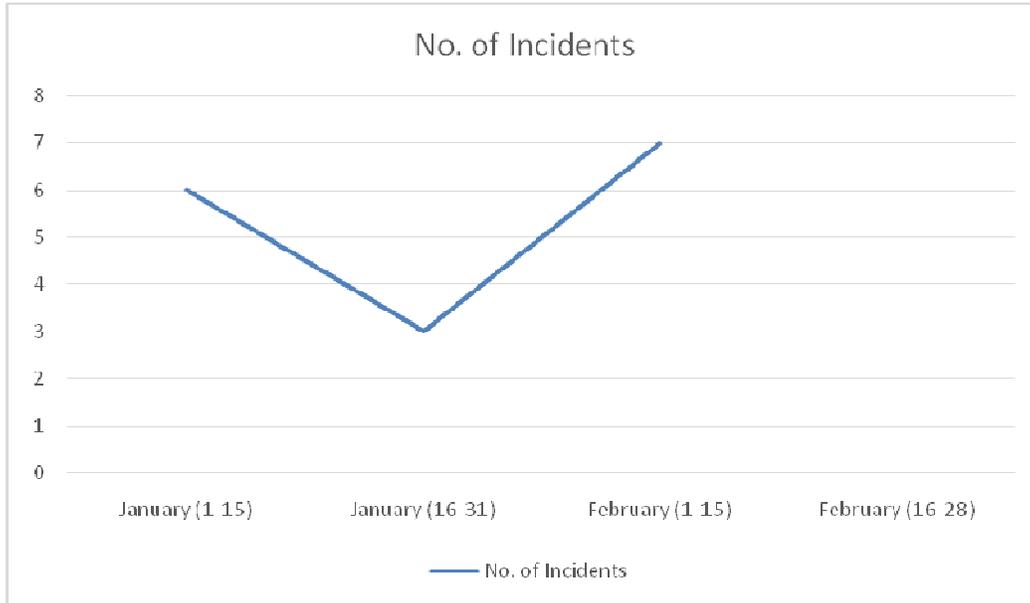


Trend of the incidents of human rights violations against indigenous peoples in Bangladesh



Situation of Indigenous Women and Girls

An Marma girl raped by Bengali youth at Karnaphuli Tea Garden in Chittagong

On 5 February 2017 at around 3.30 pm an indigenous Marma girl (17) was raped by a Bengali youth when she went to work at Karnaphuli Tea garden which is located bordering area of Bormachari union under Laxmichari upazila of Khagrachari district. It is known that the survivor from Boropara village of 3 no. Bormachari union under Laxmichari upazila of Khagrachari.

It is learnt that the victim went to work at Kanchanpur division of Karnaphuli tea garden for daily wages as usual. On the day of incident at noon around 3.30 pm during her work the marma girl was forcefully raped by Md. Mahiuddin (20) son of Amir Hossain when she went to collect drinking water from nearby well. It is learnt that the rapist Md. Mahiuddin is resident of Sarkari deba village of Kanchanpur union under Fatikchhari upazila in Chittagong. After the incident she informed rest of the workers about the incident. But in the meantime the rapist Mahiuddin managed to escape. No case has been filed till the reporting.

Indigenous Teenage Marma Student Abducted By Three Bengali Youth in Lama

On 9 February 2017, an adolescent indigenous student (15) of Marma community from Lama Upazila of Bandarban district has been kidnapped by three Bengali youth of Maijpara village under Bomu Bilchhari union of Chakaria upazila in Cox's Bazar. The victim (15) is daughter of Thuichaching Marma of Choto Bomu mouza under 4 No. ward of Lama Union in Bandarban district.

The victim's father alleged that on Thursday night of the incident intimidating them with sharp weapon and sticks Sohel son of Jahangir along with two other youth kidnapped his daughter. At the time, they took savings 92 thousand taka with them. Besides, his daughter had a gold chain weighing eight carat.

Chairman of Lama Sadar union said that he heard about the matter and he advised victim's father to

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seek assistance with Lama police station. Officer in charge of Lama police station Md. Anwar Hossain informed that we have received complaint and legal procedure has started.

An indigenous student attempted rape in Ukhiya, Cox's Bazar

An indigenous student (15) attempted to rape by some miscreants in Ukhiya of Cox's Bazar district on 13 February 2017. Failing attempt to rape miscreants attacked the victim and made her rough bloody wound. Her sister also injured when she came to save her. The victims are the daughter of Rakhai Mong Chakma of Telkhola village under Ukhiya upazila in the district.

