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## **Cht Peace Accord and Indigenous Human Rights Violence.**

**Satrong Chakma**

*Eidotor, Bangladesh*

### **Abstract**

The Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) region in the southeast corner of Bangladesh is home to 13 indigenous communities, each with distinct socio-cultural identities and a long history of peaceful coexistence. However, this harmony has been repeatedly disrupted throughout history, especially during British colonial rule, the East Pakistan period, and subsequent Bangladesh governance. The construction of the Kaptai Dam in 1960 marked a significant turning point, as it forcibly displaced many indigenous people from their ancestral lands. The dam submerged approximately 1,036 square kilometers of agricultural land, devastating local livelihoods and forcing many indigenous families to seek refuge in neighboring Indian states such as Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, and Tripura.

Following Bangladesh's independence in 1971, the government undertook political measures that further marginalized indigenous populations. Approximately 500,000 Bengali settlers were relocated to the CHT region, effectively doubling the local population and altering the demographic balance. Today, Bengalis constitute about 53% of the CHT population, a dramatic rise from just 3% in 1947 and 7% before independence. This demographic shift has exacerbated tensions, leading to increased incidents of violence against indigenous communities, including arson attacks, sexual violence against indigenous women, and widespread land grabbing. The ongoing seizure of indigenous lands remains one of the most pressing issues facing these communities.

In response to these challenges, indigenous groups organized and formed the Parbattya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS), an armed group committed to defending indigenous rights. After nearly two decades of conflict with the Bangladesh military, the government, under the Awami League, signed the CHT Peace Accord on December 2, 1997. The accord promised to guarantee indigenous rights, including land ownership and regional development, and called for the removal of temporary military camps. Despite these commitments, implementation has been slow and incomplete, with reports of continued harassment and military presence in the region.

Now, 27 years after the accord, there is an urgent need for the government to fully honor its promises. Protecting indigenous rights and ensuring the comprehensive implementation of the CHT Peace Accord

are critical steps toward lasting peace and justice for the indigenous peoples of the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

**Keywords:** Indigenous, Cht Peace Accord, Military, Massacre, Ethnic Cleansing.