

**A report on the attack carried out by the Bengali settlers on three villages of the tribal
returnee refugees in Dighinala
18 May 2001**

1. Introduction:

The Bengali settlers in cahoots with military and police pre-meditatively attacked three villages - Shanti-Laxmipur, Kalachan Mahajan Para and Hemabrata Karbari Para - of the returnee Jumma refugees of Chhota Merung Union under Dighinala Thana at 12.30 on 18 May 2001.

2. The reasons of the incident and its description:

- (a) The Jumma people of Chhoto Merung Union, which is situated at the southern part of Dighinala upazila in Khagrachari district, were uprooted from their villages in 1986-1991 and forced to take shelter in the refugee camps in Indian State of Tripura due to communal riots and mass-killings. They were repatriated to CHT under the 16 and 20-point Package Agreements reached between the delegation of the government of Bangladesh and the refugee leaders and under the CHT Accord of 1997. Most of them could not go back to their homesteads and villages due to lack of security and the presence of the Bengali settlers. However, the refugees affected by the said incident managed to go back to their villages. The settlers are continuously trying to uproot them and to illegally seize their homesteads and villages. That is why they have been resorting to various impair ways such as riot, looting, arson, harassment, framing cases etc. against the refugees of the said villages in various pretexts.
- (b) On 14/5/2001 Osman Gani, the VDP (Village Defense Party) commander in post stationed near the Chamrachari Army Camp of Chhoto Merung under Dighinala upazila was attacked and shot dead by a few unknown terrorists while he was on his way to his camp with the salary withdrawn for his men from Sonali Bank, Dighinala Sadar branch.
- (c) On 15/5/2001 centered round the incident, the VDPs and settlers of the areas brought out procession in Dighinala. They threatened the Jumma people shouting slogans like "hatyar badale hatya" (killing for killing).
- (d) On 17/5/2001 a secret meeting was held between the military authority and the settlers' leaders in the Dighinala cantonment. The said incident was committed on the basis of the decision taken in this meeting.
- (e) On 18/5/2001 at 10.30 the settlers organized a meeting in front of the office of the Dighinala Upazilla Nirbahi Officer (UNO). At the end of meeting, they brought out a procession with anti-Jumma slogans along some 1-kilometer long road from the Dighinala UNO office to the Larma Square where Dighinala-Khagrachari and Dighinala-Merung roads meet each other. From there they went 5 kilometers south by trucks and attacked the Shanti-Laxmipur, then Kalachand Mahajanpara 6 kilometers further in the south and finally Hemabrata Karbaripara 9 kilometers further in the same direction. It should be noted that a group of army led by Major Momin of the Dighiunala Cantonment and many police personnel led by Officer-in-Charge (OC) Sagir Ahmed Talukdar and Second Officer Mozammel of Dighinala police station were with the settlers while they were attacking the said villages.

The indigenous Jumma people of Shanti-Lakxmipur village alleged that on arriving of the settlers, police and military at the Shanti-Lakxmipur village, a VDP personnel snatched away a rifle from a police and fired several rounds of bullet aimlessly. Then the settlers started looting and setting fire on the houses of the Jumma people. The OC and Second Officer were watching the activities of the

settlers as a passive onlooker. A group of young Jumma people approached the OC and the Second officer and requested them to stop the settlers from carrying out their activities. Consequently, the OC did nothing except playing his referee.

Similarly, the settlers went away to their homes after looting and setting fire on the houses of Jumma people of other two villages mentioned above. However, they desperately tried to find out and kill Hemabrata Karbari and other four Jumma refugees who are continuing land related cases against some settlers in court.

Later, the Jumma people of Shanti Laxmipur came forward to resist the attack of the settlers. The military blocked, charged with sticks and dispersed some Jumma people of nearby Kabakhali and Pablakhali areas who wanted to come in the spot for rescue operation of the people injured.

