the population, at both ends of the line. For example, the sex ratio may be disturbed to a greater or less extent, and the age pyramid may assume strange shapes.

In general men are more prone to migration than women, and it is not uncommon for the departure zones to become depopulated of their man folk or at least of the young women. This anomaly has always been noticeable in the early stages of great far-flung migratory movements, for instance, the Indians in south Africa, and the Chinese in South-East Asia, were almost entirely male communities before arrival

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41. Reginald T. Appleyard, (1988), "International Migration in Asia and the pacific", Reginald T.Appleyard (ed.), op. cit n.40, p.113.

of women of their own race from the home country, and the white men who colonised parts of Asia and Africa in the 19th century were almost always unaccompanied.<sup>42</sup>

One of the most widely recognized economic consequences of labour migration is the flow of remittance (Table 3).<sup>43</sup> For a country of origin this flow not only bolsters the volume of scarce foreign exchange earning but process a potential source for additional flow of hard currency has generally alleviated the traditional foreign exchange bottleneck in major labour exporting countries and was instrumental in causing the adverse effects.

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42. S.H. Beavar, n.36, p.223.

43. Reginald T.Appleyard, n.41. p.104.



**Table 3. Remittances from Labour Migrants in Relation to Merchandise Exports and Grass National Product (GNP) Selected Asian Countries, 1980-84**

COUNTRY	YEAR	TOTAL (\$millions)	REMITTANCES	
			AS PERCENTAGE OF MERCHANDISE EXPORTS	AS % OF GNP
Bangladesh	1981 <sup>1</sup>	337	53.0	3.4
India	1980 <sup>1</sup>	1600	19.9	1.1
Pakistan	1981 <sup>1</sup>	1900	69.9	8.8
	1983	23900		
	1984	2760		
Philippines	1980	774	13.5	3.1
	1982	810		
	1983	944		
Republic of Korea	1980	1292	7.4	3.9
	1981	1674		
	1982	1940		
Sri Lanka	1980	137	12.7	3.6
	1981	174		
	1982	237		
	1983	272		
Thailand	1981	450	7.2	1.2

Sources: Demery, 1983; Stahl; Arnold and Shah, 1984

Quoted in

Reginald I. Appleyard, (1988), "International migration is Asia and the pacific" Reginald T. Appleyard (ed.), International migration today, vol. Trends and prospects, Center for Migration and Development studies, University of western Australia, p.104.

1. Financial Year

The table shows while remittance to Pakistan and Bangladesh represent a much larger percentage of export earnings than those to the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Thailand. The amounts show less contribution substantially to each country's overseas earnings.

The mass immigrations of the past are believed to have stimulated economic development in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Argentina and Brazil in the United States until late in the 19th century by bringing into a better combination of the factors of production and releasing the force of increasing return. The focus of immigration being in a relative by high proportion of young adult workers which are considered advantageous for the receiving countries. It is said that, country of immigration derives the benefits in the forms of productive labours, from the investment which the sending country has made in the maintenance and education of these persons during their youth.

From the view of the receiving country the of a substantial member of aliens in the labour force and in the society as a whole at times rise to inter-group friction and event to open strife: the differences in language, religion, physical appearance, social conform and cultural tradition causes problem in integration. Social segregation and existences of under privileged social classes in South

Africa between the White and the Black people the immigrants and the Aborigine people in Australia and New Zealand caused problem of integration in this countries.

Linguistic differences became a serious problem, particularly in those areas where people of different languages have migrated to almost in equal numbers and have been living together for a long time. For instance, the French and English in Canada, and the Boers and English in South Africa, where jealously to preserve their identity in which the essential element is language.<sup>44</sup>

The Trans-border migration have also resulted in tensions, conflicts and political instabilities in the receiving countries and also from a scope of political movement within the country. The dominant of immigrants in political, economic etc. spheres resulted the feeling of the depreciation in their own land by the nature people. The feeling of 'difference' ethnicity, nativist movement claiming equal share in the economies, political and social spheres bring tensions and conflicts between the two groups. For example, the Tamils who entered to Sri Lanka during the colonial period as estates labourer in Tea plantation, particularly in Jaffna state. from India caused intense

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44. S.H. Beavar n.36, p.231.

ethnic conflict with the majority Sinhalese in Sri Lanka. And the Nepalese immigrant are entering Bhutan in large number causing tensions between the Drukpa (native Buddhist Bhutanese) and the Nepalese immigrant. The large scale infiltration and refugees from Bangladesh to North-Eastern states of India causes serious ethnic socio-economic and political problems. For instance, the All Assam Students Union (AASU) agitations on the foreigners issue in early 1980s in Assam and the the All Arunachal Pradesh Students Union (AASU), in Arunachal Pradesh on foreigners issue of Chakmas, are against the immigrants from Bangladesh. The trans-border migration also cause bilateral problem between the receiving country and country of origin. The immigrants or refugees sometimes not only undesirable for the receiving country, it also brings socio-economic and political problems. The receiving country can use refugees or trans-border immigrants against the country of the immigrant origin in the international forum. For examples India foreign policy is directly affected by Bangladesh's Chakma problem Sri Lanka's Tamil issue.<sup>45</sup>

The importance of migrations is obviously very considerable. They play a part just like natural growth in

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45. S.K. Singh (1994), "India's Neighbourhood" World Focus, vol.15, no.8, August, p.9 and 24.

the distribution, evolution and composition of human communities. Migration also affected in differing degrees, the rates of and process of socio-economic growth and change in all countries in the region. And one should not neglect the role of migratory threads in the nation - state building processes. The trans-border migration often accompany ethnic of linguistic diversity and in many occasion posed problem and threat to national integration.

### Chapter III

#### **THE CHAKMAS: ORIGIN, AND THEIR SOCIO-CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS AND SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION**

The Chakmas are one of the ethnic tribal groups in the South-Asia. The Chakmas are an ancient tribal Community. They are Buddhist by faith, having their own distinct way of life, language, values and culture. After the Chakma refugees migration from the Chittagong Hill Tracts (Chittagong Hill Tracts) of Bangladesh into the Indian State of Tripura which began in April-May 1986, the Chakmas came into prominence in the Indian national context. This refugees problem is now both national and International problem in character.

#### **ORIGIN :**

The Chakmas, who belong to the Tibeto-Burman group of people sometimes be pronounced as Tsakma or Tsak. "The word Chakma or Chakma is a generic term given to a predominant hill tribe of Chittagong Hill Tract dwelling in the corridor link of Arakan (Myanmar) by the then British administrators and scholars who ruled and researched on these tracts of hills from mid-18th Century to mid-20th Century".<sup>1</sup> The tribe

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1. S.P. Talukdar (1988), The Chakmas : Life and Struggles, Delhi : Gian Publishing House. p.5.

is known as Thek by the Burmese, and Tui-Thek by the Kukis.<sup>2</sup> Besides the Chakmas there are other 11 (eleven) different small hill tribes in Chittagong Hill Tracts, but the Chakma formed the largest group and spread all over. Doingnak tribe is said to be the smaller section of the Chakma tribe. The origin of the Chakmas is too obscure, and cannot be traced correctly as there are no written documents. However, there are different beliefs and versions as to the origin of the Chakmas. First the Chakmas are believed to be originally coming from a country name Champaknagar, which is believed by some to be near Malacca and this may ascribe them to be of Malay origin. There are others who believe that Champaknagar is situated far to the North-Western provinces of Hindustan and people holding this view believe that they have descended from a Khettric family of the name of Chandra. However, their facial characteristics are indicative of Mongoloid and not Aryan extraction.<sup>3</sup>

Second version of their origin which majority of the tribe held that they are descended from Hindu family of good caste. Most of the Chakmas considered themselves descendents of emigrants from similar who settled in Chittagong District

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2. R.H. Sneyd Hutchinson (1978), Chittagong Hill Tracts, Delhi : Vivek Publishing Company. p.21.
  3. T.H. Lewin (1984), Wild Races of the Eastern Frontier of India, Delhi : Mittal Publication. pp.158-89.

in the days of Arakanese King. According to this view it is believed that the Kshatriya king of Champak Nagar had two sons, Bijoygiri and Samogiri. The elder brother Bijoygiri crossing the river Meghna then marched against the Arakanese forces and defeated them. Bijoygiri now prepared to return home but his younger brother Samogiri usurped the throne on the death of his father. In consequence Bijoygiri made terms with the Arakanese King and settled down in the neighbourhood of the Waaf river to the South of the Chittagong District. His people inter-married with the Arakanese and gradually become converts to Buddhism. Thus the Chakmas are said to be the descendants of Bijoygiri and his followers.<sup>4</sup>

The third version in regards to the origin of Chakmas holds that they were originally Mughals. According to this version once the 'Wuzeer' of the Chittogong Hill Tracks gathered an army to attack the king of Arakan and during the course of their march towards Arakan, they met a 'Pungyee' (POONGYEE a holy man) in the wilderness who requested the 'WUZEER' to halt and partake of some refreshment to which the Wuzeer consented. But the food did not appear for a long time, the Wuzeer sent a soldier to enquire and the soldier. Surprisingly saw that the Pungyee put both the rice and

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4. R.H. Sneyd Hutchinson. n.2, p.22.



flesh together in a pot and had placed it over the fire place where there was no fire. But instead the Pungyee had put his foot under the pot and flames were issuing from the lips of his toes. To this report the Wuzeer became enraged and said that at that rate the food will never be ready and he ordered the march to recommence. Consequently the holy man when he discovered that his guest had unceremoneously departed he became angry and cursed the Wuzeer and his army. He sent forth a powerful charms after them as a result when they met the troops of the Arakan King their hearts turned to water and they were easily taken prisoners. The king of Arakan settled all these Mussalmans as slaves in his territory and also allowed them to marry from his country. Thus over the years they increased and multiplied. This was beleived to be one of the origins of the Chakma tribe.<sup>5</sup>

Besides the above mentioned theories about their origin there are other who believed that, the Chakmas are the product of the mixture of the Shakyas of Kapilvastu (Maghada) and the Thek tribe of Burma.<sup>6</sup> The Chakmas are undoubtedly of Arakanese origin. They immigrated into the Chittagong district where they inter-married largely with

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5. T.H. Lewin n.3, pp.20-21.

6. S.P. Talukdor (1994), Chakmas : An Embattle Tribe, Delhi : Uppal publishing House, p.11.

the Bengali.<sup>7</sup> Thus we find that the word according to this theory Chakma is derived from the Maghi word 'Chook' meaning of mixed origin.<sup>8</sup>

The Chakmas are the most important tribe in the Chittagong Hill Tract (CHT). They are Mongoloid by race, Buddhist by faith. They are divided in three sub-tribes Chakmas, Doignak and Tungjainya. The Doignak broke away from the main tribe a century ago and fled to Arakan. Later few returned to Cox Bazar division, sub-division of Chittagong district. The third division Tungjainyas is say to have come from Arakan as late as 18 and spoke Arakanese.<sup>9</sup>

The Chakmas are of short medium stature, and thick-set build with well developed muscles. They are hardy and bear Mongoloid features with yellowish complexion. They have cheerful, honest-looking face but sloth to change their old habit. Their requirement in life are very limited. They are religious people.

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7. R.H. Sneyd Hutchinson, . n.2, p.21.

8. J.P. Mills Ks "Notes on a Tour in the Chittagong Hill Tracts in 1926", in J.H. Hutton Census of India 1931, vol.11, p.121.

9. B.C. Allen and other (1979), Gazetteer of Bengal and North-East India (Delhi : Mittal Publications) p.410.

**SOCIAL ORGANISATION :**

The Chakmas began to form into a coherent group of people in the 16th century onwards. The Chakmas are divided into four major groups as follows<sup>10</sup> :

- (1) **ANNAKYA CHAKMA :** The Chakma who had immigrated to the Chittagong Hill Tracts from Arakan.
- (2) **ROWYANGYA CHAKMA :** Those Chakma who had remained in Arakan
- (3) **DOING-NAK CHAKMA :** They are the sub-tribe of the Chakma. They are mostly found in Arakan.
- (4) **TONGCHHONGGYA or TANGYANYA**  
**or TUNGJAINYA CHAKMA:** They are also one of the sub-tribes of Chakmas. They are found in Chittagong Hill Tracts and also in Arakan.

The Chakmas are divided into five branches known as 'GUTHIS' according to their progenitors and this hereditary line is again sub-divided into various 'Gajas' or Clans.<sup>11</sup> The name of GUTTHIS and GOJAS or CLANS are given below :

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10. S.P. Talukdar n.6, p.14.

11. S.P. Talukdar n.1, pp.123-24.

- (1) **DHURJYA GUTTHI :** Dhurjya Gutthi was the name of the Chieftain who lived at Bakkhali in the district of Chittagong. The people of this clan are known as BAGA GAJA.
- (2) **KURJYA GUTTHI :** The progenitor of this hereditary line is known as KURJYA. The people of this clan are known as TANYA GAJA.
- (3) **DHABANA GUTTHI :** The progenitor of this hereditary line was known as Dhabana and the people of this clan are known as MULIMA GAJA.
- (4) **PIRABHANGA GUTTHI :** (Means a low broken wooden platform for sitting). As the Chakma story goes, once a Chieftain sat on a wooden platform which collapsed under his weight and since that time the people of this clan are known as PIRABHANGA.
- (5) **MENDAR GUTTHI :** (Means indignity). This Gutthi has practically been forgotten by the present generation as the meaning itself aroused bebased feeling.

There are about 40 Gajas recorded by Lewin H. Capt. in his book "Wild Races of Eastern Frontier of India". Talukdar. S.P. recorded 46 Gajas in his book "The Chakma : Life and Struggle".<sup>12</sup>

The GUTTHIS are again sub-divided into Gajas. In each Gaja there is a head man who generally possessed the titled 'Dewan' or 'Talukdars'. For a Chakma the Gaja or clan is of paramount importance because it is through this that a person can be traced. The Dewan or Talukdar were in fact tax collectors from the area under their charge (MOUZA or TALUK). The Dewan is assisted by sub-ordinates which are called Kheljas. They are under the overall direction of the Dewan. A Khelja may have several villages under him. It usually depends upon the size of the particular Goza. Below the Khelja, the Dewan also appoints the headman of each village under his jurisdiction. The headman of the village are known as KARBARIS. Thus we have seen the interrelated function from the Dewan to the lowest level in the Gojas or Clan in the Chakma society.

#### **RELIGION :**

The religion professed by the Chakmas is Buddhism. But their constant contact with the Bengalis, now they have

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12. *ibid.*, p.125.

added much of Hindu superstitions. "Buddhism appears to have always been their religion" and there are no traces of Islamic name.<sup>13</sup> There are clear indication of mixing up of the pre-existing religion with Buddhism. Some British scholar view that, "Buddhism" readily coalesced with the pre-existing religion of primitive people. Thus among the hill tribe of Eastern Bengal we see the Khyaungthas (Chakmas belong to Khyaungthas race), Children of the river passing into Buddhism without giving up their aboriginal rites. They still offer rice and fruits and flowers to the spirit of hill and stream and the Buddhist priest although condemning the practices as unorthodox do not violently oppose it (Hunter, Imperial Gazetteer Vol. vi).<sup>14</sup>

They have a Buddhist temple in very Gaja. In every temple the image or status of Gautama Buddha is installed. Each temple has several Buddhist monks who perform the religions duties according to their seniority. These monks wears yellow dress and are clean shaven and bald headed. The Chakmas practices of Buddhism during the last generation or so in matters of religion has failed to uphold their Buddhist traditions.

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13. R.H. Sneyd Hutchinson, n.4, p.26.

14. Willian Hunter (1973) Emperial Gazatteer p.46.

Lakshmi is worshipped by the Tunggainya sub-tribe as the Goddess of harvest. The offering of pigs and fowls and their beliefs in supernatural spirits of good and evil are common. They sacrifice the blood of domestic animals on various occasions.

The Chakmas speak Bengali dialect, consult Hindu astrologer and elaborate the Durga and Lakshmi pujas both purely Hindu festivals. They observe eight festivals of their own in a year. They are called (1) Bishu, (2) Tummungtong, (Sadhang) (3) Hoia, (4) Nowarno, (5) Magiri, (6) Kheyrey, (7) Tsumulang, and (8) Shangbasa. These religious festivals are observed both by the Khyongtha and Chakmas. Bishu is the principal festival which occurs in the month of April when all classes of men and women alike resort to the Mahamuni temple to make offerings at the shrine of Gautama and for general rejoicing. Sadhang is another festival in the month of July. This is a time of fasting when persons who wish to do meritorious actions give alms and build themselves by a vow to obtain pleasure. The fast continues for three months and for that period the priests are bound to remain stationary in their temple and recite the law and chant the praises of Gautama. The Tummulong is a feast at the close of this fast. Magiri is a time of festival when the rice begins to ripen and when

prayers are offered that no harm may befall the crop. The Hoia and Nowarno occur in November. This is a season of much fasting corresponding to harvesting observed in the month of October. The Kheyrey and Tsumulung are festivals of minor importance and of no fixed date. The Shongbasa is the worship of the nats or deities of wood and streams. Today, however the festival of Shongbasa has been condemned as irrational and an unorthodox practice.<sup>15</sup>

#### **MARRIAGE :**

Every society has its own custom of marriage. There are mainly two systems of marriage in the Chakma society. (1) Religious System of Marriage and (2) Social and Customary System of marriage. Unlike in the past, the customary law and practices of the Chakmas are not that rigid today. Over the years many of the customary laws have undergone changes. The religious system of marriage is performed by the Buddhist Monk (Bhikkhu) as per the tenets of the religion.

According to the traditional Chakma customary marriage laws the young man on attaining a marriage age (say 20 to 22 yrs) his parents will fix a suitable girl and negotiation are opened with the parents through a third person, of course in certain cases the marriage may take place even

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15. W.W. Hunter (1973), A Statistical Account of Bengal Delhi : D.K. Publishing House p.48.



before they attain this age. The parents consent is a must for the boy and girl failure or an action contrary to this is confronted with a serious consequences. Thus marriage among the Chakmas seems to be restricted and subject to the consent and arrangement of the parents. But today love marriage is quite common among the Chakma youths and therefore both boys and girls can and choose their our life partner.

According to the customary marriage laws the male has to pay certain amount as a bride price. Through the third person the negotiation and discussion are opened. If the discussion are favourable with the girl's parent a day will be fixed for meeting of the parents of both the parties. The bridegroom's parents will proceed to the would-be-bride's house taking with them a bottle of wine. They will make a second visit a few days later taking with them a bottle of wine and rice cakes. Third and final visit is made after some days with lots of wine, rice and other category. The detailed discussion will be made and settled the date of ceremony. On the day preceding the marriage the bride groom's party take with them presents, cloths, and Jewellery and march to the strains of festive music to the bride's house.<sup>16</sup> The following day after the morning meal the

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16. R.H. Sneyd Hutchinson n.2, p.123-24.

bridegroom's party escort the bride to the bridegroom house and in the evening the actual ceremony takes place. The marriage is consummated with the performance of "CHUMULONG". The bride and the bridegroom are bound on their waist with a new clean cloth which indicated social acceptance of their marriage which is called 'JORABANDHA'.

Elopement among the Chakmas boy and girls though not permitted considered unlawful sometime occurred. Such kind of elopement sometimes may have serious and resulted in losing one's life. But the laws and customs of the Chakma society in this regard are not so rigid as it was in the past.