It is learn that the incident took place at Telkhola village at around 9 am in the morning. The victim 10th grade student of Thaingkhali High School alleged that on her way to home from school after her tuition when she reached at forested area 4-5 miscreants lurking at that spot including Ibrahim, Abdur Rahim and Rafiq tried to rape her. In the meantime, hearing victim's scream her elder sister came forward to save her. But miscreants indiscriminately beaten two sisters and bloody injured them. Later they were admitted to the hospital. Victim's father Rakhai Mong Chakma filed an Ejahar with Ukhiya police station on same day. Abul Khair officer in charge of Ukhiya police station said order has been given to take legal action after the investigation of the incident.

Situation of Civil & Political Rights

Four Jummas arrested and 6 persons tortured in Rowangchari

Following the abduction of a Karbari from Rowangchari upazila in Bandarban district, intimidation and harassment is continuing upon innocent Jumma villagers. Four indigenous villagers in Rowangchari have been arrested and 10 villagers have been physically tortured by the security forces.

On 4 February 2017 at around 2.30 am law enforcers picked up two indigenous villagers from Noapatong union of Rowangchhari upazila in Bandarban district. The arrested villagers were identified as Kanu Prue Marma, member of 4 no. ward of Noapatang union and Thoaiching U Marma, journalist of daily Muktabani.

On 7 February 2017 another two villagers namely Thowai Shwe Prue Marm (70), a karbari of Dochari village and Mongguli Marma (70), a villager of Baghmara Bhiton Para were arrested by the police of Rowangchari police station.

On 6 February 2017 at around 9.30 pm the following villagers were brutally called to be present at the security camp in Rowangchari where at least six persons were tortured. The victims were identified as Singhthowai Marma (30); Mongnu Marma (36); Ukhyamong Marma (35); Kyaching Marma (27); Mongcinu Marma (40); Uchutui Marma (38); Kechomong Marma (44); Thuichaching Marma (40); Thowaichoprue Marma (70) and Ms. Thowaichoprue Marma (38).

It is mentionable that Mongshoi Thui Karbari was abducted from his house by some miscreants on 3 February 2017 night at 9 pm. It is not clear who abducted him. It is to be mentioned that Mong Shwe Thui Karbari who had been kidnapped could set himself free by assaulting the kidnappers in the morning of 5 February 2017 and took shelter at Betchara army camp.

Indigenous Khasi and Garo people panicked in Kulaura

Indigenous Peoples of nearby Punjis (villages) in Kulaura upazila of Moulvibazar district panicked and have been passing days with fear after the murder of a farmer of a neighboring village. The incident took place on 6 February 2017 night at Meghatila Punji under Karmadha union of the upazila. The deceased was Rimon Mia (32) son of Elaich Mia of Gutguti village under Kulaura Sadar union and the following day the body was recovered. Deceased family alleged that Khasi and Garo people are involved in this murder. So that indigenous are peoples are panicked for illegal arrest. After the incident indigenous students are not going to school out of fear.

Rimon's father filed a case with Kulaura Police Station on 7 February 2017 accusing unnamed people in the connection. Following the incident indigenous men leave their villages to avoid illegal arbitrary arrest. In the FIR it is mentioned that Khasi and Garo people killed Rimon over land dispute.

But it is learn that on 27 September 2017 a group of miscreants cut a big tree at Mokam Punji under Karmadha union. At that time punji people obstruct against it, but miscreants threaten them and took away the tree. On 2 October 2016, some miscreants destroyed three thousand betel vine at Amuli Punji. Mantri of the Punji Pratush Asakra filed a case mentioning deceased Riman, Polash, Babul and others 10/15 unknown people with Kulaura police station.

Indigenous people alleged that following the incident, local non-indigenous peoples obstructed buyers who purchase betel leaf from the Punji. Khaisa Punjis are well known for betel leaf plantation. Moreover Betel leaf is their main source of income and if betel leaf trade stop their livelihood would be in danger. So indigenous peoples are passing days amid uncertainty.

Situation of the Rights of Land and Natural Resources

Illegal land grabbing by outsiders could disrupt the progress/activity of CHT Land Dispute Resolution Commission

Indigenous peoples of Nunchari Tanchangya para of 273 no. Pagli mouza under bordering Sonaichari and Ghumdhum union of Naikhongchhari upazila in Bandarban alleged that influential outside land grabber Nurul Kabir Chowdhury son of Fakir Ahmed of Vallukia under Ukhiya upazila of Cox's Bazar district illegally occupied 25.00 acre of mouza land in that area. Visiting on the spot is has found that 10-12 workers are cutting the forest of that land.