3. The amount of damage:

- | <u>Name of village</u> | <u>Looting and arson</u> | <u>Looting and damage</u> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1) Shanti Laxmipur | 28 houses | 142 houses |
| 2) Kalachan MahajanPara | 14 houses | 19 houses |
| 3) Hemabrata Karbaripara | ... | 30 houses |
- b) It is mentionable that besides looting of and arson on houses, the settlers beat some people and took away many domestic animals such as cow, goat etc. from the Jumma people of the villages. According to a primary estimation, some Taka 5 (five) crore worth properties were damaged in the incident.
- c) 5 women were seriously wounded in the incident. They were admitted in the Dighinala Sadar Hospital for treatment. They are:
- 1) Ms. Namita Chakma (20), d/o Jebendra Chakma of Village Shanti Laxmipur
 - 2) Ms. Panchalika Chakma (22), d/o Saradhan Chakma of Village Shanti Laxmipur
 - 3) Ms. Surobala Chakma (55), w/o Ittukya Chakma of Village Shanti Laxmipur
 - 4) Ms. Suchitra Chakma (30), d/o Rajmohan Chakma of Village Gopal Memberpara
 - 5) Ms. Sabitri Chakma, d/o Nagarchan Chakma of Village Shanti Laxmipur
- d) The passport of the following Jumma students who were studying abroad were destroyed due to arson. The students were:
- 1) Master Shanti Lal Chakma s/o Satish Chandra Chakma, class VI, studying in Bodhicharya School, Calcutta, India. His Taka 28,000 and passport were looted.
 - 2) Mr. Shwasata Priya Chakma s/o Bangshi Lal Chakma, studying B. A. Hon. (English), Delhi University, India. His passport and necessary documents including Taka 30,000 were burnt.
 - 3) Ms. Remeli Chakma s/o. Bambakhula Chakma, class VI, studying in Bhodhicarya School, Calcutta, India. His passport, necessary documents and Taka 26,000 were looted.
 - 4) Mr. Nagor Chan Chakma, s/o. Ramakasta Chakma. Studying in France. An amount of US\$ 380 was burnt.
- e) In this incident, 42 houses of Jumma people were burnt down and looted. Among them, some owners of the houses at Shanti Laxmipur were are as follows:
- 1) Ms. Hugoni Chakma, w/o. late Prabhat Chandra Chakma
 - 2) Mr. Shanti Ranjan Chakma, s/o. late Sinha Mani Chakma
 - 3) Ms. Phulo Renu Chakma, w/o. late Samanjoy Chakma
 - 4) Mr. Nagor Chan Chakma, s/o. late Ramakrista Chakma
 - 5) Mr. Tushar kanti Chakma, s/o Pramod Bikash Chakma
 - 6) Mr. Jhimit Chakma, s/o Pramod Bikash Chakma
 - 7) Mr. Brajendu Bikash Chakma, s/o late Rajani Kumar Chakma
 - 8) Mr. Ittukya Chakma, s/o late Rajani Kumar Chakma
 - 9) Mr. Bamba Hula Chakma, s/o Begunya Chakma