#### **DEATH CEREMONIES :**

The Chakmas cremate their dead bodies. The usual practice is to turn the corpse on the pyre of some selected day in a week. Usually before the cremation the corpse or dead body is washed and dressed and carried by the Children or relatives to the burning place. The flame to light the pyre may be lit either by the priest or the nearest blood relation and then all present follow to act. The deceased is a man his head is set in the east and in case of women on the recourse direction. In case the death is due to certain virus illness and contagious disease then the dead body is burried to avoid adverse effect to the Community.

However the cremation of the dead body of higher rank in the society or a healthy persons differ from that of the ordinary people. Usually a big ceremony is arranged on the funeral day. The dead body is taken to the burning *ghat* with the accompaniment of music in a procession on a chariot (*Garitana*) which involves lot of money and material. Having completed the cremation the following day the close blood relative specially from the male side do not take fish or meat for about a week or two. After a couple of weeks of the cremation a community feast to commemorate the departed soul is also arranged by the family members and relatives.

#### **LANGUAGES :**

The Chakmas language belong to the Kuki-Chin sub-family of the Tibeto-Burmese language.<sup>17</sup> The Chakmas no longer speak a Kuki-Chin language but their ancestral did. Little is known about the history of Chakma language. But we find different opinion about their language, "the written form of ancient Chakma was quite close to Burmese (Bassigmet: 1958). Lewin however characterized it a rude adaptation of the Arkanese Alphabet (1869:66). Sopher (1964), believes that the Chakmas in fact were ancestrally related to the Tipras and only later because Arkanized".<sup>18</sup>

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17. A.H.M. Zehadull Karim (1989), "The Linguistic Diversities of the Tribesmen of the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh : A Suggestive Language Planning". Asian Profile 17(2) April p.189.

18. *ibid.*, p.190.

Talukdar (1994) while tracing the root of that was language said that the cursive style of the Chakmas scripts belong to the group of Pallava alphabet of Indian origin. This script was brought from India in the 5th century by the Buddhist religions teachers to Burma and was adopted as Burmese script. Their religions Books (Tasas) are written in their own Script but the language is not as old as their script. There is a closed phonetic similarity between Chakma Bengali and Burmese. Those are the result of the places of assimilation arising from the proximity.<sup>19</sup>

Presently the Chakma language is an aberrant form of local Bengali dialect, which according to Moloney (1984) their language may be classified as a separate language of Indo-Aryan origin. The present Chakma language has been defined in the Imperial Gazetteer of India Vol.1 as follows:<sup>20</sup>

"The Bengali of Chittogong is very corrupt and it is quite unintelligible to an untravelled native of Calcutta. Further inland in the Chittagong Hill Tracts there is still more debased dialect called Chakma which is written in an alphabet akin to that of Burmese". The Bengali code census procedure (Ishq, 1971-203) remarked that the Chakma

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19. S.P. Talukdar, n.6, pp.47-48.

20. Imperial Gazetteer of India, vol.1. p.377.

language is neither pure nor Arakanese<sup>21</sup> Grierson in his well known book Linguistic Survey of India recorded the Chakmas language as a broken dialect of Bengali. The Chakma language with is based on South-Eastern Bengali has undergone so much that it is almost worthy by the dignity of being classed as a separate language.

#### **SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHAKMAS :**

The Chakmas are inhabiting the inaccessible hilly areas of Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Mizoram States in India and Arakan Hills in Myanmar. The Chittagong Hill Tracts which is the main area of Chakmas concentration situated between 71°25' and 23°45' and 92°50'E Longitude. It constitutes an area of 5,138. Sq. Miles.<sup>22</sup> It is bounded on the North by the Indian state of Tripura; in the South by Arakan Hills of Myanmar on the East by the Mizoram (Lushai Hill) and Arakan Hills of Myanmar and in the west by the Chittagong District. On the East of the Chittagong Hill Tract the rivers Sajek (Khawthlang Tuipui) and Thega formed the international boundaries, between India and Bangladesh. The Chittagong Hill Tracts consist of a succession of hill ranges. It runs north to south, some what diagonally form and its general aspect is a

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21. A.H.M. Zehadull Karim, n.17, p.170.

22. R.H. Sneyd Hutchinson, n.2, p.1.

tangled mass of hill ravine and cliff covered by dense tree, bush and creeper jungle. The mountains are steep and difficult to ascended, they rise in tapering masses and are very narrow at the ridge. The highest peaks in the Chittagong Hill Tracts is Rang Dang (2,789 ft).

The Chittagong Hill Tracts has four major river-the Phenny, the Karnaphuli, the Sangu and the Matumari - and their tributaries. The Karnaphuli and Phenny flow transversely across the main lines of the hill: but the reverse is the case with the Sangu and Matamuri river which runs parallel to the ranges the two main tributaries of Karnaphuli the Kasalang and Chingri. The rivers' banks and the river valley, especially the Karnapluli and it tributaries are dotted with Chakma villages.

The Chittagong Hill Tracts is the single largest forest clad area of Bangladesh. It contributed a lot to the country recovery in current times which owes much to the forest conservancy plans under taken by the British for their province of Bengal. This area is well-known for its timber varieties. It also countributes a large tonnage of cotton, rice, oil seeds, legumes, fruits, tea, paper pulp and fish. All the river routes in the Chittagong Hill Tracts have now became suitable for mechanised river navigation and many people living solely on fishing, especially after the construction of Kaptai in 1960's.

The Chittagang Hill Tracts is divided into three Hill districts with Headquarter at Rangamati, Bandarban and Khagrachari, of which the names of the Headquarters and district are the same. These district are under a nominal Automous District Council with limited self autonomy.

As mentioned earlier the Chakmas tribe is scattered throughout the Chittogong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh. In India, Chakmas are in Mizoram, Tripura, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh, and Arakan Hill in Myanmar. But their number in different places (area) and period is difficult to obtained, due to the absent of census for a particular Chakma tribe. Their number and distribution in different places are taken from different sources. There are large numbers of Chakmas who stay in India as refugees. They came from Chittagong Hill Tracts especially after late 70's and 80's due to various reasons prevailing in their places. Thus, while analysing the Chakmas of India we will give separately the Indian Chakmas and those refugees in India.

#### **CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS:**

The Chakmas have their largest concentration in Chittagong Hill Tracts. Chakmas are one of the ethnic tribes in Bangladesh. They are about one percent of tribal in the national population numbering 898,000 according to Bangladesh census 1981.

The census of the Chittagong Hill Tracts 1872-81 recorded the population in the region increase from 69,607 in 1872 to 101,597 in 1881. And from 107,286 in 1891 and to 124,762 in 1901. And of 1872 was however very imperfect.<sup>23</sup>

According to 1901 census of the Hill Tracts the bulk of the population of the District (Chittagong Hill Tracts) is divided between the Chakma, Maghs Tippera and Mro. Tribes. The Table. tribal figures constitutes nine-tenths of the total population of the district.

The Chakma Circle in this period have 48,792 total population with an area of 2,421 square only. We have here total Chakmas population 36,207 which 8,953 more and 17,254 respectively. In Bohmang circle the have total population of 44,072 and the Chakma constitutes 1,942 of which 1,109 male and 833 female. In Mong circles we have a total population of 31,898 where the Chakma constitute 6,180 of which 3,464 male and 2,7,6 female.<sup>24</sup> Thus the most important tribes are the Chakmas who number 44,000; Maghs, 35,000; and the Tippera 23,000 in Chittagong Hill Tracts.

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23. *ibid.*, p.2.

24. *ibid.*, pp.15-16.



**Table.4 CHAKMAS & OTHER TRIBES IN CHITTAGONG  
HILL TRACTS 1901.**

<b>TRIBES</b>	<b>MALE</b>	<b>FEMALE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>POPULATION</b>			
Chakma	23,526	20,803	44,329
Magh	15,098	16,808	31,906
Tirppera	12,452	10,889	23,341
Mro	5,383	5,157	10,540
Kuki	841	774	1,615
Kumi	761	708	1,469
Khyengs	206	210	416
Banjogi	347	349	696
Pankho	76	68	144
<b>Total</b>	<b>58,690</b>	<b>55,766</b>	<b>144,456</b>

Source : R.H. Sneyd Chittagong Hill Tract (Delhi: Vivek Publishing Company, 1978, P.15.

The history of Chittagong Hill Tracts has undergone a great change especially after the partition of India in 1947, as a result, the homeland of the Chakmas along with other tribes merged with Pakistan. The Chakmas are not only the largest and dominant group but also more progressive than the other tribes of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. They have their own historical folklore, mythology, besides

their own script and religious literature. The Chakmas of Chittagong Hill Tracts are divided into two major sub-tribes. Chakma proper and the Tungjainyas (also referred to as the Tang Changa). The Chakma proper live mainly in the Kassalong and the upper and middle Karnaphuli river valley. The latter mainly live in the Ringkheong valley around Alikadam (Matamari Valley) and the thanas of Nakhyongchari.

The partition of India in 1947 resulted in intensive communal clashes and a large number of Hindus crossed the border and come to India.<sup>25</sup> A relatively small number of tribal crossed the border till 1960 the relation between Chittagong Hill Tracts and the Pakistan did not witness serious troubles in the Chakmas inhabited areas. But in 1960's tension emerged with the construction and commissioning of the Karnaphuli Hydroelectric project which was actually prepared by the British in 1940's with some modification in the 1960's completed in 1964.

The census report of Bangladesh 1961, 1974 and 1981 do not provide tribe-wise population of Chittagong Hill Tracts. However, Clearance Moloney (1984) in his work, Tribes of Bangladesh and Synthesis of Bengali culture provides statistics on all the tribal people of Bangladesh. Based on

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25. Asian Recorder (1958), "Hindu Migration from East Pakistan", New Delhi, March 24-30.

Moloney's, Chakma constitutes about 220,000. Magh 130,000 Tang Changa, about 12,000, Tipras 47,000<sup>26</sup>.

From another sources we have the rough estimates of the Hill tribes of Chittagong Hill Tracts for 1981. The Chakmas 260,000, Marma 120,000. Tripera 40,000. Tong Chengya 25,000. Bawm 7,000. Khumi 3,000.<sup>27</sup> Spot light : On Regional affairs April-May 1987, gave the estimated tribal population of the Chittagong Hill Tracts areas. The Chakmas 15,000. Maghs (also spelt Mogs or Moghs) 180,000. Tipperas (also Tipras) the third largest group lives both side of the miles national boundary between Bangladesh and the Indian State of Tripura; and the fourth major tribal group is Mrus, numbering about 30,000.<sup>28</sup>

The British afforestation schemes obtained a manifold result and also the natural resources especially the Karnaphuli river for generating hydro electric powers

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26. Clarence Maloney (1984), "Tribes of Bangladesh and Synthesis of Bengali Culture" Quoted in A.H.M Zehadul Karim (1989) "The linguistic Diversities of the Tribesman of Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh : A suggestive Language Planning", Asian Profile, 17 (2); April p.170.
  27. Willem Van Schendel (1992), "The invention of the Jummas : State Formation and Ethnicity in South Eastern Bangladesh" Modern Asian Studies vol.26. p.95.
  28. "The Chakma unrest in Chittagong Hill Tracts". Spot Light : on Regional Affairs (Islamabad) vol.6, n.4-5, April- May 1987, p.6.

Table .5

**DISTRIBUTION PATTERN OF THE CHAKMAS IN  
DIFFERENT REGIONS (1961-81)**

STATES/REGIONS	1961			1971			1981		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
India	41,722	21,993	20,131	50,955	26,834	24,218	74,702	38,787	35,910
Mizoram	19,338	9,967	9,371	22,293	11,807	10,586	39,900	20,822	19,078
Tripura	22,386	11,626	10,760	28,662	15,027	13,632	34,802	17,965	16,832
Arunachal Pradesh	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Bangladesh	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Chittagong Hill Tracts	<sup>a</sup> 220,000	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	<sup>b</sup> 260,00	N.A.	N.A.

Source: Census of India 1961, 1971, 1981.

Notes:

- a. Clarence Moloney (1984), "Tribes of Bangladesh and Synthesis of Bengali" in A.H.M. Zehadull Karim (1989), "The Linguistic Diversities of the Tribesman of Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh: A Suggestive Language Planning", Asian Profile, vol. 17, no.2, p.170.
- b. An estimated number of Chakmas in 1981. Quoted from Willem Van Schendel, (1992) "The invention of the 'Jummas': State formation and ethnicity in South-Eastern Bangladesh", Modern Asian Studies, 26, vol.1, p.95.

interested the Pakistan government. The Karnaphuli Hydro-electric project which was completed in 1964 not only generated hydro electric but also tension and discontentment among the inhabitants of the area both tribals and the settlers, where about 40% of the Districts total arable area was submerged. The effectees were said to be 18,000 families or approximately 100,000 persons who were uprooted from the District's capital of Rangmati and 125 adjacent villages. However the government scheme of rehabilitation was inadequate and in 1965, the government had rehabilitated only 10,271 families in over 18,690 areas of the flat arable land and 21,477 areas of the hilly land.<sup>29</sup>

The political scenario in Chittagong Hill Tracts area became different after Bangladesh became an independent state on 16 December 1971. The Government programmes shows its attempt to integrate a culturally divergent Chittagong Hill Tracts with the culturally homogeneous society of the plain area. For this, the Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation Act, 1900, promulgated by the British Administration which restricted by settlement of non tribals and non local population in Chittagong Hill Tracts was abolished. The Government policy of settlement of Bengali Muslims, and

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29. P.K. Debbarma and Sudhir Jacob Geogre (1993). The Chakma Refugees in Tripura, New Delhi : South Asian Publication, p.38.

government pursued the policy of establishing modern industries at Chandrogonia Chittagong Hill Tracts created jobs opportunities for non-tribal population at the cost of local tribal population. The response of this programme and policy by the ethnic tribal inhabitants found themselves pushed into a desperate situation. The clashes between the government forces and the tribal groups turned the political scenario different where there are a great influx of 'illegal' Bengal Muslim in Chittagong Hill Tracts. The situation aggravated the miseries when the government forces attack the innocent people. As a result the Chittagong Hill Tracts area witnessed an exodus of people especially Chakmas crossing the border and stayed in the various places in Indian's state as a refugees till today.

#### **CHAKMAS OF TRIPURA:**

The Chakmas of Tripura form an important proportion among the Tripura's Tribal population. The Chakma in Tripura traced their earlier history when they move from Arakan along the river courses, which ultimately led them the state of Tripura. The Chakma history records that the Chakma crossed over into Tripura during the early Muslim period of Bengal. In the early 1600 A.D, the Chakma King Sattua was reigning in the south of Chittagong, on the border of Arakan. It is also said that the king became insane and subjected his people to various inhuman treatment and

atrocities. The people (his subjects) rose against their king and ultimately killed him. (The story is known as the Pagal Raja episode). The widow of the king with her two daughters and some followers temporarily fled away to Tripura, where one of her daughter was married into a noble Tripura family. This is how we get the earliest traces of the Chakmas in Tripura. Rani Kalini (1855) was the last of the independent rulers of the Chakmas. Once Nil Chandra Dewan revolted against her. To destroy him she called the Kukis and the Lushais to her aid to which Nilchandra's reaction was to invite the British to intervene. This led to the British expeditions and gradual extension of their influence in the area. It was shortly this that Chakmas in large numbers started emigrating to Tripura.<sup>30</sup> At the time of partition of India in 1947, a great influx of Chakma has taken place into Tripura through mountainous tracts and river. Today, they are the fourth largest tribal group in Tripura.

According to the Indian census record of 1961 the number of Chakma in Tripura was recorded as 22,386 constituting 11,626 male and 10,760. They constituted the fourth largest tribe in Tripura. In 1971 it increases 28,662

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30. Omesh Saigal (1978), Tripura : Its History and Culture Delhi : Concept Publishing Company, pp.108-109.

Table .6

**REFUGEES OF CHAKMAS AND OTHER TRIBES IN FIVE  
CAMPS OF TRIPURA (AS ON 18TH JUNE 1988)**

Name of the Camps	CHAKMA		MAGH		TRIPURI		SANTHAL		TOTAL	
	No.of Families	No. of Person	No.of Families	No. of Person	No.of Families	No. of Person	No.of Families	No. of Person	Total Families	Total Persons
Kathalchhari	110	400	1,341	5,387	911	3,315	-	-	2,362	9,102
Karbook	1,192	5,444	64	225	200	847	8	24	1,464	6,540
Pancharampara	1,932	8,198	76	270	119	475	-	-	2,127	8,943
Silachhari	821	4,141	77	330	104	470	-	-	1,002	4,941
Takumbari	2,911	13,794	40	165	348	4,172	-	-	3,299	15,431
Total	6,966	31,977	1,598	6,377	1,682	6,579	8	24	10,254	44,957

Source: Based on the figures supplied by the office of the Directorate, Relief and Rehabilitation, Government of Tripura, Agartala as on 18th June 1988 -in- P.K. Debbarma and Sudhir Jacob George, (1993) The Chakma Refugee in Tripura, New Delhi: South Asian Publishers, p.56.



of 15,027 male and 13,632. In 1981 their number increases to 34,802 with 17,965 males and 16,832 female.

They are confined mostly in Kailasahar sub-division particularly Percharthal, Navinchhara, Kanchchanpur, Chhamanu, Dharmanagar and the sub-division of Amarpur and Subroom. A few families of Chakma in recent time have also settled in Banamalipur and Abhoynagar areas of Agartala, the State Capital.

The Chakmas of Tripura are Buddhist by faith and have resemble with other Chakmas in other places. They are one of the 19 tribes listed in the Scheduled Tribes list of Tripura enjoying all the rights and facilities guaranteed by the Constitution of India. In India the Chakmas of Tripura are comparatively advanced. There are some doctors, engineers and other technicians.

There are also a large number of Chakmas who came to Tripura, as refugees in different phases, after Bangladesh got independent in 1971. They are refugees who came to India due to various reasons prevailing in their places, Chittagong Hill Tracts. They felt insecure due to political conflicts in their places. Besides, Chakmas, there are other tribes who stayed as refugees in Tripura like Mogh, Tripura, Santal they stayed in five refugees camps viz., Kathalchhari, Karbook, Panchrampara, Silachhari and

Takumbari. the refugees number 10,254 families and 44,975 people on 8 June 1988.<sup>31</sup>

#### **THE CHAKMAS OF MIZORAM:**

The Chakmas in Mizoram are inhabiting the western part of Mizoram, bordering Bangladesh, the North Arakan, Chittagong Hill Tracts. The western part of Mizoram and Tripura are will knitted together with a network of river. These strategies tracts are dominated by the Chakmas. They are recognised as Scheduled Tribe in Mizoram with having Autonomous District Council, under the 6th Scheduled list of the Indian Constitution. The Chakmas District Council solely depends on the central fund which is given in the form of grant-in-aid through the state government. The District council have a jurisdiction on the subjects viz. (1) Forest (2) Water Supply (3) Rural communication (4) Primary Education and (5) Sanitation.

The history of Chakmas in Mizoram can be traced from the earlier time when "a group of Chakma, beyond the river Thega i.e, western bank of the river fled to Lushai Hill (now Mizoram) when this part was separated from Bengal and made a district of Assam province during the British period. This area is inhabited by the Chakmas became part of Mizoram

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31. P.K. Debbarma and Sudhir Jacob George n.29, p.56.

in India after the partition of India Sub-Continent in 1947.<sup>32</sup> The Chakmas are different from the Mizos in many respect: Buddhist by faith and speak Bengali dialect, whereas the Mizos are Christians and speak Mizos language.