Some local people are involved with this illegal occupation of land. They are Mongchain Tong, Kyachau Tong and Niomong Prakash Monghlwa Tong, all are son of Ukhyaching Tong headman of 273 no. Pagli mouza of Ukhyaching Headman Para. Besides, Nur Alam son of Fazal Karim of Baidhachari under Sonaichari union; Pethan Tong son of Aihla Tong, Nil Puri Tong son of late Rithoyain Tong, Mong Cho Tong son of Aungchaching Tong and Mongbathoyai Tong son of Chigkaang Tong from Nunchari Tanchangya Para, 273 no. Pagli mouza of Naikhongchhari, Bandarban.

Villagers also said that if illegal land occupying process is continues, indigenous peoples of surrounding villages including Nunchari Tanchagya para inhabitants will evict from their ancestral land and their lives and livelihoods will be endangered.

Status of Education, Youth and Children

Shortage of teacher in Khagrachari Govt. Women College: Education activities disrupted

Teacher crisis hampered education activities throughout the Chittagong Hill Tracts. In an investigation it is learn that most of the education institutions does not have adequate teacher to continue the education activities in CHT. Many teachers post has been vacant more than decades.

The scene can be found in Khagrachari Government Women's College. In spite of having 19 teachers in post in the college, only 14 teachers are currently employed. Education activities are being hampered due to lack of adequate teachers on different subjects. Graduation program cannot be introduced till now due to lack of adequate teachers.

The college was established in 1999 which is the only woman college in the district and the college

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was nationalized in 2009. At present, there are more than thousand students. Students from nine upazilas in Khagrachari enrolled in the college due to have residential facilities.

The college has 19 teaching posts. But 14 people are employed currently. For a long time there is no teacher on chemistry, information and communication technology, management, statistics and philosophy. As a result, education is severely hampered.

However, according to the recommendations of Enam Commission, every college were supposed to have two teacher on each subject including principal and vice principal. College result are getting worse in the last few years due to lack of adequate teachers. Teaching has been stopped when a teacher go to training or vacation.

From last few years the result performance of this college has been declining. In 2014 HSC passing rate was 64 percent, But in 2015 it decline to 62 percent and in 2016 it was only 44 percent.

Many Students come from remote areas to study in the college. Students can study with low cost college hostel. They demanded to introduce graduate program for higher studies by appointing new teachers.

Md. Shah Alamgir principal of the college said, a written application for the appointment of teachers have been sent to secondary and higher education office. But to no action taken yet. Despite of only Government Women College, this institution is extremely neglected. There is no college auditorium. Due to not having accommodation facilities for teacher many teachers do not stay here long and they also transferred if they come.

Indigenous peoples demanded books in Santal Language

On 11 February 2017, Indigenous people of Dinajpur district formed a human chain demanding books in Santal language using Roman alphabet for primary level Santal students. Northern Indigenous Students Union, Sabitha Sangbad, Santal Students Union, BSELC Sahitya Bibhag, Adivasi Mukti Morcha, Santal Lekhak Forum and Santal Samannaya Parishad organised the rally in front of Dinajpur Press Club.

Santal people holding books written in their language joined the human chain and urged the government to publish book for Santal children in their own language using Roman alphabet. Speakers said if an initiative is not taken, the indigenous children would forget their own language and would hardly get chance to study due to the absence of books.

Environment and Climate Change

Illegal stone extraction threatens biodiversity and livelihoods of indigenous peoples in Bandarban

The illegal extraction of stones and boulders from streams, channels, Jhiri, and springs has been going on unabated in across the Chittagong Hill Tracts especially in Bandarban district. Stones are being extracted illegally in all seven upazila's including district town and trafficked freely across the country. On the name of using development purpose transforming stones and boulders into concrete with machine has been trafficking across the country through the truck. Due to the continuing stone collection the water sources of the area is under threat and many streams, jhiri has been drying up. A local syndicate redeemed ruling party name have been illegally trafficked stones. Paitong, Fhansiakhali, Aziznagar and Kumari area in Lama Upazila, Chaikhong of Alikadam, Kachhaptali of Rowangchhari and many more places of the district are under threat due to the unabated illegal stone extraction.

It is learnt that Stones are amassed not only from the streams and springs, but also from the hills using explosives by some unscrupulous person. As a result environment and biodiversity of the region become under threat of degradation. As well as the region becomes uninhabitable. Because various streams and springs that run along the hilly regions have been the traditional sources of water for the residents. Rolling stones of these streams usually play a crucial role in purifying the water and thus making it suitable for everyday use. Stones also hold water for natural water bodies. But extraction of stone resulting crisis of water. Excessive extraction of stones from natural water bodies has been drying up the water sources.