- 10) Mr. Turanga Ram Chakma, s/o late Ana Chakma
- 11) Mr. Indra Kumar Chakma, s/o Akshay Kumar Chakma
- 12) Mr. Prati Moy Chakma, s/o late Lare Chandra Chakma
- 13) Mr. Ashwajit Chakma, s/o Sadananda Chakma
- 14) Mr. Arun Bikash Chakma, s/o Nalani Kumar Chakma
- 15) Mr. Amar Kanti Chakma, s/o Nalini Kumar Chakma
- 16) Mr. Bangshi Lal Chakma. s/o Kamini Kumar Chakma
- 17) Mr. Nalini Kumar Chakma, s/o Trijagat Chakma
- 18) Mr. Punya Chandra Chakma, s/o late Kala Chakma
- 19) Mr. Hari Ram Chakma, s/o late Deva Mohan Chakma
- 20) Mr. Ranta Mani chakma, s/o Paranna Mani Chakma
- 21) Mr. Rebati Kumar Chakma, s/o late Rabindra Chakma
- 22) Mr. Bigyan Chakma, s/o Prabhat Chandra Chakma
- 23) Mr. Bishwa Kala Chkma, s/o Jamini Kumar Chakma
- 24) Mr. Chitta Chakma, s/o late Kamini Kumar Chakma
- 25) Mr. Pattobap Chakma, s/o Rabindra Chakma
- 26) Ms. Anita Chakma w/o late Anupan Kanti Chakma
- 27) Mr. Manoram Chakma, s/o Pramod Bikash Chakma
- 28) Mr. Shanti Bikash Chakma, s/o Murati mohan Chakma

- f) In this incident, 191 houses of Jumma people were looted and damaged. Among them, some owners of the houses were:

Houses looted

Rough estimate of property damaged

Shanti Lamipur

1) Ms. Menaka Chakma, w/o Rebati Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
2) Mr. Nidhuk Chandra Chakma, s/o late Shubha Tara	TK. 60,000/-
3) Mr. Lalubap Chakma, s/o Jamini Kumar Chakma	TK. 30,000/-
4) Mr. Sonattuk Chakma, s/o late Shubha Tara	TK. 35,000/-
5) Ms. Sumitama Chakma, w/o late Mahlla Hula	TK. 25,000/-
6) Mr. Chikanchan Chakma (Hriday Ranjan) s/o Rabindra Chakma	TK. 38,000/-
7) Mr. Babu Chakma s/o Raranta Mani Chakma	TK. 20,000/-
8) Mr. Ghalo Chakma s/o Sadananda Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
9) Ms. Dhup Kuli Chakma w/o late Radma Sen Chakma	TK. 25,000/-
10) Ms. Shashi Rani Chakma w/o late Batya Chakma	TK. 15,000/-
11) Mr. Mangal Ranjan Chakma s/o Deva Mohan Chakma	TK. 55,000/-
12) Mr. Ranjit Chakma s/o Laxmi Hari Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
13) Mr. Chagashira Chakma s/o Punya Chandra Chakma	TK. 30,000/-
14) Mr. Nila Mani Chakma s/o Ana Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
15) Mr. Bimal Kanti Chakma s/o Nayan Kumar Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
16) Mr. Purna Shekhar Chakma s/o Anupam Kanti Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
17) Mr. Kiran Bikash Chakma s/o late Batya Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
18) Mr. Jatisti Chakma s/o Ashwini Kumar Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
19) Mr. Sadananda Chakma s/o Trijagat Chakma	TK. 30,000/-
20) Mr. Dharaj Chandra Chakma s/o Bhakta Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
21) Mr. Shukra Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
22) Mr. Ashwini Kumar Chakma s/o Ashkay Kumar Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
23) Mr. Manas Priya Chakma s/o Rajani Kumar Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
24) Mr. Bhagirat Chakma	TK. 30,000/-
25) Mr. Nirapam Kanti Chakma s/o Hriday Ranjan Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
26) Mr. Pramod Bikash Chakma s/o Laxmindar Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
27) Mr. Bagafa Chakma s/o Pramod Bikash Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
28) Mr. Shatish Chandra Chakma s/o Bramalal Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
29) Mr. Khsetra Mohan Chakma s/o Hari Kista Chakma	TK. 30,000/-
30) Mr. Sunil Bikash Chakma s/o Khsetra Mohan Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
31) Mr. Ranjan Kumar Chakma s/o Ram Kista Chakma	TK. 40,000/-