In the hill area of the Southern region of Mizoram where the tribes of PAWI, LAKHER, and CHAKMA are in majority, a Regional council (Pawi - Lakher) was set up in 1953. It has the power of management and control of the following subjects. (1) Allotment of lands (2) Forest, (3) Establishment of village administration (4) Inheritance of property (5) Marriage and social custom. In 1972, three District council areas has been set-up out of the defunct Pawi - Lakher council. These are as follows.

(1) The Chakma District Council (2) The Pawi district council (3) The Lakher District Council.

The District Councils have certain power and function under their jurisdiction. The headquarter of the Chakma District is Kamala Nagar. The District Councils have members and function under the Chief Executive members. The Chakmas have two M.L.A. (in the State Assembly) in Mizoram. The census of India recorded the Chakma population in Mizoram (Mizo Hill District) 19,338 in 1961 with 9,967 male and

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32. S.P. Talukdar n.1, p.60.

9,371 female. In 1971 it increased to 22,293 with 11,807 male and 10,586 female. And in 1981, we have a sharp increase to 39,900; with 20,822 male and 19,078. It is interesting to note here that the earlier census have shown that Mizoram have lesser number of Chakma than Tripura. But in 1981, in Mizoram there are 39,900 and in Tripura 34,802 Chakmas. In Mizoram we have an increase of 17,607 from 1971-81. This may be due to the influx of Chakma across the border. In 1985, many chakmas about four thousand took shelter in South Mizoram. However, the Mizos resented this immigration and as per statement of the Chief Minister, Lalthanhawla, at Chinatuiui, the 4,000 Chakma refugees had been handed to the Bangladesh Government.<sup>33</sup>

The Chakmas of Mizoram are very backward, both economically and educationally. Bengali is the medium of instruction in school. At present the Chakmas claim their population at 45,000 in Mizoram.<sup>34</sup>

#### **THE CHAKMAS OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH :**

The history of Chakmas in Arunachal Pradesh can be traced back from the year 1964. When few thousand chakma

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33. The Statesman, Culcutta, 5 March 1986.

34. Suhas Chatterjee (1990), "Chakmas", Mizoram Encyclopaedia, vol.1, Bombay : Jaico Publishing House, p.159.

families came over to India from East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). They were originally hailed from the Chittagong Hill Tracts of the present day and are actually displaced people. They were displaced by the famous Kaptai - Dam which had inundated more than 40% of the total arable land and displaced about 100,000 people in Chittagong Hill Tracts. they are Buddhist by faith. The Hajongs who are Hindus from the Mymensingh District (of Bangladesh) of the erstwhile East Pakistan also migrants similarly placed with the Chakmas.

In 1964, nearly 40,000<sup>35</sup> Chakmas came to India and entered NEFA (North Eastern Frontier Agency: now Arunachal Pradesh) from their traditional homeland, Chittagong Hill Tracts. The developmental policy of the then government of Pakistan, stressed economic growth, especially large capital intensive project. It was against this backdrop of this perspective that the Kaptai Hydro-electric project was undertaken with the funding from the USAID in 1960. For however, contribution of the Kaptai for the factories, the elites in Chittagong Hill Tracts and within the Chittagong Hill Tracts itself, it was a major catastrophe for the tribal peoples, especially for the Chakmas. And added to this religions persecution of the Chakmas and bleending the

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35. P.K. Debbarma and Sudhir Jacob George n.29, p.53.

ethnic Mongoloid Chakma Community with the Bengali Muslims by the Pakistan authority that a large number of Chakmas crossed over into India. The immigration of the Chakmas and Hajong into India is the result of a disaster in their life which befell them, added by the swamping over of the Bengali Muslim into Chittagong Hill Tracts with the blessing of the Pakistan.

The Chakmas had little knowledge about Arunachal Pradesh, when they crossed over into India. It was an arrangement made with the government of India and the Chakmas leader that the refugees (the Chakmas and Hajongs) more finally rehabilitated under the fine settlement schemes in then, Tirap (now Changlang), Lohit, and Subansari (Pa Pum Pare) districts in Arunachal Pradesh "they were given 18 Bighas of land per family in Papumpare and about 5 to 6 acres of land per family in changlang and Lohit District. They were issued trade licences, ration cards, Scheduled Tribe certificates, given employment rights and some even exercise their voting rights in Anchal Samiti and State Assembly election<sup>36</sup> All of them were given 3 years of free ration as a rehabilitary measure. So that they can start

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36. Seminar on the Citizenship Issue and Human Rights Violation against the Chakmas and Hajongs of Arunachal Pradesh Organised by Nehru Discussion Forum (NSUI) and World Chakma Organisation (WCO). On 13th November 1994 at J.N.U, New Delhi, p.2.

their life afresh in Arunachal Pradesh. All these arrangements were done at the instance of Mr. Mahavir Tyagi who was the then Union Minister for Rehabilitation, Government of India, who visited the camps and offered schemes for the rehabilitation of the refugees.

When the Chakma and Hajong came to NEFA (North Eastern Frontiers Agency, now Arunachal Pradesh), they were rehabilitated in different places. "The total number of families in Tirap District was 1,976 with a population of 16,000. Nearly 300 families were settled in Balijan and Kokali area, of Subansari District and Chowkham area of Lohit District with an equal share. The population was estimated at 45000"<sup>37</sup>

The exact number of Chakmas and Hajongs are not available. No census report gave their number, at the same time newspaper report also differ. The 'Committee for citizen Rights of the Chakmas' of Arunachal Pradesh; this Committee claimed that it is well-versed with the problem of the Chakmas and spearheading the movement for citizenship rights gave the members of the Chakmas' and the Hajongs about 60,000 in Arunachal Pradesh<sup>38</sup>.

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37. S.P. Talukdar n.1. p.60.

38. The Times of India, New Delhi, 26, May 1994.

According to the 1991 Census Arunachal Pradesh has the total population of 858,392. The Chief Minister Mr. Gegong Apang affirmed that the Chakmas population in the state is 35,000 and that of Hajongs 8,000<sup>39</sup>.

The Chakmas and Hajongs in Arunachal Pradesh do not enjoy the same rights and facilities enjoyed by the local tribes. They remain without any nationality. They are today suspended between the promise of Indian citizenship and the threat of deportation. They failed to secure citizenship even after 31 years of their immigration into India.

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39. The Times of India, New Delhi, 11, October 1994.



## Chapter IV

### **POLITICAL ISSUES AND CONFLICTS RELATING TO CHAKMAS**

The Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) is experiencing the conflict situation with problems of economic participation, representation and political change. The present crisis stemmed out primarily from the socio-economic problem since the commissioning of Kaptai dam in early 1960's. The political transaction's and relation between the Hill people especially the Chakmas and the majority plain-people reflect intense activities. The society of this region has an alternative to traditional political structures, operating simultaneously with the modern one. The peripheral antagonism that developed subsequently has to be considered not only as a fall out of inherent contradictions in the territorial endowments, economic problems, political compulsions and the resultants dilemmas, but also against the back drop of geo-economic, geo-political and geo-ethnicity legacy of the region. The crisis in the Chittagong Hill Tracts is aggravated further with the government's policies started by Pakistan. And further emphasis after the emergence of Bangladesh by linking the regional resources and the Hill people with the national market and the mainstream.

The Chittagong Hill Tracts region has undergone a series of changes after 1947. The scale and intensity of the problems have been gradually increasing especially after Bangladesh emerged as an Independent nation in 1971. It is a politico-economic development crisis and centre around resources, (particularly, lands, its system of allocations and transfer) and political participation and representation in the decision making bodies.

In order to understand clearly the problems in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) today. It will be analysed how its experience different political, economic etc. arrangements since the Mughal conquered the areas in 1666. Since then the tribals have been living under successively dominated influence by different external powers. Their names and period of domination is given below.<sup>1</sup>

PERIOD	DOMINANT POWER
1666-1760	Muslim rulers (Mughal)
1760-1860	East India Company
1860-1947	British Monarch
1947-1971	Pakistan
1971-onward	Bangladesh

1. S.P.Talukdar, (1989), The Chakmas : Life and Struggle, Delhi: Gian Publishing House, P.49.

The Mughal conquered the area in 1666<sup>2</sup>. The relationship between the Mughal and the Hill peoples was that of payer of animal tributes and formal allegiance. "From the area amounted to 11 mounds of cotton per annum".<sup>3</sup> The Mughal allowed the tribals to maintain their internal authority structure more or less intact. The Muslim rulers hardly interfered in their day-to-day affairs. The tribes were nations both culturally and politically. Culturally they communicated in their own language and kept alive their tribal norms; politically they determined their own future.

The earliest records of the British colonial rulers dealing with the people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts is a letter from the Chief of Chittagong to Warren Hastings, the Governor - General dated 10th April 1777.<sup>4</sup> By the Act XXII 1860 the Hill Tracts were separated from the Regulation Districts. The Superintendent of the Hill Tribes was appointed to look after the administration of the Hill

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2. Mufazzalul M.Hug, (1992), "Changing Nature of Dominant Social Forces and Intervention in Chittagong Hill Tracts", The Journal of Social Studies No.56; April P.69.
  3. Shurandra Lal Tripura (1984), "Parbattaya Chattagramer Rajshewer Itihash", Qouted in Mufazzalul M. Hug (1992), op.cit, p.69.
  4. R.H.Sayed Hutchinson (1978), Chittagong Hill Tracts; Delhi; Vivek Publishing Company (Originally Published in 1909), P.8.

Tracts. The administrative staffs including the police were locally recruited from the tribal population. The tribal Chief collected revenues and dispensed justice in the tribal courts.

A very important administrative reforms was introduced by the British Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation of 1900. According to the regulation, the district of Chittagong Hill Tracts was divided into three circles -- the Chakma, the Bohmang and the Mong. And each circle was placed under the jurisdiction of the tribal chief. The Chief was responsible for collecting revenues and managing internal affairs. And each circle was under the supervision of the sub-divisional officer who was responsible to the Deputy Commissioner of the district. The tribal administrative set up was based on a three-tier structure in descending order: the circle, the Monza and the para. With tribal heads of each tier the colonial government restrained the district administration from interfering in tribal socio-political affairs.

Rules and procedures regarding the settlement of the outsiders in the Chittagong Hill Tract was an important feature of the Hill Tract Manual. According to this one has to obtain prior permission for settlement from the Deputy Commissioner who sought recommendation from the local headman as well as the Tribal Chief. In 1920, the Hill Tract

Manual was amended and a new administration was formed under the Chittagong Hill Tracts (amendment).

By the Regulation of 1920 the district was declared an excluded area independent of general administration. And the Government of India Act 1935 declared the Chittagong Hill Tract as "totally excluded area". At the time of partition of India in 1947 the Hill people wished to opt for India but Sir RadCliff Award (The Boundary Commission headed by RadCliff on the eve of the transfer of power) allotted the district to Pakistan against the wishes of the Hill people.<sup>5</sup>

The British policy and geographical location make the Hill Tracts protected, isolated tribal area not directly administered as a colony. But this arrangement was changed after the partition of India.

#### **THE CHAKMAS AFTER PARTITION OF INDIA**

The political development in the sub-continent of India culminated to partition of India into two sovereign States. The Chittagong Hill Tracts which constituted 95% non-Muslim

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5. S.P. Talukdar, (1994), Chakmas : An Embattled Tribe, New Delhi: Uppal Publishing House, PP.64-65.

**Notes:** According to the India Partition Act, the Chittagong Hill Tracts was to remain with India the partition was on the basis of Hindu and Muslim religions; but the unexpected declaration of the Sir Rad Cliff Commission on 16th August awarded Chittagong Hill Tracts to Pakistan. No specific have been given on taking such decision.

populated area should have been included into India. The leadership of the Hill Tracts also wanted to join the Indian Union. Delegations of the Hill people went to New Delhi from Chittagong Hill Tracts prior to independence and received assurance from Shri. Sardar Vallabhai Patel and Shri. Jawahar Lal Nehru that Chittagong Hill Tracts would be included in India. Since Sir Rad Cliff Boundary Commission worked in secret and no reasons were given for its decisions.<sup>6</sup>

The Pakistan authority initiated their rule in the Hill Tracts by deploying of the Baluch Regiment (army) and the lowering down of the Indian flag from Rangmati and Bandarban in August, 1947. The first major action of the Pakistani regime was to disband the tribal homeguards instituted by the Chittagong Hill Track (CHT) Frontier Regulation (III) by 1881 in early 1948 and repealed it.<sup>7</sup> In 1995, the provincial government tried to abolish the special status but failed because of stiff opposition from the tribal people and lack of support from the Central Government. The Pakistan Constitution of 1956 an "excluded area", but this ceased with the passage of Constitutional

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6. For detail see, Sardar Vallabhai Patel's Correspondence 1945-50, vol.4, Edited by Durga Das Transfer of power - Communal Holocaust on partition Administration and Stability. PP.171-179.

7. Mufazzalul M. Hug.n.2. P.75.

Amendment in 1963. An Amendment which came into force in 1964 dropped the previous designation of the Chittagong Hill Tracts as the Tribal area and lost its special status and autonomy, but some special treatment to the Chittagong Hill Tracts in fact continued. The development during the partition period gave way to distrust between the Pakistan Government and the Tribal people. The Government could not mitigate their grievances and later development further alienated the tribal people from the mainstream of the nation.

The situation in the Chittagong Hill Tracts area was complicated as the changes coincides with the Pakistan Governments policy towards the Chittagong Hill Tracts shifted dramatically in 1960s in two ways. The first of these was priority of development scheme and growth especially large capital intensive projects, most especially industrial ones. It was against the backdrop of this perspective that the Kaptai Hydro-electric project was undertaken with the funding from USAID. The second, was the shift in government's policy which formerly had put severe restriction on the settlement of non-tribals in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Under the new settlement, policy favoured the entry of the non-tribals in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The Bengali people from the plains began to settle

in thousands to work on new development projects, established business and industry, got the best lands in Chittagong Hill Tracts and displaced Jhum (slash and burn) cultivators and the latter were given the slightest attention.<sup>8</sup>

The Kaptai power project revolutionized the industrialization in East Pakistan. It has a tremendous and great contribution to the running factories and air-condition in the Chittagong and increasingly within the Chittagong Hill Tracts region itself. But it was a major catastrophe for the tribal peoples of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, especially for the Chakma people.

The Kaptai Hydro-electrical project created reservoir which proved to be a disaster for a large number of people of Chittagong Hill Tracts and constituted the most serious intervention in the lives of the tribals. The Kaptai project initially created an artificial lake which "...inundated 253 Sq. miles. 50,000 acres of settled cultivable land and which is about 40% of the districts cultivable area. Finally more than 100,000 persons, 90% of these displaced Chakma were and

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8. Wolfgang May (1981), Quoted in M.Q. Azman (1985). "Tribal Survival in the Chittagong Hill Tracts", Man in India, Vol.65, No.1 March, p.61.



never adequately rehabilitated".<sup>9</sup> The construction of Kaptai Dam and the Karnafuli reservoir had submerged a major portion which habitats were the Chakmas, traditionally the most influential tribes was submerged. The cash compensation and the rehabilitation schemes were not commensurated to the loss. Not only that the dam also virtually disrupted the social organisation and economic system of the tribes, because a number of them were still engaged in slash and burn (Jhum) cultivation. Besides in terms of economic infrastructure and employment avenues the beneficiaries of the Kaptai Dam were mainly non-tribals.

It is therefore, not surprising that the Chakmas are bitter about being so suddenly uprooted by industrial society. This created food and financial problems, faced re-settlement problem and the East Pakistan Government failed to work out on adequate and comprehensive programme for the rehabilitation of the affected people especially the Chakmas.

The government encouraged the tribal people to take up new occupation such as fishing and horticulture but the

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9. Almut May (1981), Quoted in M.Q.Zaman (1985), op.cit, PP. 171-179.

**Notes :** And as a detail report on the Kaptai Hydro-electric project is not available Sopher study the would be affect on people. See David E. Sopher (1963) "Population Distoration in the Chittagong Hills", The Geographical Journal, Vol. LIII, No.3 July PP.338-362.

response was not promising due to the circumstantial disadvantages and tribal lack of skills.

The Hydro-power projects has a great affect on the Hill tribal. The movement of the non-tribal Bengalis into the Chittagong Hill Tracts was justified in the name of economic efficiency and development. Considering the tremendous disruption of tribal life resulting from the Kaptai Dam and the steady increasing of non-tribal population in Chittagong Hill Tracts, the tribals became apprehensive of the new economic and settlement policies which they believed posed a threat to their ethnic identity and culture. It was against the backdrop of their perspective that the tribals of the Chittagong Hill Tracts began to put some organised resistance. In 1966 the tribal solidarity movement led to the formation of an underground political party called Chittagong Hill Tracts Welfare Association with the aim of protecting the rights of the tribal people.

#### **THE CHAKMAS AND BANGLADESH: AFTER 1971**

Bangladesh emerged as an independent state in December 16, 1971, by seceding from the Union of Pakistan. The situation of pre-independence especially in Chittagong Hill Tracts tribal was inherited by Bangladesh at the time of her independence. The relationship between the state and tribal especially the Chakmas crisis deepened after 1971. This

crisis stemmed out primarily from the socio-economic problem during the Pakistani period and intensify after 1971. The intensity of the problem began to increase with new industrialization and economic policies 'resources appropriation' for the benefit of the national economy with little or no participation by the local tribesmen.

In the late 1970's there in Chittagong Hill Tracts especially the Chakmas witnessed a conspicuous peripheral protest and dissension, mobilisation against the regional and national powers. Since then there has been continued upsurge aiming at a separate and district territorial status. The propounded upsurge among inhabitants has shown the situation whereby the quest for identity with strong territorial linkages superseded the needs of equality in the community of population groups that constituted a country as inherited from its colonial heritage. This is followed by demands for more autonomy self-determination that undermined the very concept on which the country was recognised as a state. Such mobilisation in the states peripheral areas challenged the existing understanding of political integration and economic development.

The Chittagong Hill Tracts have its own distinct economy and polity. The peripheral antagonism that developed subsequently after 1971, can be traced back to the period of

their separate existences as well as to the existence of separate instruments of agreements which the colonial administration had arrived with in order to bring the territories under the political control of a single political system in the 19th century; while allowing degrees of internal autonomy and non-interference. The most important being the Chittagong Hill Tracts Manual 1900; reaffirmed itself by Government of India Acts 1935 and modified during Pakistani period.