Locals told, Jhum field and rural roads are also being damaged due to unplanned extraction of stone from the hilly land and beside hilly springs. As a result, cultivable land is being reduced day by day. Rivers and canals are also silted because of this phenomenon. This has already resulted in excessive soil erosion and scarcity of water affecting livelihoods of people in Bandarban.

Locals also said that deceiving administration influentials extracting stones in remote areas of the district. Traffickers and workers has been collecting stones for last few years massively. In some cases with the help of administration, businessman contractor extracting stones from streams, rhyme and hills.

On 12 February 2017 Shimul Jalai Tripura a resident of Fashiakhali union under Lama Upazila in Bandarban filed a public interest litigation seeking temporary ban of stone extraction from natural water bodies in the district. The district court issued show cause notice to 12 persons including 4 secretary. Senior Assistant District and Sessions Judge in Bandarban district Manisha Mahajan ordered the show cause notice to know the step of temporary ban of stone extraction and why not stop it by defendants within 15 days of the receipt of the noticed issued

The defendants were stone businessman Pradeep Das, Ali Hossain, Secretary of Ministry of Public Administration, Secretary of Ministry of Mineral Resources, Secretary of Ministry of Land Secretary of the Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs, Chittagong Divisional Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner Dilip Kumar Banik, Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue) Harun-ur-Rashid, (Upazila Nirbahi Officer) UNO of Lama Khin Oyananu, Lama Police Station Officer in charge (OC) and of land officer of Lama Upazila.

Follow Up

High Court orders withdrawal of Gaibandha SP and police personnel involved in Snatal village Arson in Gaibandha

On 7 February 2017, The High Court ordered concerned authorities to withdraw Gaibandha's Superintendent of Police (SP) Md Ashraf Islam and all other police man involved in arson of the houses of indigenous Santal and Bengali peoples during an eviction drive on 6 November 2016 in Sahebganj-Bagda Farm area under Gobindagonj upazila of Gaibandha district.

An High Court bench of Justice Obaidul Hasan and Justice Krishna Debnath passed the order after the hearing of a judicial prove report on the incident. The judicial prove found some policemen were involved in the incident.

The court ordered the withdrawal of all police personnel including the SP who were on duty at that spot on November 6, 2016, an order which the home secretary, IGP and Rangpur Range police DIG will have to implement. The authorities concerned also have been asked to submit report with the High Court by four weeks about what action has been taken against the police members those involved with the incident.

On Dec 14, 2016 the same High Court bench ordered the judicial inquiry after a video of police

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setting fire to Santal houses gone viral on the social media. The probe team led by Gaibandha Chief Judicial Magistrate Shahidullah visited the spot at Gobindaganj Upazila on Dec 27 and recorded witnesses' testimonies. On 30 January 2017 the judicial probe body submitted the probe report to the High Court.

In the report, the probe body said it was seen after analysing the video footage of Al Jazeera TV that some policemen and two civilians actively took part in torching the houses of Santal people. There were some other policemen standing in a short distance playing the role of spectators and they did not try to douse the fire, the report said. Those who were setting fire could not be identified as they were wearing helmets and the video was shot from a distance. The probe body sought names of police personnel on duty that day from the Gaibandha SP, but he could not provide it.

Santal Woman killed after rape in Dinajpur

On 25th January 2017, at around 11.10 pm, police recovered a dead body of 33 year old indigenous santal woman named Sefali Hembrom daughter of late Sukra Hembrom of village Bulakipur of Raghunathpur Union under Ghoraghat Upazila of Dinajpur district. She was brutally killed after rape by miscreants.

It was learnt that Sefali Hembrom lives almost five years with her parents after divorce. Family sources said, Sefali had gone to sleep in her room after taking dinner on Wednesday night. Later, a gang stormed the room silently and took her out from the house by deceit, raped the woman and strangled her, the family suspected. In the morning at around 11.10 am, Suniram Baskey (20) a villager found the dead body of the victim, scarf knotted in her throat, 10 yards distance from his house in a Banana Garden. Being informed, police rushed to the spot, recovered the body and send it to Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

Noresh Hembrom (28) brother of deceased Sefali Hembrom, filed a case number 14/14 under section 302/34 of Bangladesh Penal Code 1860, date 25/01/2017 with the Ghoraghat Police Station. The victim's brother suspected it to a pre-planned killing of her sister. However, the reason behind the killing could not be ascertained instantly. Police could not arrest anyone in this connection. SI Raseduzzaman, investigation officer of this case alleged, they have wait for the autopsy report to catch the real killer.

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