32) Mr. Kripa Jiban Chakma s/o Sharat Kumar Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
33) Mr. Litan Chakma s/o Sharat Kumar Chakma	TK. 60,000/-
34) Mr. Chitta Ranjan Chakma s/o Sharat Kumar Chakma	TK. 80,000/-
35) Mr. Dhana Kumar Chakma s/o Sharat Kumar Chakma	TK. 60,000/-
36) Mr. Ramjoy Chakma s/o Shiddajoy Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
37) Mr. Shashi Ranjan Chakma s/o Chandra Kumar Chakma	TK. 60,000/-
38) Ms. Kundi Bala Chakma d/o Shashi Ranjan Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
39) Mr. Bijay Bikash Chakma s/o Shashi Ranjan Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
40) Mr. Rahul Chakma s/o Shashi Ranjan Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
41) Mr. Jatin Bikash Chakma s/o Paran Mani Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
42) Mr. Achinta Chakma s/o Paran Mani Chakma	TK. 45,000/-
43) Ms. Kiran Mala Chakma w/o Nagara Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
44) Ms. Sona Devi Chakma w/o late Sidhartha Chakma	TK. 30,000/-
45) Mr. Manga Sen Chakma s/o Sharat Kumar Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
46) Mr. Ghantu Chakma s/o Mangal Sen Chakma	TK. 30,000/-
47) Ms. Mahini Chakma w/o late Sharat Kumar Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
48) Mr. Satyajit Chakma s/o Paran Mani Chakma	TK. 50,000/-
49) Mr. Parash Mani Chakma s/o Kula Chandra Chakma	TK. 60,000/-
50) Mr. Lamba Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
51) Mr. Bijoy Bikash Chakma s/o Prabhat Chandra Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
52) Mr. Mantu Bikash Chakma s/o Mangal Sen Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
53) Mr. Nigira Ranjan Chakma s/o Rabindra Chakma	TK. 30,000/-
54) Mr. Larai Chandra Chakma s/o Chedang Kaji Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
55) Mr. Nujya Kumar Chakma s/o Surendra Chakma	TK. 25,000/-
56) Ms. Madhan Shobha Chakma d/o Sonadhan Chakma	TK. 30,000/-
57) Mr. Shanti Jagat Chakma s/o Nujya Kumar Chakma	TK. 30,000/-
58) Mr. Kala Uda Bap	TK. 40,000/-
59) Mr. Jatin Bikash Chakma s/o Nujya Kumar Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
60) Mr. Amar Bikash Chakma s/o Nujya Kumar Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
61) Mr. Barna Kumar Chakma s/o Surendra Lal Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
62) Mr. Kalabadu Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
63) Mr. Barai Bichi Chakma s/o Anil Chandra Chakma	TK. 30,000/-
64) Mr. Anil Chandra Chakma s/o Surendra Lal Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
65) Mr. Shim Chakma s/o Anil Chandra Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
66) Mr. Larei Chandra Chakma s/o Ananda Kumar Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
67) Ms. Pare Chandra Ma w/o Ananda Kumar Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
68) Mr. Pare Chandra Chakma s/o Ananda Kumar Chakma	TK. 30,000/-
69) Mr. Badu Sona Chakma s/o Shubha Tara Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
70) Mr. Dhag Badi Chakma s/o Dagajya Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
71) Mr. Betrasur Chakma (Jnana Jyoti) s/o Angara Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
72) Mr. Mahisur Chakma s/o Angara Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
73) Mr. Nandan Chakma s/o Tipujya Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
74) Mr. Sadhan Kumar Chakma s/o Dagajya Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
75) Mr. Jagendra Chakma s/o Rugadhan Chakma	TK. 30,000/-
76) Mr. Fulendra Chakma s/o Rugadhan Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
77) Mr. Pagala Chakma s/o Ananda Kumar Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
78) Mr. Bhala Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
79) Mr. Chiji Chakma s/o Purnendu Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
80) Mr. Tupidhan Chakma s/o Rabindra Chakma	TK. 45,000/-
81) Mr. Subodhi Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
82) Mr. Chijigula Chakma s/o Purnendra Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
83) Mr. Areiya Chakma s/o Purnendu Chakma	TK. 45,000/-
84) Mr. Rabingya Chakma s/o Purnendu Chakma	TK. 45,000/-
85) Mr. Kala Sona Chakma s/o Sadhan Kumar Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
86) Mr. Nirmal Kanti Chakma s/o Mishriya Chakma	TK. 55,000/-
87) Mr. Kala Chhti Chakma s/o Mishriya Chakma	TK. 35,000/-