In order to understand the nature of issues and political development in Chittagong Hill Tracts which resulted in conflicts and making the Chakmas leaving their native place, it is necessary to analysis the Government policies and the tribal perception of it. They are as follows:

**1. THE SETTLEMENT POLICIES OF BANGLADESH IN THE CHITTAGONG HILL TRACT:**

The 1972 constitution of Bangladesh place all land under a common land law. This disregard the special right and privileges of the tribal people as a 'protected' community a status given to them since the days of the British rule. In order to safeguard the interests of the backward and less fortunate tribal people and preserve their special ethical cultural and others identity the British

made a law known as the Hill Tracts Manual 1900. Even the Pakistan government tried to follow this Manual and although some changes in the power structure of the tribal chief were made the rights of the general people remained almost untouched.<sup>10</sup> According to this Manual no outsiders could settle in any part of the Hill Tracts without the permission of the headman of the area or Monza. But after the Independence of Bangladesh there was an endless flow of Bengali-Muslim or non-tribals in the Hill Tracts. Internal migration among the landless peasantry has been a common or usual phenomenon in Bangladesh. Poverty and unemployment amongst the peasantry had compelled them to move from place to place for employment and natural calamities like cyclones, flood and tidal waves are a common phenomena in Bangladesh which render million homeless from time to time, added hardship to the common people. This factors contributed to the settlement policies of Bangladesh Government which envisaged settling down of the landless peasantry in such areas where population are less in the Chittagong Hill Tracts and the adjacent area.<sup>11</sup>

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10. Hayat Hussain (1993) "Problem of National Integration in Bangladesh" in S.R. Chakravarty and Virendra Varain (Eds). (1993) Bangladesh, Vol.1, New Delhi: South Asian Publisher, P.203.

11. "The Chakma unrest in Chittagong Hill Tracts", Spotlight : on Regional Affairs/Islamabad. Vol.6. No.4 and 5 April-May, 1987, p.13.

The new nation of Bangladesh offered an opportunity to fresh beginning for opening up new area to accommodate future settlement of the fast-growing plain population. The Government of Bangladesh has been carrying out plans for settlement of people from the overcrowded plains in the hill tracts; the home of the Chakmas. The settlement policies were implemented after 1973 and envisaged the settling down of both the landless peasantry and the Jhumia tribal population.<sup>12</sup> By 1974 a substantial number of non-tribal from the plain were resettled and this gave rise to the organised resistance by the tribals. The policy which actually means for the benefits of the tribals, brought alienation and *cause-de-resistance* with massive flow of outsiders continuing, even began to evicts many innocent tribal people from their ancestral posseses.

Zia-ur-Rehman assumed power firstly as the Chief martial law administrator in November 1975 and a popularly elected President in April 1977. President Zia responded to the Shanti Bahini (peace Force) insurgent activities with a sharply increased military presence in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. He began sponsored migration of Bengali settlers into the Chittagong Hill Tracts, which formed on integral part of the larger objective of exploiting the vast economic

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12. *ibid.* 1.

potential of the Chittagong Hill Tracts and the Chittagong division. Earlier the Bangladesh government's representative denied that there was any programme of sponsored migration. "Now the government (Bangladesh) acknowledge that there was a programme of sponsored migration".<sup>13</sup>

The resettlement schemes had already begun during the Pakistani era. The demographic dimension of the Hill Tracts due to the scares population, and with a large uncultivated land became the target of the new settlers. The government given them land with financial support. The tribal peoples had alleged that in its objectives of stimulating the hill peoples the government through such settlement has its objectives: the conversion of the Chittagong Hill Tracts into a Bengali Muslim majority area. The atrocities are alleged to have been committed in the process of settlement operation. Some of the allegations have been confirmed by Amnesty International and other International Human Rights Organisations.

"The settlement operation have been carried out in phases. And each time the operations were extended to new areas, waves of Chakmas have taken refuges in Tripura".<sup>14</sup>

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13. 'Life is not Ours' Land and Human Rights in Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh; The Report of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission, May 1991. P.16.

14. Times of India, New Delhi. September 9, 1987.

Throughout the 1970's the number of Bengali settlers increased gradually, particularly after the liberation war when 50,000 Bengali's settler entered the Ramgarh area.<sup>15</sup> According to Bimal Bikkhu the Bangladesh government deliberate policy of settlement has resulted in 25,000 Bengali Muslim families settling the Chittagong Hill Tracts in 1980, one lakh more in 1981 and another 250,000 in 1982.<sup>16</sup> There are currently over 400,000 Bengali settlers throughout the Chittagong Hill Tracts.<sup>17</sup>

The demographic characteristics of the Hill Tracts have changed tremendously in recent time. The non-tribals constituted about 9% in 1951, 17.7% in 1961, 27.5% in 1980 and 45% in 1991 to the total population in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. From 1975 to 1981, the total population of the Chittagong Hill Tracts grew 46.65% compared to the growth rate of only 21.81% for the total population of Bangladesh.<sup>18</sup>

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15. 'Life is not Ours', Land and Human Rights in Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh. n. 13, P.63.
  16. "World Ignores Chakmas Struggles", The Hindustan Times, New Delhi, April 17, 1993.
  17. The Report of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission 1991 recorded the torrent Stream of Bengali settlers in between 1979 to 1989. In 1979 and 1980. 100,000 settlers moved into the Hill Tracts. Another 100,000 entered in 1981 and 200,000 more in 1982 and 1983. n.13, P.64.
  18. Bimal Bikkhu, (1993), "Misuse of Foreign aid in Bangladesh", October 1989 In Quest of Peace, World Chakma Conference, Calcutta; and Indian Express, New Delhi August 24, 1992.



## 2. LAND DISPOSSESSION AND EFFECTS:

The settlement of Bengalis in Chittagong Hill Tracts from other parts of Bangladesh has occurred with massive violations of the property rights of hill peoples. The situation in the Hill Tracts gradually changed for the worse with more outsiders increasingly upon the tribal land. The settlement policies combined with the construction of Dam in 1960's have generated discontentment amongst the tribal peoples. The Dam submerged about 40% of the cultivable land. But the compensation programme did not work well. It disrupted the hill peoples' lives considerably and resulted in a further shortage of land.

The educated section of the tribal people view the existing administrative and Judicial system in the Chittagong Hill Tracts as a powerful instrument to subjugate and exploit their tribesman.<sup>19</sup> The tribals often have neither sufficient legal documentary basis for their cultivable land, nor adequate access to the bureaucratic organisations dealing either with land or law enforcement. The Bengalis settlers are thus further encouraged to violate the tribal traditional right emanating from their notion of land use or ownership. The increased Bengali settlement programme is seen as associated with or responsible for

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19. Hayat Hussian n.10. P.204.

increasing loss of land right and liberty of the tribals in the Hill Tracts.<sup>20</sup> The government has however, an apparently forceful argument for the Bengali settlement programme in the name of development of the Hill Tracts, which lying idle or unproductive. 3.

**THE BIRTH OF JANA SAMHATI SAMITI (JSS) AND SHANTI BAHINI (SB):**

The tribal people of the Hill Tracts have a traumatic experience with the Bangladesh. Due to number of reasons they were viewed by the erstwhile East Pakistan fighter as being on the Pakistani side, providing a base as well as sanctuary to Pakistani elements in 1971. The military and para-military force reprisal operations which were launched with a view to weeding out the collaborators of Pakistan army and recovering the concealed arms and ammunition and created havoc in the tribal areas. Their anti-pathy intensified towards the centre dominated by the plains people.<sup>21</sup> The Chakma tribal resistance surfaced soon after the Shanti Bahini significant for its oppressive militancy. It was in sharp contrast to their comparative pacific existence in the past decades. It was in 1928 in the form of political organisation called the CHAKMA YUVAK SANGHA led by

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20. Mufazzul M.Hug n.2. P.56.

21. M.Q.Zamman, (1982), "Crisis in Chittagong Hill Tracts: Ethnicity and Integration", Economic and Political Weekly Vol XVII (3) P.75.

Gyan Shyam Dewan set up a resistance to the power of the Deputy Commissioner as the Regulation 1908 declared the absolute administration of the region. During the Pakistani rule despite commissioning of Kaptai Dam and its displacements of the tribal people the discontentment did not turn militant. The tribal leader contested the 1970 elections. Suggesting their option for political participation rather than for a deliberate resistance and in the election the Chakma leader, Mr. Manabendra Narayan Larma was elected as Member of Parliament.

A delegation of hill peoples leader led by Manabendra Narayan, a former member of Parliament called on the Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rehman on February 1972 and placed before him a four point charter of demand. These were:-

- (1) Autonomy for Chittagong Hill Tracts, including its own legislature;
- (2) Retention of Regulation 1900 in the constitution of Bangladesh;
- (3) Continuation of the tribal Chiefs office and
- (4) A constitutional provision restricting the amendment of regulation 1900 and imposing on the influx of the non-tribal.

It is widely reported that Sheikh Mujibur Rehman advised them to do away with their ethnic identities and

merged with greater Bengali nationalism".<sup>22</sup> Meanwhile massive military deployment took place in the Chittagong Hill Tracts as the demand for regional autonomy was interpreted as secessionist by the Bangladesh Government.

In March 2, 1972 the Parbathya Chattajram Jama Sainhati Samiti (JSS) was formed to exert constitutional pressure on the government to access to the tribal demands. Two significant demands were the expecting of immigrants settlers in the Chittagong Hill Tracts after 1972, along with payment of compensation to tribal families uprooted by the Kaptai dam and the fixation of water level in the dam at 90 feet.

In the first parliamentary elections of Bangladesh in 1973 Manabendra Narayan Larma contested and won Chittagong Hill Tracts constituency under the banner of JSS. As an M.P., N.Larma fought in the parliament to safeguard the tribal identity and to attain their lost right. He led a constitutional fight for tribal demands though there was widespread repression throughout Mujib's rigime. Atrocities were committed by the Rakkhi Bahini (Security force) and the police.<sup>23</sup> A military wing the Shanti Bahini was also formed

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22. *ibid.*

23. Syed Aziz-al Hsan and Bumitra Chakma (1989), "Problem of National integratin in Bangladesh: the Chittagong Hill Tracts". Asian Survey, Vol.XXXIX, n.10, October, P.968.

under the leadership of Manabendra's brother Shanti Larma. Soon after the 1975 coup that removed Mujib Larma went underground and organized the Shanti Bahini - the armed wing of the JSS -and engaged in armed struggle to gain tribal demands. The Shanti Bahini stepped up armed activities in 1976 and there were frequent confrontations between it and the government forces throughout, which result in political instability in the region.

#### 4. **MILITARIZATION OF CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS (CHT) :**

The most important feature in Chittagong Hill Tracts is the all-pervading presence of military and para-military forces. The General officer commanding (Chittogong Cantonment) has occupied an important position in the civil and highest policy making body. The justification for the massive presence of military and para-military forces is that it is needed to counter and contain insurgency activities of the Shanti Bahini. Besides, the military had been directly engaged in various developmental activities in the region.<sup>24</sup>

From military sources, the Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission May 1, 1991 gathered that there are over 230 army camps more than 100 BDR (Bangladesh Rifles) and occurred 80 policies camps in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The estimates

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24. 'Life is not Ours,' Land and Human Rights in Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh, n.13, P.39.

military and para-military forces not taking into accounts VDPs (Village Defence Parties) and Police are.

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<b>COMBAT</b>	<b>FORCE</b>	<b>UNIT</b>
Army	24th Infantry Division	80,000 personnel
B.D.R.	6th Battalions	25,000 personnel
ANSARS (Islamic Guard)	4th Battalions	8,000 personnel
Navy	1st Battalions	1,500 personnel
<b>Total</b>		<b>114,500 personnel</b>

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The Chittagong Hill Commission 1991, in its report added that a conservative estimates would therefore indicate that there is one member of the security forces for every ten hill people.<sup>25</sup>

**5. DEVELOPMENT PLANS :**

In addition to the increase of the Bengalis from the plains it is the nature of the developmental scheme which is crucial. The main features of the schemes have been permanent settlement of the people as opposed to a nomadic pattern of life extension of basis facilities to the

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25. *ibid*, pp.40-41

inassessable part of the area, development of forest communities through settled instead of them cultivation etc. of most of the development programmes are carried out through the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board (CHTDB) established in 1976. Besides this industrial development, schemes were planned and Export presence zone set up by President Zia which come under the direct control of his Secretariat. This formalized a pattern of special development initiatives for the Chittagong Hill Tracts and also demonstrated the leading role of the military in those project. The chair of Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board is the General Officer Commanding of the Chittagong Discussion. Military have increasingly taken over civilian government roles in building, roads, supplying of electricity, constructing school, promoting local college, industries etc.

However, the tribal leadership have seen these as the policies of assimilationists. That process of widening employment avenues, have helped the non-tribals in enhancing their dominance in the district in socio-economic terms. Finally the expansion of communicational network has facilitated not the development of the tribal people but easy movement of the around forces.

The late 1970's witnessed more clashes between the

government and the militants. A successive governments have sidetracked the political aspects identified the problem of the Hill Tracts, either economic or as an issue of law and order. When the military activities to curb the insurgent it resulted in brutal operations there were various reports of ruthless opposition on unarmed villagers jointly by the armies and the new settlers. The Kankhali massacre on March 25, 1980 reportedly respond all previous records of brutalities committed against the tribes men".<sup>26</sup>

The government of Bangladesh proposed in 1980 to enacted "Disturbed Areas Hill Act 1980", in order specially to deal with the turbulent Hill Tracts areas. Here any person can be arrested on slightest pretext under this fearful Armed Forces Act.

The government effort to manipulate the regional autonomy through the institution of the Tribal Convention 1977 and the National Reconstruction Revolution any council with a viewed to securing greater co-operation of the people in development programmes was designed as a counter force to the Shanti Bahini but it failed to exert any influence over the tribals. Besides in the parliament a committee on the Chittagong Hill Tracts become more active in 1980 for

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26. *ibid.*, PP.18-19



monitoring the information on the development in the strike - torn district.

On the other side, a large number of Chakmas and other Hill Tribes crossed over into Indian State of Tripura. The first notable incident of such come to the fore in 1977. Further there are also other sources which portray only a picture of the Chakma tribals of Chittagong Hill Tracts migrating continuously over a period into the Indian States in the forms of refugees mainly to escape the alleged atrocities perpetuated by the army. Although the immediate events leading to the migration of the Chakmas to Tripura in the 1970 is not clear yet all can say that it was the culmination of the political crisis which make them to come to Tripura. The specific period of these major migration in the form of refugees was in March 1977, December 1978, December 1979, September to December 1981, June 1983 by for the largest in 29 April to 3 May 1986.<sup>27</sup> The Chakma problem in the form of refugees became a major issue for India to air it grievances against Bangladesh.

On 24 March 1982 a bloodless coup brought Lt. General H. M. Ershad to power. It appears that Lt. General Ershad's leadership took a fresh look at the problem. He pledged that no more Bengalis would be settled in the Chittagong Hill

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27. The Hindustan Times, New Delhi. May 16, 1989.

Tracts, and after a General Amnesty to the Tribal resistance groups both inside and outside Bangladesh. Quoting the Amnesty International the Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission in 1991 reports.

"Since the end of 1982 migration to the Chittagong Hill Tracts by non-tribal people had been prevented: no order prohibiting migration had been issued but the authorities were said to have ceased allocating land to non-tribal people thereby effectively removing the factors that had led people to move there".<sup>28</sup>

#### **LT.GENERAL ERSHAD'S POLICIES IN 1983**

On October 3, 1983 General Ershad while addressing a series of public meetings in South-Eastern of the Chittagong Hill Tracts made a set of policy announcement at a rally in the Stadium at Rangamati. A general Amnesty was declared for tribal insurgents and asked their to surrender by February 25, 1984. He offered Rs.5,000 to call person, rations and rehabilitation. The Chittagong Hill Tracts was declared a special economic zone with special tax and interest rate. A special five year plan was established for the Chittagong Hill Tracts. He pledged a re-writing of the Hill Tracts Manual of 1900. But the proposal failed to fulfill the aspiration of the insurgents.

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28. 'Life is not Ours', Land and Human Rights in Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh, n.13, P.18-19.

A truce was worked out between the two factions, the Larma and Priti's faction in the Shanti Bahini in April 1985 which broke-up after the death of Lama Bendra Narayan Larma on 10 November, 1982 Priti agreed to 'stay cool'. But members of his factions were disillusioned. Meanwhile Delhi declaration of two general amenities by President Ershad in 1983 (following the death of M.N.Larma) and in 1985 along with a 5 years upazila plan of Taka 263 crores made a large number of members of Shanti Bahini available to General Ershad offered. Shanti Larma was arrested in 1975 and was released in 1980, on the condition that he would assist the government and initiate the process of a gradual surrender of the Shanti Bahini but his rejoining of the Shanti Bahini violated the condition while he was released. After that the army were given a free hand to deal with the Shanti Bahini group. The gruesome massacre at Kalampati Union in Chittagong Hill Tracts on 25 March, 1980 was a direct result causing widespread public reaction and Parliamentary investigation. This was in retaliation to an incident of 22 March 1980 in which 22 army men including an officer were killed by the Shanti Bahini.

The attacks on army and new settlers by the insurgent were followed by reprisal attacks on the hill people. In May and June 1984, the attack by Shanti Bahini on the army was followed by reprisal attacks on hill people at Barkal, where

around Six or Seven thousand refugees crossed the border into Indian State of Mizoram. But they were forcibly returned in the following February.

In 1986 the Shanti Bahini regrouped and reorganized. The Shanti Bahini on 29 April 1986, carried out a well coordinated attack on several army camps and Bengali settlements. In turn the Muslim settlers and government forces carried out reprisals on tribal villagers forcing the tribes-people to India on 30th April, 1986. An exodus to India was not a new event. But for the first time the refugees went in very large numbers and refused to return. This led to the establishment of the five refugee camps in Tripura which existed till today. The refugees were a major embarrassment for Bangladesh. The Bangladesh government responded to with policies to prevent reprisal and stop further refugee overflow.

In July 1988, Shanti Bahini attacked and killed about 233 Bengali settlers. President Ershad flew to ManikCharī to visit the site. He announced an emergency scheme to create Bengali cluster villages, to protect the settlers from Shanti Bahini raids. This was expanded into a general and lasting programme of GUCHCHA GRAMS or clusters of villagers for Bengali settlers practised by adjacent army camps. This policy was added to the cluster villages for hill people.

called in current usage BORAGRAMS or SHANTI GRAMS as a programme dating back to the JOUTHA KHOMAR or cooperative form programme of 1979.

Recently, available reports suggested that the government demonstrated some new conciliatory gestures the problem of the Chittagong Hill Tracts was declared a political. And a five members 'high-powered' team was formed to recommend steps towards a peace feel solution.<sup>29</sup> Accounts in the reports are brief and do not allow us to deal in detail with the negotiation by 1985, the government initiated negotiations. A Liaison committee was established consisting of Upendra Lal Chakma. Nokul Chandra Tripura and K.S. Pure to establish a process of negotiations between the Jana Samhati Samiti (JSS) Shanti Bahini (SB) and the government.

The government's national committee on the Chittagong Hill Tracts was established in August 1987. The Hill peoples leaders from the 'Dialogue Committee' met with Ershad, leading to a second JSS/SB - government meeting in December 1987. The JSS/SB present a 4-point programme<sup>30</sup> to the government.

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29. Syed Aziz-al Aksani and Bhumitra Chakma, no.24. P.970.

30. 'Life is not Ours', Land and Human Rights in Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh, no.13, P.26.

- (1) Removal of all non-tribal settlers from Chittagong Hill Tracts.
- (2) Withdrawal of all Bangladesh armed forces from Chittagong Hill Tracts including the tribal police force.
- (3) Retention of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation 1900 and a constitutional procession restricting the amendment of the regulations.
- (4) Autonomy of Chittagong Hill Tracts with its own legislature and recognition of the Jumma Nations right to self-determination and
- (5) Deployment of the UN peace keeping Force in the Chittagong Hill Tracts and implementation by those measures under the auspices of the United Nations Organisations.

The government also presented 9 point programmes involving new district courts. As the meeting between the JSS/SB - government proceeded with no agreement on both the document. The government after the JSS/SB continued inflexible their demands began negotiations with the 'Dialogue Committee'. In October and 1988, the government held discussions with the hill peoples leaders over draft legislation in Chagrachari, Rangamati and Bandarban on 10 separate days the JSS bitterly attacked the leaders

involved in the 'Dialogue Committee' and the proposals on district councils.

Another meeting between the government and the JSS/SB occurred on December 12, 1988 at Kharachari containment set as before there was no agreement on using or both documents as a basis of discussion on 26 February 1989 repeal the 1900 Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulations and introduced legislation to establish three new district councils. The important provisions were it concerned to local administration the chair must be a tribal person and fixed proportionally represented for the tribal group and new settlers. But the issues over land and law and have yet to be evolved upon the council.

The JSS/SB urged to boycott the proposed District Councils election stated for June 1989. On the other hand, the Bangladesh government was bent on holding election. The government sent a high power official team (Commissioner Chittagong a Deputy Commissioner and Several tribal representatives) to the refugee camps in South Tripura persuade them to return to their villages before elections. While the Bangladesh team was in Tripura to visit the refugees camps at that time afresh group of tribal refugees around 15,00 refugees crossed into India.<sup>31</sup> Another report

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31. *ibid.*, P.36.

gave between 14 May and 31 May in 1989 5,800 refugees crossed into India.<sup>32</sup> There were reported that many tribals were waiting at the international border Upendra Lal Chakma, a former M.P. of President Ershad's Jatiyo Dal and advisor to the Bangladesh Government on Hill Tracts Affairs, who headed the Liaison Committee formed by the Bangladesh Government to contact the insurgent Shanti Bahini, had arrived Raisyabari in South Tripura on 24 May 1989 after few day arduous trek through hilly routes.<sup>33</sup> This defection was a major blow to the government. Mr. Upendra Lal Chakma had been the most prominent spokesman of the Hill people, the person with most credibility to the JSS/SB the government and the outside observers.

In December 1990, military rule was removed Democracy had been restored in Bangladesh through parliamentary election held on February 27, 1991. The Prime Minister Begum

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32. **Note:** The Bengali Chairman of the Langadu Upaziela was killed on May 4th 1989. The Shanti Bahini was blamed for this . This was followed by massive reprisal attacks against hill peoples villages. An usly International reported in 1990 that although the regular security forces are not alleged to have participated members of Village Defence Party (VDP) are there among the non-tribal settlers who attacked and killed tribal people. This are the reasons for crossing the border between 14 May and 31 May 1989 by the tribal people.

33. Sekhar Datta, "Refugee Camps Spilling over as Chakmas influx Continues". The Telegraph, Calcutta. June 22, 1989.



Khalida Zia official visit to India in May 26, 1992 initiates the problem of the return of tribal refugees in Tripura with the Prime Minister of India P.V. Narasimha Rao. It was finally decided that a Joint Task Force headed by the two respective Home Secretaries would set up to table the inquiring problem of Chakma refugees now in Tripura.

The initiatives envisages the formation of a political committee with public representatives representing main political parties to establish contacts with the refugees leaders in India with a view to convince the refugees to return home. The refugees about 5199 went back in the first and second phases of repatriation agreed between the Bangladesh government and the Chakma leader in February and July 1994. But the other phases of repatriation could not carried as the Chakma leaders alleged that the Bangladesh government failed to fulfill its promises.

#### **THE CHAKMAS OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH :**

The Chakmas of Arunachal Pradesh; who had come to India in the year 1964 and rehabilitated under five settlement schemes in the then Tirap (now Changlang), Lohit and Subansiri (papumpare) districts in recent time faced the local antagonism which has been increasing. Although the Chakma problem in Arunachal Pradesh is not as volatile and is different from the refugees problem as that of Tripura.

But they are now caught up in the foreigner issue and threat from deportation by many political groups including the students.

The Chakmas and Hajong settled in the state of Arunachal Pradesh (NEFA) by the centre between 1964 and 1971. They were to be grant India citizenship despite a decision to this effect by the Centre and statement from Central leaders. As reported, this people were issued trade licences, ration cards, Scheduled Tribe certificate, given employment rights allotted land, small loans to start afresh when they arrived in Arunachal Pradesh.<sup>34</sup>

The Chakmas who originally hail from the Chittagong Hill Tracts of the present day Bangladesh are actually displaced indigenous people. They were displaced by the famous Kaptai and which had inundated more than 40% of the total arable land in Chittagong Hill Tracts.

The problem of Chakmas and Hajong began to in the late seventies and early eighties, when educational facilities such as stipend and employment rights to the Chakmas and

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34. **Notes:** This reports are collected from surviving refugees in Arunachal Pradesh from the seminar on the Citizenship issue and Human Rights Violation against the Chakmas and Hagong of Arunachal Pradesh Organised by : Nehru Discussion Forum (a Forum of NSUI), The World Chakma Organisation (WCO) on 13th November 1994, at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi-67.

Hajong were banned officially by the state government. In 1980 trade licenses issued to the Chakmas were cancelled. Ration cards were withdrawn through the official notification in October 31, 1991. The items of public distribution system to them has been scraped since January 1994. Recently on September 28, 1994 the state government had withdrawn all facilities from Chakma including of Health Care allegedly because of the latter mis-conduct.

Reiterating the State administration's stand the Chief Minister Mr. Gegong Apang told newsman in Itanagar, the centre has settled these people here without taking the people of the state into account.<sup>35</sup> In another report Mr. Gegong Apang said, "they have overstayed and now it is time for them to go. The sooner they leave and the better it would be for peace in our state".<sup>36</sup> In 1977 the state government passed a resolution asking for deportation by the refugees. Ever since then the state government has reported this demand almost every year.

This community is feeling vulnerable and a recent Judicial pronouncement of the Guwahati High Court and the

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35. Mannika Chopra, "Chakma Preparing for a Fight", The Telegraph, Calcutta, April 22, 1994.

36. "Chakmas have overstayed", The Times of India, New Delhi, October 9, 1994.

Supreme Court added to their woes. The High Court verdict said that Chakmas of Arunachal Pradesh being stateless refugees did not have the right to indulge in trade and commerce in the state. The Supreme Court in its judgment in 1993, on Khudiram Chakmas V/s the state of Arunachal will appeal case had ruled that the Chakmas are foreigners.

The Centre and the state government of Arunachal Pradesh are locked in a bitter confrontation over New Delhi's reported decision to grant citizenship and voting rights to Buddhist Chakma refugees in the state despite the state's forceful bid to get rid of all foreign nationals from the hill state.

The government of India in 1992 stated that, being new migrants from Pakistan who came to India before March 25, 1971 they are eligible to the grant of Indian Citizenship as per the policy of the government on the subject and that most of these migrants have already seen granted citizenship. It further said that those who are born and brought up in India will be automatically entitled to Indian citizenship by birth.<sup>37</sup>

In the same breadth the present Union Minister of State for Home Shri. P.M.Sayeed in a letter to Shri. Nyoddek

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37. Refers former Union Minister of State for Home, Shri. M.M. Jacob's letter to an M.P. from Arunachal Pradesh Shri Laela Umbrey dated 23rd September, 1992,

Yonggam a Rajya Sabha M.P. from Arunachal Pradesh has stated in July 7, 1994 that under the Indira-Muji Agreement of 1972 it was decided that the Chakma and Hajong refugees who came to India from the erstwhile East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) before March 25, 1971 will be considered for grant of India citizenship.<sup>38</sup>

The letter from Shri.P.M.Sayed sparked off a series of protest from the All Arunachal Pradesh Student's Union (AAPSU) and the State Government led by the Gegong Apang. The AAPSU served 'Quit notices' to all foreigners to leave the State by September 30,1994. While the State Legislative Assembly passed a resolution for the fourth time seeking deportation of the Chakma and Hajong from the state. As a result of the 'quit notice' and 'direct action' rallies more than 2000 Chakmas fled Kokila (Arunachal Pradesh) to Sonitpur district in Assam.<sup>39</sup>

The refugees issue brought a misunderstanding between the two neighbouring states: Arunachal Pradesh and Assam.

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38. Refer Shri. P.M. Sayeed Union Minister of State for Home in a letter to Shri Nyodek Youggain a Rajya Sabha M.P. from Arunachal Pradesh in reply to the issue raised in the Rajya Sabha on 27th June 1994 by the latter in regards repatriation of Chakma/Hajong, Tibetan and Yobin Refugees from Arunachal Pradesh. July 7th 1994.

39. Suhas Chakma, "Another Ethnic Strife", The Pioneer, New Delhi, September 7, 1994.

The Chief Minister of Assam Mr. Hiteswar Saikia in September 24.1994 to an Chakmas influx from Arunachal Pradesh into Assam told the Prime Minister Mr. P.V.Narsimha Rao that simply because of its central location in the region Assam cannot offered to become a sanctuary of all the displaced people from the neighbouring states.<sup>40</sup> They were later pushed back to their area of settlement and the Assam government fearing Assam to be a dumping ground of refugees imposed night curfew and shoot-at-sight order against any Chakma entering the State. But the Guwahati High Court stayed the shoot-at-sight orders issued by the state government.<sup>41</sup>

The recent crisis of Chakma in Arunachal Pradesh also represented the agony of the indigenous people of Arunachal Pradesh and also showed the anti-foreign nationals issues in the whole of North-East India. In recent times all the states witnessed anti foreign movement where this region received a large number of migrants from the surrounding State, especially Bangladesh.

During the entire period the nature and process of interaction with the Chakma and different authority is

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40. "Chakma creating problem in Assam", The Assam Tribune, Guwahati, September 25, 1994.

41. "Shoot-at-sight Order Stayed", Assam Tribune, The Guwahati, September 21, 1994.

differed in subsequent years. It is also associated with contest and conflicts. This bring out the territorial and political instability in the Chittagong Hill Tracts region. The development issues dominant the theme during the Pakistan and Bangladesh. But this resulted in the issue that encourage mobilisation of the new-settlers which centred of around the question of powers and allocation of resources - land to the new settlers.

The problem of refugees in Tripura camps is not only a continuing reality. It also bring embarrassment and strained relations to the Bangladesh government at the regional and international level.

The Chakmas problem in Tripura is quite different from Arunachal Pradesh. In Arunachal Pradesh they are still to get a citizenship rights after 30 years of coming to India. Not only that the local antagonism has increased They were deprived of basic facilities and also faced a threat of deportation from the State. The Chakmas and Hajong fated insecurity and treatment from the local people.

From above we have seen the Chakma problems are politico-economic development crisis and centre around resources. The status of 'excluded area' during the British rule was changed after 1947. The plain-Bengali settlers increases after Bangladesh emerged as an Independent nation

in 1971. The tribal protest and demand for the removing of the settlers. This resulted in conflicts and making the Chakmas leaving their native places to Tripura state of India as a refugee. All these political development, in the Chittagong Hill Tracts are the result of the government settlement policies and and programmes and it attitude towards the tribal people.



## Chapter V

### INDIA AND BANGLADESH RELATIONS AND GOVERNMENTS STANDS ON THE CHAKMAS

The Chakma and other tribes of Chittagong Hill Tracts had taken shelter in the neighbouring states of India which resulted to about 60,000 refugees in Tripura Camps. It is a continuing reality. In the early 1987, the refugees made it clear that they would resist force repatriation. International campaigns were mounted in urging India to protect them. Number in the refugees camps fluctuated. Some had gone back to Chittagong Hill Tracts and returned to the refugees Camps. According to the available report given the figure in 1986 was about 40,000 who sought refugee in five Camps, and by May 1989 their number swelled up to 70,000<sup>1</sup>. And in 1990, the refugees figure in the five camps of Tripura was 64,000<sup>2</sup>.

The political situation in the Chittagong Hill Tracts after 1986, deteriorated. The problem of Chakma in Chittagong Hill Tracts and refugees in Tripura had now gained considerable national, international attention. The volume and composition of refugees influx into Tripura

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1. Chhayakant Nayak "Chakma refugee face uncertain future", The Deccan Herald, Bangalore March 21, 1990.
  2. The Telegraph, Calcutta, April 25, 1990. Union Home Minister informed the Lok Sabha.

clearly show qualitative change from the trickling of refugees crossing in the initial period to the present flood of people fleeing atrocities in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Fresh influx of refugees were a common phenomena which was as result of torture of the tribal people by plain resettlers and backed by Bangladesh army and paramilitary forces in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Some were said to be reprisal actions after the attacks by Shanti Bahini against military and settlers. Fearing large scale influx of refugees the Border Security Force, has been put on alert on the south Tripura - Chittagong Hill Tracts border

3. Discussion to find an amicable solution to the problem had failed, due to the inflexible stands adopted by the Bangladesh government and the Chakma leaders.

The continuous reports of the four countries media during this period also echoed the visible tensions that had developed in the bilateral relations of Bangladesh and India. The Chakma problem in the form of refugees become a major issue for India to air its grievances against Bangladesh. The issues come to the attention of the media, describe the resettlement polices on being to forcibly converted Buddhist Tribals to Islam.

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3. "Fresh influx of Chakma refugees into Tripura". The Patriot, New Delhi, May 20, 1988.

#### INDIA - BANGLADESH RELATION DUE TO THE INFLUX OF REFUGEES:

The relation between India and Bangladesh deteriorated after the exodus of Chakmas from Bangladesh into India, leading to the mis understanding on both sides. The continuous tribal influx has a serious ramification. As the state of Tripura and Mizoram shares an international boundary with Chittagong Hill Tracts, the refugees problems are felt in these border states. Since that time, these refugees, began to entered into the state in April - May 1986, they are posing a serious national problem and are also straining the scarce resources of the state. It also threatens to jeopardize its political, economic and social structures. To compound the problem the Bangladesh Government has alleged that India has been assisting and providing bases to the Shanti Bahini, who have killed many innocent Bangladeshis and destroyed national property <sup>4</sup>. A Bangladesh newspaper carried a report that a captured Shanti Bahini guerilla named Narendra Tyra had revealed Indian Government's complicity in the organisation. He was said to have disclosed that many of the Shanti Bahini cadres were trained in insurgency and guerilla warfare at Indian Security Force Camps for six months in 1985 <sup>5</sup>.

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4. "India urged not to Aid Shanti Bahini" The Bangladesh Observer, Dhaka, June 2, 1986.

5. "Shanti Bahini Man confesses arms training in India". The New Nation, Dhaka, June 6, 1986.

On the other hand, the Indian authorities have blamed the Bangladesh authorities for giving shelter to then outlawed The Tribal National Volunteers (TNV) and other insurgent groups of North East Indian Tribal in the Chittagong Hill Tracts region. The Indian newspaper report that on the Tripura's eastern boundary with Bangladesh, some Bangladesh's Counter insurgency commandos entered Indian territory and raided the CHANDRA HASPARA village and kidnapped 4 Chakmas of Indian nationality.<sup>6</sup>

The Indo-Bangladesh relations took a new turn in the mid 1987 when the Bangladesh Government alleged that 50 armed personnel of the B.S.F. raided the NALUARLHAR border village near Ramgarh in Chittagong Hill Tracts and killed persons including 6 children. This development once again highlighted the sensitive situation developing in the region.

On May 9, 1986 a flag meeting took place at Jaleya (South Tripura) between the Deputy Inspector-General Border Security Force (Tripura) and his counter part of B.D.R (Bangladesh Rifles). The Bangladesh side agreed to take back the Tribal refugees who had entered South Tripura since April 30, 1986, and that they would inform the Indian side

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6. "Tension Continues on Indo-Bangladesh border" The Statesmen, New Delhi, March 5, 1986.

of the tentative date for return of refugees. The Indian officials placed the figure of such refugees at 5, 675 in the four camps in South Tripura <sup>7</sup>. There are reports, of fresh influx of 100 refugees the following day into South Tripura and 800 others pushed back. And an other 5,000 tribals were reportedly scattered all along the border trying to cross over. On May 12, 1986, a Shanti Bahini killed at Maring Camp 12 persons, (soldiers and resettlers). There was alleged reprisal attack. There are reports of torture and pushing back of the refugees in the border area by the B.S.F. The Border Security Force had pushed back 4,000 refugees upto May 10, 1986. Around 15,000 Chakmas and Maghs were waiting along the international boundary. The same report gave the figure of 6,570 refugees in Karbook and Silachhari Camps, with the information that they were starving<sup>8</sup>.

The reprisals attack on the Chakmas intensified. A re-organised Shanti Bahini force carried put its biggest coordinated attack on 29 April 1986, raided rural Bangladesh army Camps, outposts of paramilitary forces and new Bengali settlers of the Muslim settlers and government forces

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7. "Bangladesh agree to take back refugees in South Tripura". The Hindu, Madras, May 10, 1986.

8. "Refugees allege torture on both sides" The Patriot, New Delhi, May 13, 1986.

carried out reprisal on Dulbai villages forcing the tribal people to flee to India. On May 19, 1986 the resettlers allegedly backed by Bangladesh army were said to have completely burnt down the village of Tarbanmukh and Ladiapara, and killed 16 Hindu Tripura tribals in Kumillatila and Taidong villages (Khagracherri districts). The Shanti Bahini were reported to have attacked army camps on the Khagracherri and Abaydnagar, Hasim Nagar and Ali Kadam killing 8 Bangladesh personnel and 60 plain resettlers and seriously injured 15 Jawans. And two day later, in the other Shanti Bahini two soldiers died and two injured. The Bangladesh soldiers and resettlers reportedly retaliated and burned down the tribal villages, the refugees in India State of Tripura reached about 11,000<sup>9</sup>.

A second flag meeting on 10, May 1986 was followed by a third flag meeting held on June 2, 1986, at Ramgarh, between the commanders of the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and the Indian Border Security Force (B.S.F). The commanding officer of BDR was reported to have requested his counterpart, that India should not give shelter and assistance to the outlawed Shanti Bahini members<sup>10</sup>.

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9. "Bahini men gun Down 68 in Bangladesh" The Patriot, New Delhi, May 24, 1986. "Shanti Bohini Steps up operations in Bangladesh" The Patriot, New Delhi, May 28, 1986.

10. "India urged not to aid Shanti Bahini" op.cit. n.4.

The most contentious part of the Chakmas problem is how many of these refugees have actually taken shelter in India. Despite the assertions and arrangement made by the Bangladesh government the influx of Chakma is continuing unabated on 28 April, 1987. The then Foreign Secretary of India, Mr.K.P.S. Menon has said that the two countries differed in the figures of the refugees. Indian say the figure is 48,000 and Bangladesh say that so far identify of 27,000<sup>11</sup>.

Openly disputing the Indian figure of 50,000, Bangladesh says the figures cannot be more than 30,000. This is the first time that Bangladesh has disputed refugees figures given by India<sup>12</sup> on July 1988, the Bangladesh foreign Minister Mr. Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury told the parliament that 29,920 Bangladesh tribal refugees were in camps in India. So, far 8,000 such refugees have returned to Bangladesh and are leading a normal life <sup>13</sup>. The Indian Home Minister on 24, April 1990 informed the Lok Sabha that there are 64,000 Chakma refugees in India<sup>14</sup>. There is

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11. Zaglul A. Chowdhury," Early repatriation of Chakmas Unlikely", The Times of India, New Delhi, April 28, 1987.