88)	Mr. Maratsha Chakma s/o Bandara Chakma	TK. 45,000/-
89)	Mr. Nagari Chakma s/o Niru Kumar Chakma	TK. 30,000/-
90)	Mr. Chittigula Chakma	TK. 45,000/-
91)	Mr. Chkkamoy Chakma	TK. 50,000/-
92)	Mr. Bharat Chandra Chakma	TK. 50,000/-
93)	Mr. Kala Kana Chakma s/o Chikkamoy Chakma	TK. 45,000/-
94)	Mr. Sona Ratan Chakma	TK. 45,000/-
95)	Mr. Santu Kikash Chakma s/o Hriday Basu Chakma	TK. 120,000/-
96)	Mr. Ayub Kanti Chakma s/o Hriday Basu Chakma	TK. 45,000/-
97)	Mr. Dipankar Chakma s/o Samarsing Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
98)	Mr. Ama Ratan Dewan s/o Adhir Dewan	TK. 40,000/-
99)	Mr. Natun Kumar Chakma s/o Bijindra Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
100)	Mr. Anil Chandra Chakma s/o Ramkista Chakma	TK. 30,000/-
101)	Mr. Rabidhan Chakma s/o Gopal Krishna Chakma	TK. 60,000/-
102)	Mr. Shudhangsu Bimal Chakma s/o Rabidhan	TK. 55,000/-
103)	Mr. Ranjit Chakma s/o Mangal Bihari Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
104)	Mr. Rajendra Chakma s/o Nila Kumar Chakma	TK. 45,000/-
105)	Mr. Jogen Bikash Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
106)	Mr. Mundiya Chakma s/o Mangal Bihari Chakma	TK. 30,000/-
107)	Ms. Kusumika Chakma w/o late Subhash Chandra	TK. 55,000/-
108)	Ms. Memory Ma w/o Rajendra Chakma	TK. 50,000/-
109)	Mr. Basudev Chakma	TK. 80,000/-
110)	Mr. Nalini Ranjan Chakma s/o Chandra Kumar	
111)	Mr. Nilamoy Chakma s/o Nalini Ranjan Chakma	
112)	Mr. Gopal Krishna Chakma s/o Shanti Kumar	TK. 20,000/-
113)	Mr. Ranjit Sing Chakma s/o Gopal Krishna	TK. 60,000/-
114)	Mr. Ban Mrinal Chakma s/o Gopal Krishna	TK. 80,000/-
115)	Mr. Shrati Chakma s/o Mangal Bihari Chakma	TK. 50,000/-
116)	Mr. Rabi Ranjan Chakma s/o Chandra Kumar	TK. 40,000/-
117)	Mr. Shulamani Chakma s/o Shanti Kumar Chakma	TK. 60,000/-
118)	Mr. Pingula Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
119)	Mr. Ragoni Mohan Chakma	TK. 30,000/-
120)	Mr. Tadu Chakma s/o Ragoni Mohan Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
121)	Mr. Kalabua Chakma s/o Ringula Chakma	TK. 25,000/-
122)	Mr. Mangal Bihari Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
123)	Mr. Brajendra Lal Chakma s/o Chikanchan	TK. 40,000/-
124)	Mr. Bishwanath Chakma s/o Kalendra Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
125)	Mr. Rasi Chakma s/o Shishir Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
126)	Mr. Arabindu Chakma s/o Kripasindhu Chakma	TK. 30,000/-
127)	Mr. Bira Mohan Chakma s/o Kripasindhu Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
128)	Mr. Gahna Chakma s/o Kripasindhu Chakma	TK. 25,000/-
129)	Mr. Brajendra Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
130)	Ms. Jilima Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
131)	Mr. Padma Sen Chakma s/o Ittukya Baidya	TK. 40,000/-
132)	Mr. Brettakanta Chakma s/o Ittukya Baidya	TK. 40,000/-
133)	Mr. Samrat Chakma s/o Angara Chakma	TK. 45,000/-
134)	Mr. Tatum Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
135)	Mr. Purnendu Chakma s/o Chikanchan Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
136)	Mr. Amalendu Chakma s/o Chikanchan Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
137)	Mr. Bimalendu Chakma s/o Chikanchan Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
138)	Mr. Nila Pradip Chakma s/o Angalal Chakma	TK. 45,000/-
139)	Mr. Swapan Chakma s/o Nalini Ranjan Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
140)	Mr. Shobha Ranjan Chakma	TK. 40,000/-
141)	Mr. Bandara Chakma	TK. 45,000/-
142)	Mr. Arun Bikash Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
143)	Mr. Anil Chandra Chakma s/o Surendra Lal	TK. 80,000/-