12. Manas Ghosh", Chakma issue Dhaka's fears alloyed", The Statesman, New Delhi, October 1987.

13. The Bangladesh Times, Dhaka, July 1988.

14. The Telegraph, Calcutta, April 25, 1990.

contradiction and disagreement on the number of the refugees.

The Chakma issue has become the most ticklish between India and Bangladesh. Admitting that the Chakma refugees had sown a seed of discord between the two countries the Bangladesh foreign minister, Mr. Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury said his government had done everything for the safe return of the refugees<sup>15</sup>.

The Tribal refugees in Tripura camps are apprehensive of their future if they go back to Chittagong Hill Tracts, from where they had migrated. The refugees themselves were emphatic that there is no question of their going back until conditions were created for their safe passage and full security of life and property was assured. The government - sponsored and deliberate policy of Muslim resettlement in the sparsely populated area of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, the alleged torture and atrocities on them by the Bangladeshi Security forces and the Muslim re - settlers are the main reasons for their coming to India. They refused to return to their home-land fearing further atrocities.

The refugees leader raised the demand for involvement a third country. They insisted on India involvement to find

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15. "India asks Dhaka to take back all Refugees", The India Express, New Delhi, June 2, 1987.



out a solution to the Chakma problem. The other demands are withdrawal of army camps, and guarantee of their safe return.

The Bangladesh government had agreed to take back the Chakmas refugees and this as arranged through various bilateral agreements with India. But the Bangladesh government has rejected all the demands of refugees saying no foreign country can be involved in solving its domestic problem. It also agreed that no self-respecting country can agree to the withdrawal of its armed forces from a part of its own territory.<sup>16</sup>

India view the Chakma problem as an internal problem of Bangladesh. On 28 April 1987, the Indian media reported that K.P.S Menon, the then Indian Foreign Secretary said on Chakmas refugees, "it is the responsibility of the Bangladesh side to begin the process (repatriation) by convincing their citizens to return home from Indian territory"<sup>17</sup> Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, visited Dhaka on 25th August, 1987 as a special envoy of the Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi to discuss the refugee issue. Both Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao and President General H.M. Ershad described

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16. "Involvement of India ruled out", The Bangladesh Observer, Dhaka, September 18, 1987.

17. Zaglul. A. Chowdhury n.11.

the refugees issue as essentially Bangladesh's problem and said Dhaka had to take the initiative for solution<sup>18</sup>.

It is not India's interest to harbour such a large number of outsiders in a state like Tripura which already has a explosive insurgency problem created by the insurgent tribal groups. The Indian authorities made it clear that India was not going to be a party to any agreement between the Bangladesh government and the Chakmas, as it was an internal matter of that country. India only got involved on humanitarian grounds because the Chakmas had crossed the border in search of sanctuary.

#### **ACCORD ON TRANS - BORDER INSURGENCY**

Many years were spent in mutual accusations. One side felt that insurgents were being given sanctuary on the other side to promote local secessionist movement. The problem affects both countries equally. Insurgency in the thickly forested area on either side of the Tripura - Chittagong Hill Tracts, has disrupted the life of the people and has taken a heavy toll.

On December 7, 1986 the Bangladesh Observer, reported that at a meeting at Demagiri (Mizoram, India), between the "military team" of India and Bangladesh an accord had been

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18. The Times of India, New Delhi, August 25, 1987.

signed to prevent cross - border insurgency. Both sides had reportedly discussed problems of cross - border insurgency led by Shanti Bahini in Bangladesh and Tripura National Tribal Volunteers in Tripura. Both sides agreed to promote mutual understanding and cooperation in preventing cross border insurgency They also agreed not to harbour or provide sanctuary to any of these 'misguided groups' in each other's territory and help each other in combating the problem<sup>19</sup>.

The common interest of both sides to stamp out insurgency was finally seen as an agreement which apparently has culminated in adopting a common plan for military operations.

The continuing insurgent problem of Shanti Bahini in Bangladesh and the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) in Assam and other groups in North Eastern States of India made the two countries to formed a joint task force on May 1992, for dealing trans-border insurgency at the Home Secretaries level<sup>20</sup>. The Indian newspaper reported June 7, 1994 that Inter-Services Intelligence (I.S.I), Pakistan's, intelligent are operating in the Chittagong Hill Tracts area. New Delhi asserted that ISI is training and arming the hostile Naga

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19. The Bangladesh Observer, Dhaka, December 7, 1987.  
"Dhaka-Delhi pact to curb insurgency" The Times of India, New Delhi. December 12, 1986.

20. The Deccan Herald, Bangalore. May 29, 1992.

and Manipuri militants at various places in Bangladesh. Assam chief Minister Hiteswar Saikia says that he passed on concrete evidences to New Delhi<sup>21</sup>.

#### REPATRIATION AND PROBLEMS

Amidst officially stated contradictory positions the Chakma refugees figures claimed by both sides there is vast difference. It was announced in the media of both countries that the refugees would be repatriated in phases.

On January 6, 1986, it was reported in an Indian paper that besides, discussion on important matters relating to the two countries, the repatriation of Chakmas to Chittagong Hill Tracts was agreed between India and Bangladesh, after Indian Foreign Minister Mr. N.D. Tiwari's 3 day visit to Dhaka. It was decided that the repatriation would be carried out from January 15, 1987 onward. However, prior to that, "a Chakma refugee delegation" would visit the Chittagong Hill Tracts area or before January 15, and see for himself the situation prevailing there. Following that 300 refugee families would go back every day from three points in Tripura's South district, namely, Mandirghat, Kathalachari and Silachari<sup>22</sup>

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21. The Telegraph, Calcutta, June 7, 1994.

22. "Tiwari in Dhaka on 3 day visit", The Times of India, New Delhi. January 7, 1987; "Delhi will help and Chakma insurgency", The Bangladesh Observer, Dhaka. January 9, 1987 and The Amrita Bazar Patrika, Culcutta. January 6, 1987; quoting a Press Trust of India report.

The news report stated that on the Bangladesh side, the district administration of Khagrachherri had taken necessary steps, to receive and rehabilitate the tribals who had fled because of the Shanti Bahini activities. Two reception centres were set up at Ramgarh and Pancherri. Initially, 6,400 tribals were to be taken back, a process that was to stretch till February 1987. "The process involves determination of identity of the tribals and Indian insistence that there are more than 24,000 tribals who had taken shelter in Tripura".<sup>23</sup>

As per the condition for repatriation, an 8 (eight) member delegation consisting of six representatives of the Chakma's refugees was formed. One each from B.S.F and district administration had visited the hill tracts; to study the situation there. They also met the representative of Bangladesh Rifle (B.D.R), district administration, village headman and other. The Bangladesh authority promised that each refugees family would get Rs.500 after return besides free ration for six months.

The same paper reported that on January 7, 1987, the visiting delegation had returned from Chittagong Hill Tracts. The representative of the Chakma refugees, in an

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23. "Preparation to receive Chakma refugees", The New Nation, Dhaka. December 13, 1986.

urgent telegram to the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and the External Minister of India, Mr. N.D.Tiwari, requested them to "stop repatriation of the Chakma refugees". The representative said "torture, killing, arson, rape, large-scale eviction of Chakmas by the Bangladesh forces and illegal occupation of land by the Muslim continued unabated". Despite the agreement to take back 24,000 Chakma refugees, further "thousands of uprooted Chakma families were leaving Pancheri area and entering Tripura". It was reported that January 7, 1987, had been the third successive day of influx of yet more refugees, fleeing another offensive of fresh action against them by BDR, Bangladesh Army and Muslim resettlers. The refugees were apprehensive that the repatriation under these circumstances means sure death of the refugees. This raised the official Indian figures of refugees to 30,000. They have been sheltered in five refugees camps, Silachari, Karbuk, Kathalchari, Pancharampara, and Takumbari.<sup>24</sup>

More clashes had reportedly taken place at Kudarai Cherra, Rangkhiong, Laximcherri between the Bangladesh soldier and Shanti Bahini who report had reunited after the

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24. "Bangla offer Chakmas Security", The Indian Express, New Delhi, January 8, 1987; "Influx from Bangladesh Continues", The Amrita Bazar Patrika, Calcutta, January 8, 1987, and "Thousands of Chakmas heading for India", The Patriot, New Delhi, December 14, 1986.

break up in 1983. The same reported quoted "trans-border sources" for information that guerillas procured large quantity of arms from "foreign sources". On January 12, 1987 the Shanti Bahini blew up a power station near Dighinala, "16 kilometers from the Indian border".<sup>25</sup>

The expected repatriation did not take place as scheduled on January 15, 1987. The Chakma tribals, fearing further persecution, had put forward a series of demands as conditions to their return. On February 2, 1987, the Bangladesh paper reported that the Bangladesh Foreign Minister Mr. Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury having said that, "Bangladesh was willing to take back the Chakmas refugees from India and all arrangement had made in this respect, the stand by our decisions" he said and wondered why repatriation did not come off.<sup>26</sup>

Some strains appears to be shooting in Indo - Bangladesh relation following the failure of the repatriation plan for 24,000 Chakma refugees from Tripura to

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25. The Patriot, New Delhi. December 14, 1986, op cite n.24; and Muslim, Islamabad, January 12, 1987, quoting a Reuter Report in "The Chakma Unrest in Chittagong Hill Tracts", Spot light, Regional Affairs, Islamabad: Institute of Regional studies, Vol.6, no. 4 and 5, April - May 1987 p.29.

26. "Dhaka committed to take back Chakmas", The Bangladesh Times, Dhaka, February 2, 1987.

Chittagong Hill Tracts to take off on January 15, 1987. As not a single refugees turned up, forcing the plan to be postponed. This had badly exposed the insecure conditions prevailing in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Apparently to cover up the embarrassment to Bangladesh, the Dhaka press had launched a sustained campaign accusing India complicity in frustrating the plan.

The problem faced by the Indian and Tripura state governments were highlighted. In other reports, India had spent Rs.2.25 crores on the Chakmas in the last nine months in 1987.<sup>27</sup>

In another development India protested to Bangladesh against concentration of hundreds of thousand of tribal refugees along the border. Despite the Border Security Forces (B.S.F.) trying to check the refugees attempts to cross the border the influx continued unabated through dense forest. Apart from this, another 6,000 were camping at the Mizoram -Chittagong Hill Tracts border according to official sources.

The continuous flow of the refugees followed fierce fighting between in Bangladesh Security forces and the

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27. "Chakma: Shattered Lives", India Today, New Delhi, March 1-15, 1987.



outlawed Shanti Bahini guerrillas in Chittagong Hill Tracts.<sup>28</sup>.

The Bangladesh foreign Minister, Mr. Humayun Rasheed Chowdhary commented in regarding to Chakma issue, he said that Bangladesh had done everything possible for the repatriation of Chakma taking refuge in Tripura. He said that armed miscreants were creating panic among the tribal people in Chittagong Hill Tracts. In regard the failure of Chakma repatriation, he told the parliament on Indo-Bangladesh relations that the process could not be carried out owing to the "intransigent" attitude of the Indian authorities to send them back, on the plea of their security and safety. He said a that peaceful atmosphere prevailed in the hill tracts and the government was capable of ensuring their full security.<sup>29</sup>

Contrary to the assertions made by Bangladesh, the Indian newspapers reported that the influx of Chakma refugees into Tripura continues unabated. The figure increases to nearly 50,000 persons in April 1987, creating a

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28. "Chakmas issue hits Indo-Bangla ties" The Times of India, New Delhi. January 31, 1987; "India lodges Protest with Dhaka", The Indian Express, New Delhi, February 13, 1987.

29. Joynal Abedan, "Bangla Minister: Ties with India growing", The Hindustan Times, New Delhi, March 27, 1987.

tremendous problem of management for the state government. The newspaper reported that, the chief Minister of Tripura Mr. Nripen Chakravarty was provoked to say that, "we cannot shoot them down on the border since no one leaves his hearth and home unless driven to do so"<sup>30</sup>. Bangladesh had agreed to take back the illegal immigrants but so far there have been no sincere effort.

On April 27, 1987, the newspaper reported that India and early repatriation of Chakmas from India at Foreign Secretaries level talks held in Dhaka. On the repatriation the two sides could not evolve any modality or fix any tentative date for it. The Bangladesh has agreed to verify the number of Chakmas entering into India<sup>31</sup>.

On the same date, the Bangladesh media reported the return of the tribal refugees continued, despite many obstruction created by the Chakmas armed miscreant and Indian security forces. The return of 47 refugees was reported through Baro Ramgarh, border post, and four persons died in the refugees camps without any treatment<sup>32</sup>.

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30. "The continuing influx", The Hindu, Madras, April 3, 1987.

31. "Accord on Chakmas' repatriation", The Times of India, New Delhi, April 27, 1987; "Accords reached Chakmas issue", The Times of India, New Delhi, August 17 1987.

32. "Chakma return from Tripura Continues", The Bangladesh Times, Dhaka, August 23, 1987.

On August 25, 1987 Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao visited Dhaka as the special envoy of the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and discussed the refugees issue with President General H.M. Ershad. General H.M. Ershad appears to taking a new fresh look at the Chakma refugees issue. He make a fresh effort to bring them back from India. General Ershad said that he had ordered that no new settlement of the people from the plains would be allowed in the hills. A major complaint of the Chakma insurgents is that Bangladeshi settlers from the plains were swamping into the hills of Chittagong. President General Ershad also expressed his eagerness to talk to the leaders of the Chakma insurgents about their problems and grievances.

The Bangladesh government has set up a governmental committee in August 1987 headed by the Planning Minister, retired Air-Vice Marshal, A.K. Khandakar as its chairman and senior official as members to solve the tribal problem in the hill district, and facilitate their return to Chittagong Hill Tracts. In fact Mr. A.K. Khandakar was earlier Bangladesh High Commissioner to India.

The same paper reported that "Some among the settlers steal or take away by force the crops grown by the tribals". This invited a retaliation by the tribals backed by the

armed Shanti Bahini men which in turn set settlers to retaliate further.<sup>33</sup>

The setting up of the committee indicates Dhaka's seriousness in bringing back the refugees from the camps in India. Dhaka is trying to avoid a Sri Lanka type-situation developing in Chittagong Hill Tracts by directly negotiating with the Chakma refugees in Tripura to return home without involving India in any way in the process. The committee would visit the Chakma refugees camps in South Tripura to talk to the refugee leaders and persuade them to return home.

During their visit to Tripura, the Bangladesh Team will not talk to any Indian apparently to emphasize that the Chakma issue is an internal problem of Bangladesh and there is no need for Indian intervention to solve it, the source added.

The Bangladesh newspapers September 18, 1987 reported that the above said committee will soon visit the hill tracts to make on the spot study of the problem. They will identify the problems in consultation with the tribal

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33. Zaglul. A Chowdhury, " Bangla panel on Chakmas issue", The Times of India, New Delhi, September 9, 1987; Ataus Samad, " Bangla panel to solve tribal problems", The Deccan Herald, Bangalore, September 23, 1987; and Manas Ghosh "Chakma issues Dhaka fears alloyed", n.12.

leaders standing in the way of a lasting peace in the area.<sup>34</sup>

It is true that Bangladesh has not been successful in repatriating the Chakma refugees who started an exodus to India on 1986. After the failure of the first attempt on January 15, 1985 various bilateral talks were held between India and Bangladesh for earlier repatriation of the Chakma refugees. And also Bangladesh government held talks with the Jana Samhati Samati. The Shanti Bahini (JSS/SB) in December 1987 in order to solve the tribal problems in Chittagong Hill Tracts. But without any success with its subsequent meeting.

More refugees in India were reported during this period. The controversial election of the District Councils in Chittagong Hill Tracts, in 1989 which was opposed by Shanti Bahini caused the refugees to swell their number to 70,000 in May 1989. Mr. Upendra Lal Chakma, former M.P. and member of the Liaison committee, fled to Tripura on the eve of the election in the Chittagong Hill Tracts in May 24, 1989. He said that those who returned to their homes were forced to hard labour in concentration camps<sup>35</sup>. Explaining

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34. Involvement of India ruled out ", n.16

35. Chhayakant Nayak, "Chakma refugees face uncertain future n.1.

his defection Mr.Chakma asserted that "staying back would mean working against one's own conscience and people".<sup>36</sup>

Despite the increased bilateral moves to find a solution to the problem of the refugees have consistently refused to be repatriated, barring political settlement of the Tribal problem in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, guaranteed security of tribal in their homes, including proper rehabilitation and land restoration and international supervision of the repatriation. The newspaper on March 28, 1990, a Six member delegation of refugees led by Mr.Upendra Lal Chakma left for Delhi to apprise the then Prime Minister, Mr.V.P.Singh on the conditions prevailing in the camps. The delegation also said to have press for the continued enrolment of fresh entrants from Chittagong Hill Tracts in the camps. The Tripura Government stop enrolment of refugees in the camps since December last year<sup>37</sup>.

The parliamentary democracy was installed in Bangladesh in 1991. The Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khalida Zia visited to India in May 1992, made a fresh look at the Chakma problem. Begum Zia's initiated the setting up of a

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36. Sekhar Datta, "Refugees Camps Spilling over as Chakmas influx continue" The Telegraph, Calcutta. June 22, 1989.

37. The News Time, Hyderabad, April 9, 1990.

Joint Task Force to facilitate the speedy return of the Chakma refugees to Chittagong Hill Tracts.

The Bangladesh government in July 1992 formed a nine - member committee headed by Mr.Oli Ahmed, Bangladesh Minister for Communication, to find a political solution of the Chakmas problems. Prime Minister Begum Zia of Bangladesh herself visited the Chittagong Hill Tracts twice and offered talks with the militants to bring about a settlement. The Shanti Bahini in turn responded by declaring a unilateral truce in August 1992. Also its political wing the Parbattya Chattogram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS) came out to participate in the talks.

The joint Indo-Bangladeshi ministerial level delegation visit to the refugees camps of Tripura. According to the official sources after the visit the Bangladesh government had announced a package of incentive and take several measure for rehabilitation of refugees after their return to the Chittagong Hill Tracts.<sup>38</sup>

The repatriation again could not take place as scheduled. The Chakma refugees observed a fast and remained indoors in South Tripura to avoid repatriation due to start on June 9, 1993. The earlier repatriation six years ago had

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38. "Indo - Bangla repatriation treaty thrown out-of-gear", The Observer, June 10, 1993.

failed due to stiff resistance by the Chakmas. They insist that Dhaka sign a repatriation agreement with the Parbattya Chattogram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS), the political wing of the Chakma insurgents on the basis of their 13 points Charter of Demand.<sup>39</sup> Their demands include, withdrawal of army and Muslim resettlers from the Chittagong Hill Tracts, doing away with the system of regrouping the tribals in cluster villages in the Hill Tracts, total Regional autonomy, political settlement of the Chittagong Hill Tracts along with the restoration of democracy in the area.

On September 13, 1993 a newspaper reported that the Chakmas are facing starvation condition because of the decision taken by the central government of India to totally stop financial assistance for the relief of nearly 60,000 Chakma refugees herded in six crowded camps of the Tripura.