144)	Mr. Tapan Chakma s/o Anil Chandra Chakma	TK. 45,000/-
145)	Mr. Shanti Bikash Chakma s/o Maruti Mohan (He is a police posted in Dhaka)	TK. 40,000/-
146)	Mr. Rahul Chakma	TK. 35,000/-
147)	Mr. Bindhumoy Chakma s/o Nalini Ranjan	TK. 55,000/-

g) Name of the settlers who led the attack:

- 1) Abul Kashem, GS of Awami League of Dighinala upazila
- 2) Jahangir Ali Raju
- 3) Abdul Rab, member of BNP of Dighinala upazila and member of Kabakhali UP
- 4) Shamsu, president of Juba Dal of Dighinala upazila
- 5) Yunus Ali s/o Amir Uddin
- 6) Oson Ali s/o Sagir Uddin
- 7) Sattar Khalid, Kabakhali
- 8) Md. Ali
- 9) Abdus Sobhan
- 10) Mozaffar Ali, platoon commander of Betchari Ansar camp
- 11) Tajuddin s/o Mafizuddin

All the culprits were from Betchari and Bibhuti Bhushan Karbari Para under Dighinala upazila.

4. Emergency Measures:

A meeting chaired by Mr. Jatindra Lal Tripura, Chairman, Khagrachari Hill District Council was held on 18 May 2001 at the Dighinala Upazilla Sadar with the local leaders at the presence of Mr. Sudhasindhu Khisa, member of CHT Regional Council, Mr. Raktoutpal Tripura, member of CHT Regional Council, Mr. Ashraful Maqbul, Deputy Commissioner, Khagrachari Hill District, Additional Police Super of Khagrachari Hill District, Additional Divisional Commissioner of Chittagong, DIGP of Chittagong Range. In the meeting, it was expressed that there was a need for maintaining peace and harmony of the area and for immediate supply of cloths of daily use, food and utensils to the affected tribal people. It was also decided to take immediate and necessary steps through Khagrachari HDC, Red Crescent and Khagrachari DC to this effect. However, the Chairman of Khagrachari Hill Districts Council apprised the meeting regarding lack of necessary fund in the Council to provide such amount of assistance the affected people.

5. Recommendations:

In the backdrop of the incident stated above, the following measures are recommended for consideration:

- 1) To allocate fund to the affected people for construction and repairing of houses, supply of house materials and compensation for damage of properties;
- 2) To transfer the Jumma police personnel and officials working outside CHT to CHT in the interest of protecting communal riots in the region. And to transfer human resources/man-power, properties and institutions etc. to the Hill District Councils as per its Acts in which it has been stated that the Council will supervise and maintain law and order in the Hill District and work for its improvement including police;
- 3) To take measures for adequate punishment of all involved in this incident;
- 4) To immediately arrest VDP and settlers leaders involved in this incident;
- 5) To form a committee with people representatives under the leadership of a justice for fair and impartial investigation into the incident;

- 6) To take measures for immediate withdrawal of all temporary military, Ansar and VDP camps with a view to stopping military operation and demilitarization of the administration in CHT.