The same paper quoting the Tripura - base Humanity Protection Forum, (HPF), a Chakma Organisation headed by Mr. Bhagya Chandra Chakma, India seem to be using food as a weapon to force the Chakmas, stranded in Tripura since 1986 to return. Although the Tribal are convinced that they would once again be subjected to repeated massacres and slaughter

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39. "The Chakma Choice", The Statesmen, Calcutta, June 12, 1993.



in which the Bangladesh Army as well as its civil population will be the partners.

The Chakmas are seen to be caught between Bangladesh and the Indian. They fear annihilation and on the other side they face the certainty of starvation. This Chakma's Organisation have appealed to the Central Government of India not to use food as a weapon to force the tribals indirectly to return to Bangladesh. It had also appealed to the government to ensure that minimum international standard for refugees relief were maintained. If necessary the help of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees could be sought<sup>40</sup>.

The President of the Chakma Refugees Welfare Association, Mr. Upendra Lal Chakma after his talks with the Bangladesh Parliamentary team and government officials in the border town of Ramgarh on January 16, 1994, had "agreed to Dhaka's proposal to start repatriation with an aim to create a situation conducive to the solution of the problem"<sup>41</sup>. The repatriation of about 53,420 refugees now

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40. Ashis K. Biwas,, "Chakmas facing starvation", The Hindustan Times, New Delhi, September, 1993; Chakmas being "Compelled to return" from The United News of India reported in, The Times of India, New Delhi, July, 25, 1994.

41. Sekhar Datta, "Pack on Chakmas triumph for Bangla", The Telegraph, Calcutta, January 25, 1994.

settle in six camps of Tripura will be in batches. The first batch consisting of 400 families will leave on February 15, 1994 to mark the beginning of an end of their life in exile.

The repatriation of the Bangladesh tribal refugees in Tripura began on February 15, 1994. Initially 77 families comprising of 282 refugees departed for their homeland in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Each refugee family was provided a sum of Rs.2500 by the Indian Government, record receive 10,000 Takas from Bangladesh Government on repatriation. The repatriation process began 10 days after the refugees leader and president of the Chakma Refugees Welfare Association, Mr. Upendra Lal Chakma informed the Tripura Governor that the Refugees had decided to return.

Commenting on the repatriation, the Tripura governor Shri. Romesh Bhandari has said that "the 300 Chakma refugee families repatriated to the Chittagong Hill Tracts Bangladesh were being properly rehabilitated"<sup>42</sup>

Mr. Upendra Lal Chakma who along with Indian Government officials, visited the Chittagong Hill Tracts between April 25 and 29, 1994 to monitor the rehabilitation of the first batch of 379 returnee families. He charged the Bangladesh government with going back on their commitment to implement

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42. "Chakmas properly rehabilitated", The Assam Tribune, Guwahati, April 24, 1994.

16 conditions agreement on the eve of the first round of repatriation. He said the first batch of 279 families had returned responding to an appeal from the Indian government and at the request of the Tripura governor, Shri. Romesh Bhandari, but the Bangladesh was not following the terms of the accord.

Mr. Upendra Lal Chakma said except the house - building grant of Rs. 10,000 per family, tin sheets and free ration, no other condition of the 16 - point package had been implemented. He said army and paramilitary forces were continue posted even at religious places in the Hill Tracts. Those who had to leave their homes in the wake of atrocities by the security forces were still awaiting rehabilitation, he added.

He further said that an organisation comprising Bengali settlers, called Pahari Gana Bengali Parishad was resisting return of refugees. He said the organisation enjoyed support from the Bangladesh security forces and was threatening the refugees with "dire consequences" if they returned home to reclaim land.<sup>43</sup>

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43. Sekhar Datta, "Chakma repatriation stalled again", The Telegraph, Calcutta. May 15, 1994; "Bangla has not implemented Chakma package", The Assam Tribune, Guwahati, June 27, 1994.

Altogether 1028 tribal refugee families comprising 5199 people, had already been repatriated in two phases in February and July 1994 following the Bangladesh government announcement of a 16 point economic package for them.

The third phase of repatriation cannot take place, following the refugee's unwillingness to return to their motherland in Chittagong Hill Tracts. They refused to submit to the state government the list of those to be repatriated in the following phase.

On February 1994, a five - member delegation led by Mr. Oli Ahmed visited Takumbari, Pancharmapara, Karbook and Kathalchhari' refugee camps in south Tripura. They appealed to the refugees to return assuring them of implementing their 19 - point Charter of demands. The refugees staged demonstration and refusing to be swayed away by the repeated appeals of the Bangladesh Government delegation.

#### **INTERNATIONALISATION AND THE QUESTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS:**

The repeated influx of Chakma refugees and the presence of thousands of refugees in five camps in Tripura has not only strained the Indo-Bangladeshi relations from time to time, but also receives international attention. Large scale atrocities are committed by Bangladeshi troops and resettlers on the Chakma villages in Chittagong Hill

Tracts, when the Chakma began to fight for retaining the autonomy and protected status, which they enjoyed right from the British period.

The Jana Samhati Samiti of the Chittagong Hill Tracts had issued a fervent appeal to all human right organisations as well as the United Nations after the atrocities in Chittagong Hill Tracts in 1986 to intervene and save the tribals of the region. Both Shanti Bahini and the Bangladesh Government accuse each other of human rights violations. In the past, Shanti Bahini's attacks on Bengali settlers have led to reprisal attacks by Bangalis backed by security forces on tribal settlements. Human rights groups continue to report reprisal killings and torture in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Amnesty International and local human rights group continue to monitor the Chittagong Hill Tracts situation closely and to encourage the government to safeguard the rights of tribal people.

The various reports on Chittagong Hill Tracts have clearly documented massive human rights violations in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Hill people have been murdered, crippled, raped, tortured, imprisoned and deprived of their homes and means of livelihood. They have been denied civil and political rights. Religious places were burned down and desecrated, and social and economic were denied.

The UN commission on Human Rights in its reports to the 44 Session of the United Nations General Assembly in March 1988 and in its other reports has expressed deep concern and sought an early solution to the problems being faced by the refugees.<sup>44</sup> The Amnesty International - International Human Rights organisation - has come out with document in support of the Chakmas allegations that they have been systematically raped, tortured and killed by Bangladesh forces in active collusion with Muslim settlers.

In October 1986, Amnesty International issued their major report on the situation in Chittagong Hill Tracts entitled "Bangladesh: Unlawful Killing and Torture in the Chittogong Hill Tracts", which is believed to have contained eye witness accounts of the torture and extra-judicial killing tribal people. The report stated that government forces had killed or tortured hundreds of unarmed villagers in the Chittagong Hill Tracts during the previous 10 years. There had been marked increase in such acts between February and May 1986. Some were said to be reprisal actions, occurring after the attacks by Shanti Bahini against military and settlers. Unarmed hill people had also been

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44. For details see United Nations Commission on Human Rights - Report on the 44 General Assembly Session, 1 Feb. 1988-11 March 1988 in ECOSOC official Records (New York, U.N.) Supplement No.2, 1988.

killed during army counter-insurgency operations. Hill people were tortured and compelled them to move to "protected villages".<sup>45</sup> Besides, the Amnesty International, its reports on the situation in Chittagong Hill Tracts were published regularly by the Anti-Slavery Society, the International working groups for Indigeneous Affairs, and Organising Committee Chittagong Hill Tracts Campaign.

The issue was annually raised in the United Nations working groups on Indigeneous populations. Allegations of gross and reliably attested patterns of violations of human rights went to the United Nations Sub-Commission on prevention by Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, and Bangladesh was questioned both at that level and at the level of UN Human Rights Commission. From 1985 the ILO (International Labour organisation) had annually and publicly criticised Bangladesh of inadequate reporting on conditions of the Chittagong Hill Tracts subsequently the ILO official visit Chittagong Hill Tracts in 1989.

In 1990 and 1991, a group of European, Canadian and Australian Non-governmental Organisations (NGO's) under the

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45. 'Life is not ours', The Report of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission, Bangladesh, The Report of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission, May 1 1991, pp.24-25 and also for detail See, "Torture of Chakma Tribals", The Asian Recorder, vol. 33, no.27, July 2-8, 1987, p.19531.

name " Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission" sent a mission to Bangladesh and India to investigate allegation on human rights violations in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The Commission's report, issued in May 1991, was the first attempt at a concise report on the human rights situation in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The report was critical to some aspects to the Bangladesh Government's past and present policies.

The report concluded that the Bangladesh Government has militarized all facets of life in the Chittagong Hill Tracts and is destroying its tribal society and culture as well as its indigenous economy, by concentrating the population, tribal and settler into cluster villages as part of the government counter insurgency strategy. The commission also concludes that government development and agricultural programmes are causing graved ecological damage to the area, destroying the habitat of the tribal peoples. While the commission notes that all parties to the conflict suffer violence and human rights abuse, it is most critical of the effects of continued settlement and government policies on the indigenous tribes of the tracts.<sup>46</sup>

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46. For detail please see, 'Life is not Ours', Land and Human rights in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh: The Report of the Chittogong Hill Tracts Commission, May 1, 1991.



The Chittagong Hill Tracts Jumma Refugees Welfare Association from the Tukumbari refugee camps in South Tripura has brought out a booklet (1993), where it is alleged that the Bangladesh Government has adopted a policy of eliminating the Chakmas and settling the Bengali Muslim in Chittagong Hill Tracts. The booklet says a series of as many as eleven "ethnocides" were perpetrated between 1972 and 1982, "leaving thousands of Chakmas dead, tortured, and raped. Villages and religious temples were plundered and burnt to ashes and thousands of acres of Jummland was grabbed by the Muslims".<sup>47</sup>

The refugees who have prepared the booklet against the backdrop of the United Nations observing 1993 as the Year of the Indigenous People said "we are eager to go back home as early as possible but we do not dare to do so in the abnormal situation in the Chittagong Hill Tracts".<sup>48</sup>

The Bangladesh government had made attempts to repatriate the Chakma refugees from Tripura. For this many bilateral meetings were held between India and Bangladesh. But the attempts to repatriate in 1987 was a failure. The

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47. Samudra Gupta Kashyap", Dhaka sceptre keep Chakmas in India", The Indian Express, New Delhi, June 12, 1993.

48. *ibid.*

Chakmas refugees (about 1029 families comprising 5199 people) were repatriated in two phases in February and July 1994. The third phase could not take place till date, due to the alleged non-implementation of the promises made by the Bangladesh Government.

The whole repatriation exercise is seen as hurried attempt on the part of the two governments' aimed at improving relations between India and Bangladesh. The World Chakma Organisation, the South Asian Human Rights Documentation Centre in New Delhi, and a Chakma Civil Rights unit, the Tripura Humanity Protection Forum have charged that Indian Government is forcefully evicting the refugees and have asked for the UNHCR's participation in the repatriation. On February 23, 1993, the newspapers reported about the Chakma refugees repatriation that, "With the changing approximation of Indo-Bangladeshi relationship, they became an expendable commodity in the current geo-political equations in the whole region".<sup>49</sup> The problem stands with its all severity and immensity. It needs a humanitarian approach and the parties involved should address themselves with the ground realities.

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49. Suhas Chakmas, "Force Repatriation", The Pioneer, New Delhi, February 23, 1993.

## CONCLUSION

Both migration and political conflicts are important in our study. The outflow of migrants crossing the border, irrespective of its adjacent neighbour or distance have effected the area of origin, destinations and the migrants themselves. The migrations are closely linked with the process of socio-economic, political, technological developments. In regards to the trans-border migration the undocumented or illegal and refugee movements are important. The trans-border in the forms of undocumented or illegal and refugee migrations have taking place in different parts of the world. This two form of trans-border migration has brought political conflicts, instability in the third world countries. It has opened the scope for political movements at national and local levels. It has a long term impact in the process of development and bilateral relation for the country of origin and destination. In our study an attempt have been made to analyse the concept of migration and political conflicts with reference to the problem of the Chakma tribal group. The Chakmas of Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), Bangladesh come to India as refugees in April-May 1986, and encamped to the North eastern Indian State of Tripura. The Chakma refugees in the five Camps of Tripura caused political socio-economic problem for Tripura State

and generated bilateral problems between India and Bangladesh.

The mass movement of people occurred on account of variety of factors and compelling situation. The migration of people are from the densely populated area to sparsely populated area, less developed countries to developed countries, politically insecure to more secure places. Further, natural catastrophe: like, flood, earthquake, wars and economic compulsion are important. The nature of migration are also conditioned by several factors like, disproportion, insufficient and inadequate economic development of a regions within a country; seasonal or recurring labour shortage in particular areas/region within and outside the country. The emergence of large number of the nation-state after the Second World War, cultural diversities and political conflicts within the nation-state caused the trans-border migration complex and controversial.

Migration in international sense is comparatively recent phenomena. Modern time migration are borne out of the growing process of industrialization technological advancement and changes in the social and economic sphere. In addition, war, political event, regional disparities in wages and availability of agricultural lands.

The migration are different types and forms. They are not uniform in nature. There is a growing diversity in regards to migration, especially causes, duration distance, direction, electricity. Migration may be classified as economic, social, long-term, short-term, long-distance and short-distance. It may also be seasonal, temporary, periodic and permanent spontaneous, forced, impelled, free and planned; of internal, external, inter-regional, inter-continental.

There are fundamental differences between voluntary and forced migration. In case of voluntary migration, the community or person has a choice to migrate, whereas in case of forced migration the community or person has no choice to migrate.

The international migration may be broadly categorized into regular and irregular migrations. The regular migrants are non-nationals who possess the authorization of the state in whose territory they are; that are required by law in respect of entry, stay or work. They are mostly the result of economic, political and social forces. The irregular migrants are difference from regular migration. They are also non-national enters in the state, but little out possessing the authorization in which territory they are and stay or work. They are the result of unplanned, political

events, natural disaster etc. Generally, the international migration has been divided into permanent migration, labour migration, undocumented or illegal migration and refugee migration.

The impact of migration are noticed more in the receiving country than the country of origin of immigrants. The migrations lead to the reallocation of the imbalances in human resources and physical resources. The movement of people transformed the demographic composition. Further, it is generally noticed that wherever there is a continuous inflows of migrants, the immigrants over a period of time out number the local population. The immigrants begin to wield and control economic and political power. This brings serious ethnic, socio-economic and political problems.

The Chakma exodus into Tripura has been caused by a series of conflicts between the tribal inhabitants of Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) and the Bangladesh Government. These conflicts were the result of the demographic and settlement policy adopted by the Bangladesh Government in the Chittagong Hill Tracts region. By 1974 when the population growth in the plains of Bangladesh increased rapidly and went beyond control, the Bangladesh Government offered to the plains-men settlement facilities in the Chittagong Hill Tracts region. The settlement policies

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The Chakma exodus into Tripura has been caused by a series of conflicts between the tribal inhabitants of Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) and the Bangladesh Government. These conflicts were the result of the demographic and settlement policy adopted by the Bangladesh Government in the Chittagong Hill Tracts region. By 1974 when the population growth in the plains of Bangladesh increased rapidly and went beyond control, the Bangladesh Government offered to the plains-men settlement facilities in the Chittagong Hill Tracts region. The settlement policies

adopted by the erstwhile East Pakistan and the successive government of Bangladesh has generated a great deal of tension in the Chittagong Hill Tracts region. As a result of these settlement policies, by the 1980s thousands and lakhs of Bengali speaking Muslims either by force or with the connivance and assistance of the Government managed to settle in the in the Chittagong Hill Tracts region. This process of settlement has generated tension and conflict between the tribals of the Chittagong Hill Tracts the Muslim settlers over time

The Chittagong Hill Tracts, after the partition of Indian sub-continent in 1947, lost the status of the 'Excluded Area' which they enjoyed during British rule. The commissioning of Kaptai hydro-electric project during the Pakistan period further bring problem for the tribal people. The tribals of Chittagong Hill Tracts were suppressed and torture by the Bengali speaking Muslim settlers backed by the Bangladesh army. To safeguard and protect the interests of the tribals, the Jana Samhati Samiti and the Shanti Bahini, an armed wing of this organisation were formed on 16 May 1972 and 7 January 1973 respectively. Under the banner of this organisation, the Chakmas demand autonomy for the Chittagong Hill Tracts but the Bangladesh authority has been against their demand. The tribal demand for autonomy and protests against the settlement of Bengali-settlers in the



Hill Tracts were responded by the Bangladesh Government with oppressive and repressive policies. To counter the insurgency of Shanti Bahini, the Bangladesh authorities followed a policy of armed attrition leading to the massacre of thousands of innocent tribal in the Chittagong Hill Tract. Besides, these development official attitudes were oppressive. There was shortage of food supply. The tribal were also began to subjected to socio-religious persecution.

In addition, the declaration of 'Islam' as the state religion on 7 June 1988 has generated a new dimension of religious tension in the Bangladesh society. Thus, the Bangladesh Government policy of resettlement of Bengali-Muslim, oppressive policy on the tribal demands and protests, religious persecution and socio-economic policies on the Chittagong Hill Tracts and above all, insecurity of life created by atrocities of Bangladesh army and Muslim settlers makes life in Chittagong Hill Tracts difficult. This has compelled the Chakmas and other tribals of Chittagong Hill Tracts, to cross the border and take refuge in the Indian State of Tripura.

The continued presence of the Chakmas tribal refugees in Tripura and unresolved status of the Chakmas in Arunachal Pradesh has its impact on the state particularly, and India as a whole. The problem of the Chakmas refugees in Tripura

has assumed an international dimension. The Chakmas in Arunachal Pradesh are still to get their Indian citizenship. This caused serious political, economic and social problems in Arunachal Pradesh. The Government of Arunachal Pradesh has requested the Central Government for sending back the Chakmas from Arunachal Pradesh. The local protest and demand for the Chakmas deportation assumed political tension in the Chakma areas of Arunachal Pradesh. After the exodus of Chakmas from Bangladesh into India, the Indo-Bangladesh relations have deteriorated leading to misunderstanding on both sides.

Towards the settlements and solution of the Chakmas problem in the Chittagong Hill there have been several round of talks between the Jana Samhati Samiti and the Bangladesh Government. The talks have failed to yield any substantial result. As a result of this talks, the Bangladesh Government in February 1989 granted limited autonomy to the tribal dominated three districts of Khagrachhari, Bandarban and Rangamati. But, the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti has not accepted this autonomy.

Many bilateral arrangement were made between India and Bangladesh Government for the repatriation of the Chakma refugees from Tripura. The repatriation of the Chakma a refugees been to carried out from 15 January 1987. The

repatriation could not be carried out as refugee leaders alleged that killing, torture, large-eviction of Chakmas etc., by the Bangladesh forces and illegal occupation of land by the Muslim settlers in the Hill Tracts.

In 1991, Parliamentary democracy was installed in Bangladesh. A fresh look at the Chakmas was made by the Prime Minister Begum Khalida Zia. Her visit to India in May 1992, initiated the setting up of a Joint Task Force to facilitate the speedy return of the Chakma refugees to Chittagong Hill Tracts.

According to the available sources, the first and second repatriation of Chakma refugees were conducted from 15 February 1994. In the first phase, 77 families comprising of 282 refugees return to Chittagong Hill Tracts. After the second phase of repatriation, where altogether 1028 tribal refugees families comprising 5199 people had repatriated. The third phase of repatriation could not take place due to the alleged non-implementation of the 16 points of their demands.

The problem in the Chittagong Hill Tracts manifested a serious human rights violations. These attract the attention of various Countries and Human Right Organisations. The Amnesty International and other Human Right Organisation

came out with documents in support of the Chakma allegation that they have been systematically tortured and killed by Bangladesh Forces in active collusion with the Bangladesh Muslim settlers.

In the light of the above discussion and issues the following observations are made:

The real problem of social, economic and political in the Chittagong Hill Tracts related to the presence of the Bengali settlers in this region. The programmes for the return of the Bengali settlers would be an ideal solution to the problem. The governments resettlement programmes into the Chittagong Hill Tracts had been a serious mistake.

Hill people want the Bengali settlers to leave the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The Jana Samhati Samiti and the Shanti Bahini want the return of the Bengali settlers. And it was the first demand of the 'Dialogue Committee' in their meeting with the representative of the government and the military in December 1987.

The new Bengali settlers constituted now almost half of the Hill Tracts population. The settlers have taken over lands of the Hill people. They could gain political control of the region. The most basic objection the Jana Samahiti Samiti and the Shanti Bahini have to the District Council

Laws is the fact that the new law officially and legally legitimized the presence of the new-settlers in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The law firstly give the settlers fixed representation on the District Councils. This fixed representation suggests that the settlers are regarded as a permanent component of the population of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, as permanent as the hill people themselves. Secondly, the laws are designed to completely end the legal role of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation of 1900, which contained restriction on the entry and settlement of the non-hill people. The Jana Samhati Samiti and the Shanti Bahini called for the enforcement of the 1900 regulation and their protection in the constitution.

In looking the political, socio-economic reality in the Chittagong Hill Tracts it is suggested that :-

1. A new-settlers from the plain should not be allowed to settled or entered in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.
2. A neutral expert body capable of examining the legality of titles to lands in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The return of the refugees from India related to the problem of land titles. The refugees are at present convinced that their lands have been taken over by settlers. Unless, it is resolved immediately the refugees will not voluntarily return to their home area.

3. Recognizing the political and symbolic importance of the Chittagong Hill Tracts 1900, to the Tribal people, it should not be repealed. The Bangladesh law should recognize in an autonomous Chittagong Hill Tracts government to implement and amend the provision of the 1900 regulation, dealing with land rights and settlement.
4. For any permanent solution of the Chittagong Hill Tracts region, the interest of the resettlers should not be neglected.
5. The issue of autonomy is fundamental to the problem of Chittagong Hill Tract. The achievement of autonomy, where the people come to believe that they have real control over their future is very important. When the issues of land rights and autonomy are resolved only then will persuade the refugees to return from Tripura and and the justification for the Shanti Bahini insurgency.

The Jana Samhati Samiti and the Shanti Bahini of the Chittagong Hill Tracts have been long demanding for autonomy with separate legislature for the Hill Tracts. The autonomy will safeguard and protect their cultural identity and ethnicity. The discussion over the Chittagong Hill Tracts is no longer whether there

should be autonomy or not, but what should be the institutions exercising autonomous powers, what should be the extent of those powers, and what legal basis should exist for the system.

The Bangladesh Government has accepted that there should be special arrangement, involving limited autonomy when it decided to established the three new District Councils in the Hill Tracts. The District Councils were established by legislation. They are not protected by the constitution.

6. In order that the process of resolving the question of autonomy, land rights and permanent solution for Chittagong Hill Tracts, both the Jana Samhati Samiti and the Bangladesh Government should come to the negotiating table. These should be done with the spirit of mutual understanding and accept each others points of views.

The Chakma problem is a regional issue. It should be resolved by bilateral level, i.e. India and Bangladesh. It should not be internationalized, as it will invites more complexities. The early just solution of the Chakma problem is both in the interest of India and Bangladesh and the Chakmas of the Chittagong Hill Tracts in particular.

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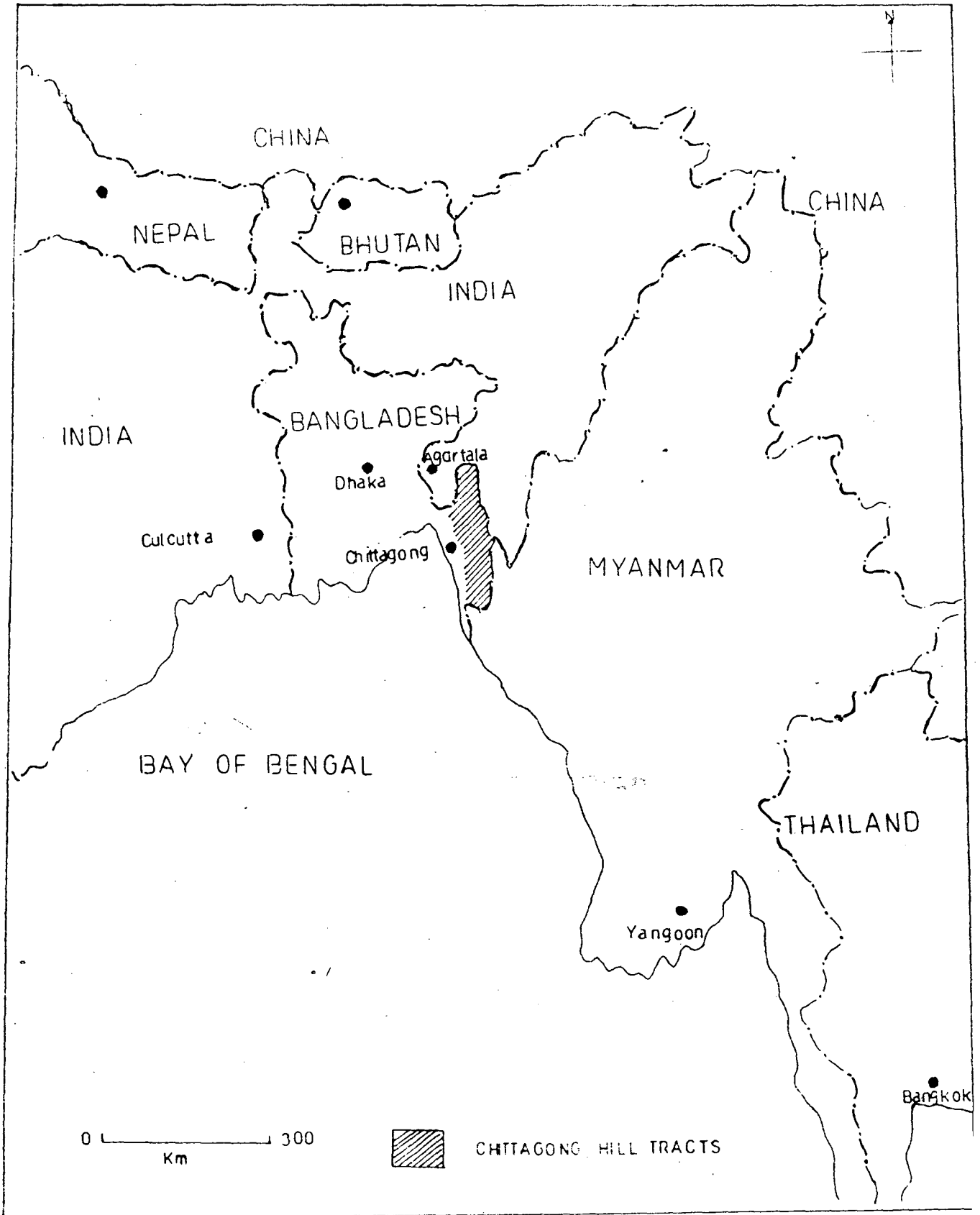
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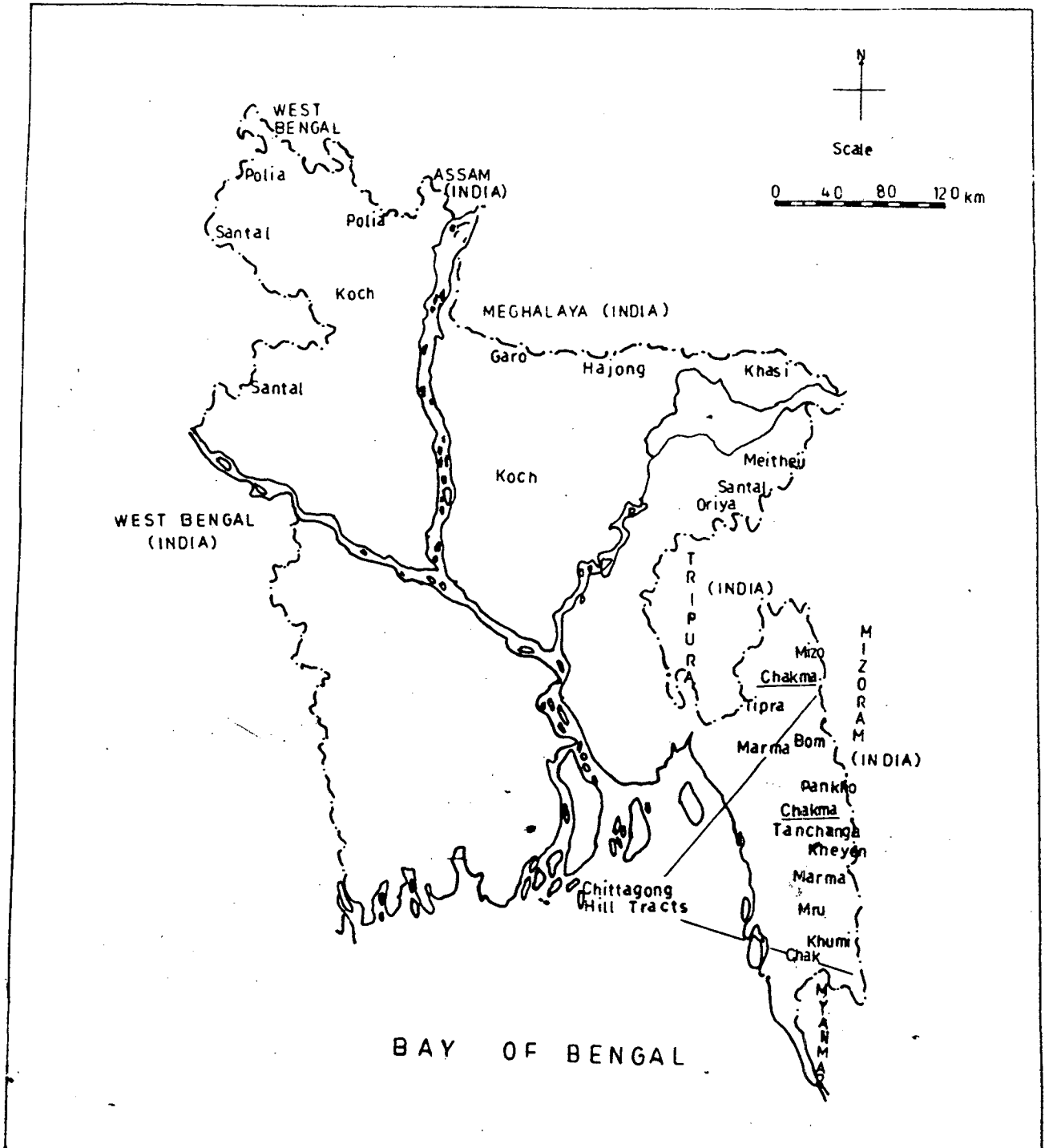


LOCATION OF THE CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS (BANGLADESH)



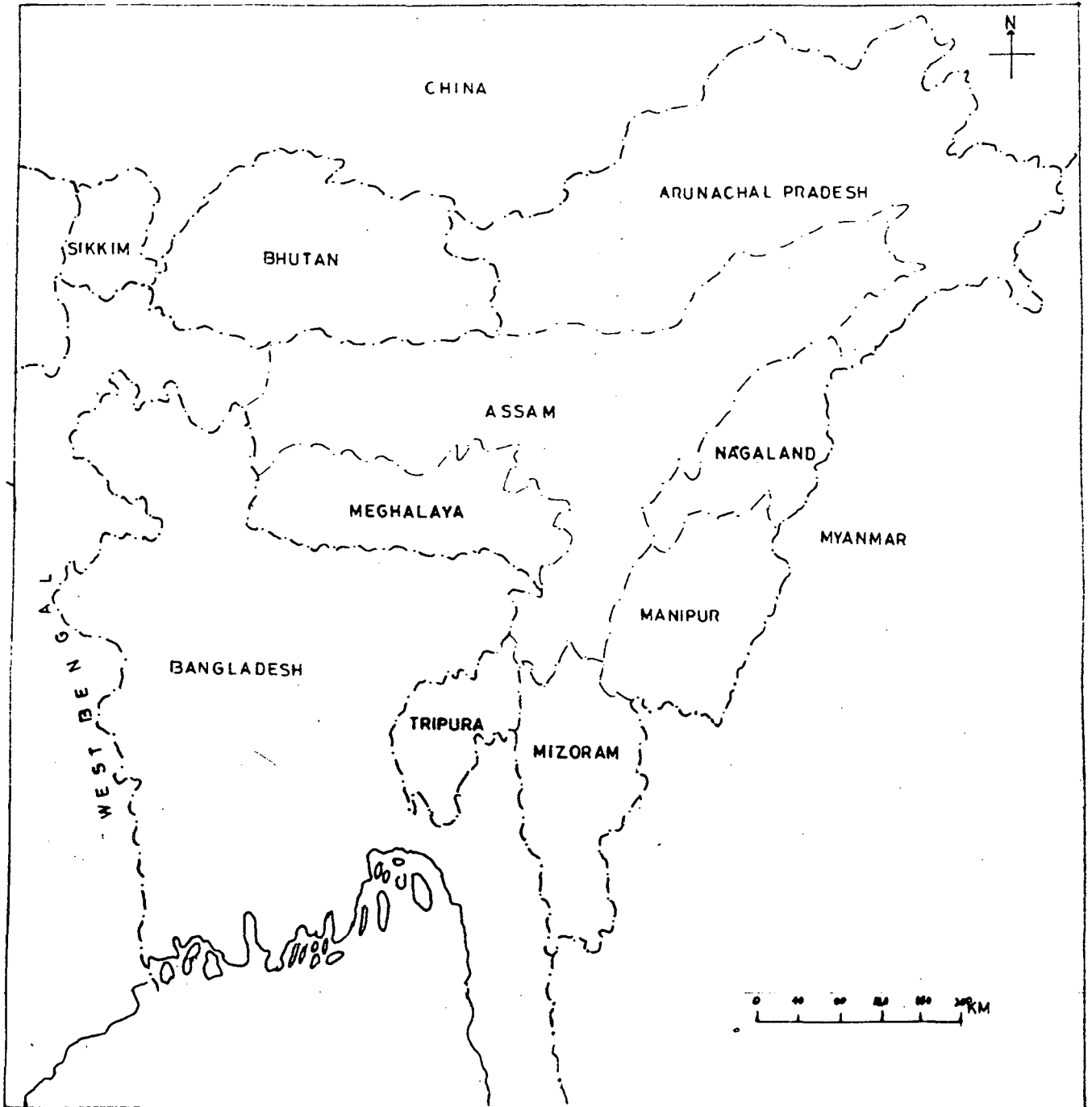
Map. 1

BANGLADESH : MINOR ETHNIC TRIBAL GROUPS



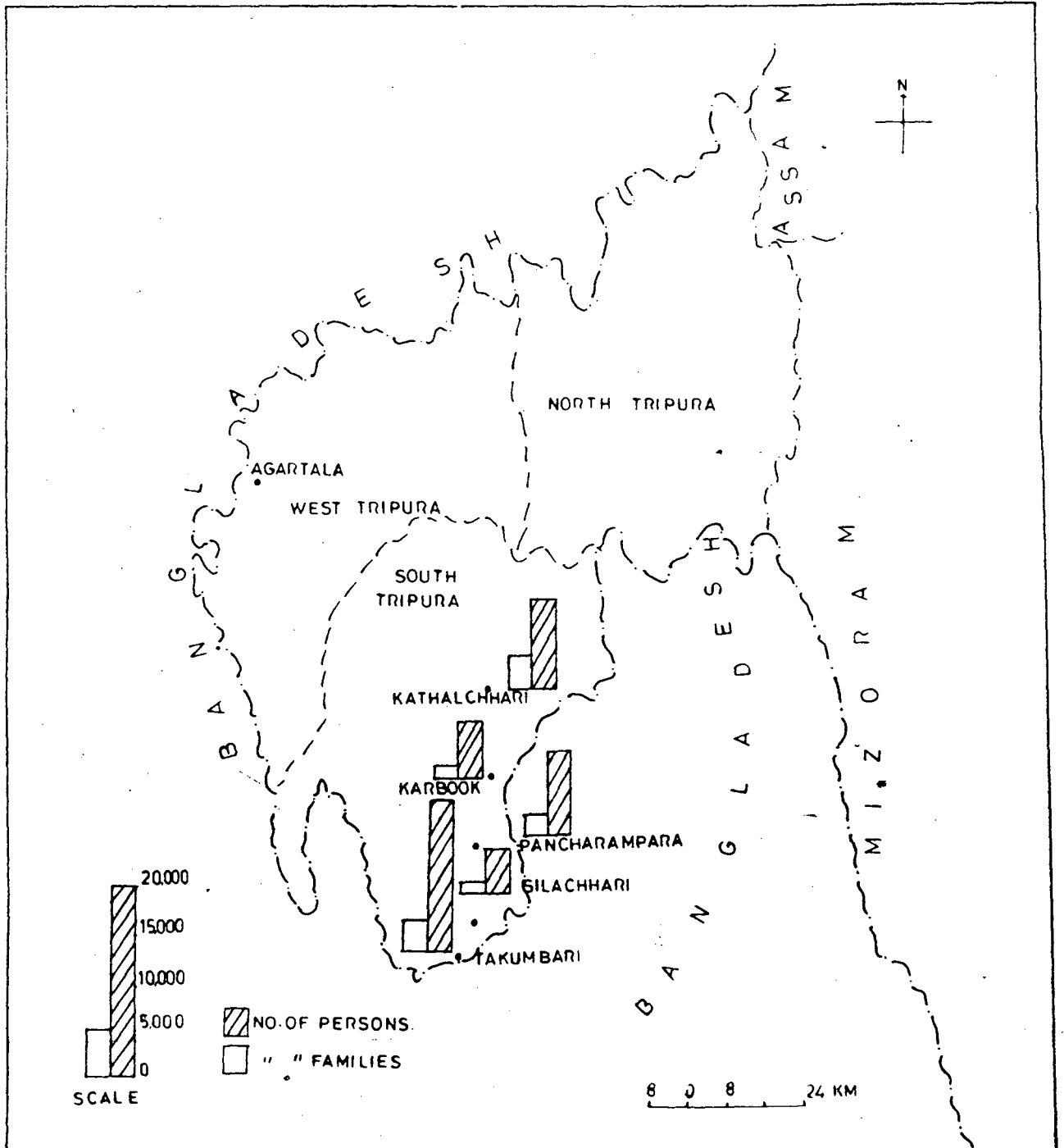
(Source : adapted from Haroun Er Rashid : "Geography of Bangladesh". Westview Press - Boulder Colorado 1977)

NORTH EASTERN INDIA BHUTAN AND BANGLADESH



Map. 3

# POPULATION AND FAMILIES IN REFUGEE CAMPS OF TRIPURA, 1988



Map. 4