Press release by PCJSS

The Parbattya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS) strongly condemns the attack on the tribal people and arson, damage and looting of their houses and properties by the Bengali settlers in league with the military and police in Merung area under Dighinala Thata in Khagrachari District on 18 May 2001. The PCJSS demands a judicial inquiry into the incident and immediate punishment of persons involved in it. The PCJSS also demands immediate measures for adequate compensation to the Jumma people affected in the incident.

It is notable that VDP Platoon Commander Osman Gani was shot dead by a group of terrorists in Dighinala on 14 May 2001. The Bengali settlers created communal tension in Dighinala area implicating the Jumma people with the incident. They organized a demonstration against the Jumma people on 15 May 2001. In the demonstration, they delivered provocative speeches and shouted slogans like "hatyar badale hatya" (killing for killing) against the Jumma people. On 17 May 2001, the military authority called the settler leaders in Dighinala Cantonment and had a closed door meeting with them there. Next day, on 18 May 2001 the settlers again bought out demonstration shouting anti-Jumma slogans in front of the office of the UNO of Dighinala upazila. From there, the demonstration advanced some one-kilometer long way towards Larma Square in the south. From there, the settlers proceeded towards Shanti-Laxmipur, Kalachan Mahajan Para and Hemabrata Karbari Para by trucks and jeeps. They were accompanied by a group of police personnel and VDPs under the leadership of OC Sagir Ahmed Talukdar and Second Officer Mozammel of Dighinala police station. On arrival of the settlers and police and VDPs at Shanti Laxmipur, a VDP personnel snatched away a rifle from a police personnel and fired several rounds of bullets aimlessly. The settlers then started attacking on the Shanti Laxmipur village and looting the houses of Jumma people and setting fire on them. The police remained passive while the settlers were attacking the village. After this, they attacked and looted Kalachan Mahajan Para and Hemabrata Karbari Para in similar manner. As a result, 42 houses were burnt into ashes and 191 houses were looted and damaged. During the attack, the settlers attacked with sharp lethal weapons and sticks whoever they found in the villages that resulted in five Jumma women injured two of them - Monika Chakma and Panchalika Chakma - of Shanti Laxmipur received serious injuries at their head and other parts of the body.

Later, the Jumma people of Shanti Laxmipur came forward to resist the attack of the settlers. The military blocked, charged with sticks and dispersed some Jumma people of nearby Kabakhali and Pablakhali areas who wanted to come in the spot for rescue operation of the people injured.

Later, the military ordered the settlers, who looted houses of Jumma people and set fire on them, to leave for their houses. In this context, it should be noted that the PCJSS is observing with grave concern that some national dailies widely published some baseless news accusing the Jumma people of attacking the Bengalis and setting fire on their houses. These dailies have even described the incident as a 'Jumma-Bengali clash'.

With regard to the above incident, on behalf of the Jumma people, a memorandum was submitted to the Khagrachari Deputy Commissioner (DC) demanding exemplary punishment of the persons responsible for this incident and withdrawal of the settlers from CHT. But till now, no one of them has been arrested. The PCJSS demands

1. To arrest and punish the persons involved in the incident without any delay;
2. To immediately conduct a judicial inquiry into the incident;

3. To provide the adequate compensation to the Jumma people affected by the incident and medical treatment to the Jumma people wounded in the same.
4. To withdraw the temporary military, Ansar and VDP camps and the settlers in accordance with the CHT Accord.