

Report on Matiranga – Taindong Communal Attack



Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS)

Report on communal attack upon Jumma villages by Bengali settlers in Matiranga-Taindong area under Khagrachari district

On 3 August 2013 the Bengali settlers conducted a massive communal attack followed by arson and looting in 11 villages of Jumma people in Taindong union under Matiranga upazila of Khagrachari district.

In this attack, around 36 houses including 19 houses in Sorbeswar Para, 12 in Baga Para, 2 in Talukdar Para and 3 in Bandarshing Para (Bhagaban Tila) were burnt to ashes. Besides, around 400 houses of Jumma villages including two Buddhist temples, namely, Sorbeswar Para Janashakti Bouddha Bihara and Monudas Para Bouddha Bihara were plundered and vandalized by the Bengali settlers.

A total of 454 Jumma families numbering 2000 persons crossed over the border and took shelter in the "no-man's land" between Bangladesh and Indian territories. Apart from this, around 1,500 persons of 380 families belonging to Tripura community fled to the neighbour Panchari upazila of Khagrachari district, while other 35 families took shelter in the jungle.

It is learnt that 24 families of Bandarshing Para, 137 families of Baga Para, 70 families of Sorbeswar Para, 59 families of Monudas Para, 44 families of Tonga Mahajan Para, 43 families of Talukdar Para, 70 families of Asalong Mog Para and 7 families of Krishna Doyal Para took shelter in the 'no man's land' of Indian territory. Besides, 19 families of Bandarshing Para, 162 families of Headman Para, 140 families of Laifu Kumar Para and 59 families of Pura Bari villages fled to the neighbouring Panchari upazila. In addition, 30 families from Bandarshing Para and 5 families of Baga Para took shelter in the jungle.

In this attack, the school text books and uniform of many students were also not spared. Initially, a victim list of 71 students comprising 25 students of primary level, 30 students of secondary level, 16 students of higher secondary and tertiary level was received.

At least 12 Jumma villagers were learnt to have been wounded in this attack while some of them were reportedly snatched off from the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) custodianship and severely beaten up inflicting serious wounds with sharp weapons by the Bengali settlers. It was alleged that the police and BGB members did not take effective measures against the Bengali settlers during the massive attack upon the Jumma peoples in the broad day light.

Ashamoni Chakma, a 2-month old daughter of Sukkamoni Chakma of Bandarshing Para died of pneumonia at Khagrachari general hospital on 10 August 2013. During their returning home on 4 August from 'no man land' of Indian territory following assurance of security pronounced by the state minister Dipankar Talukdar, Ashamoni Chakma drenched in the rain, as a result of which the baby developed pneumonia. Due to communication and financial problem, the condition of Ashamoni got deteriorated owing to lack of proper treatment. On 8 August, she was admitted to Khagrachari General Hospital. However, finally she died. It is mentionable that her father Sukkamoni Chakma was chopped by the Bengali settlers and sustained wounds in his hand.

The amount of damages of 15 houses, out of 36 houses that were set ablaze in this attack, has been estimated to be 2.656 million in BDT. Apart from this, the amount of damages of 262 houses, out of 400 houses plundered and vandalized by the Bengali settlers, has been estimated to be Taka 12.898 millions. Hence, it is observed that the total loss caused by the arson, looting and destruction of houses including rest of 21 houses set ablaze and 138 houses plundered and vandalized has been estimated to be 20 million in BDT or US \$ 256,410.

Propaganda:

On that day, the 3rd August at noon, the Bengali settlers went on propagating to the effect that one Bengali settler

named Mohammad Kamal Hossain with one Bengali settler driving the rental motor bike, had been abducted by the UPDF from Bandarshing Para in Taindang area. Within no time of the propagation, the Bengali settlers started gathering while uttering ultra-communal provokative slogans against the Jumma people. At certain state, they began attacking upon the Jumma villages with batons and lethal weapons followed by setting fire in the houses.

Roles of law-enforcing agencies:

The synchronized attack of Bengali settlers began at 3:00 pm and continued to exist 4-5 hours at a stretch in combination with arson, looting and vandalization in the nearby Jumma localities around the BGB camps. Around the Bandarshing Para BGB camp located are the villages of Baga Para and Bandarshing Para (Bhagaban Tila) while the Talukder Para is located adjacent to the Taindong BGB camp. Besides, quite nearer are the BGB camps of Tanakka Para camp, Asalong camp and Fenichara camp, from the suburb areas of which the Bengali settlers set out to attack the Jumma villages. In addition, the Bengali settlers from Gumti, Khedachara, Matiranga and Battali (Alu Tila) marched in crowds by the side of these BGB stations. But the BGB personnel did not take any measure to refrain the advancing settlers from going to attack upon the Jumma villages.

Backdrop of the attack:

In the recent days, UPDF, the anti-CHT Accord armed terrorist group, has intensified its heinous terrorist atrocities in the forms of forcible extortion of money, kidnapping, realization of ransom, killings, etc. one after another unabatedly in Matiranga upazlia under Khagarchari district. On the other hand, in reciprocation, the Bengali settlers are also found to have been actively involved in perpetrating heinous communal designs like attacking upon the Jumma villages with lethal weapons and indiscriminately committing vandalization, setting fire and plundering. To the utter surprise, the local administration, law-enforcing agencies and government authority, so far, did neither take any measure

against the Bengali settlers who were involved in creating such communal tension and committing attacks upon the Jumma people nor any legal measure against the UPDF armed terrorists who were involved in extortion of money, kidnapping and killings, thus thereby revealing its abject failure in coming up with legal actions against such anarchism and atrocities. As a result, both the evil forces are being seen quite capable of conducting their own mean and ultra-communal modus operandi to meet their self ends.

Hence, the situation as a whole hereof is spurring to downwards day by day, which cannot be desirable in the interest of the country.

It may be cited for instances that the combined armed terrorist group of UPDF and Reformist (Sudhasindhu-Tatendra) faction shot to death Amalendu Bikash Chakma, a member of PCJSS returnees at Matiranga of Tabalchari on 4 June 2012 and another PCJSS member, Kalanjoy Chakma who was killed after kidnapping from Bengmara of Matiranga on 5 March 2012. But the administration did not step for legal action against the terrorists involved in the incidents of kidnappings and killings. On the other side, the UPDF terrorists kidnapped one Bengali business person from Toilafang area of Barnal Union on 22 December 2012 the incident of which prompted the Bengali settlers being equipped with batons and sharp weapons, to attack Hemanga Karbari Para and Robidhan Karbari Para of Hedachara mouza under Belchari union. The attackers set ablaze 2 houses and looted and vandalized 36 houses of the Jumma people.

On 25 January 2013, while operating for extortion of money, the UPDF armed terrorists shot a Brickfield labourer to death at Battali Brickfield in Khedachara mouza of Matiranga upazila. Centering an issue related to money extortion being carried out by a combined armed terrorist group of UPDF and Reformist faction, 4 Jumma villagers were seriously wounded during the attack conducted by the Bengali settlers in Pran Kumar Karbari Para under Barnal union of Matiranga upazila on 5 April

2013. On 13 June 2013, on the issues of extortion of money and non-availability of permission for holding an agitation, the UPDF called for a 'Boycott' declaring an embargo on going to Matiranga and Gumti Bazaars and in a bid to ensure success of their boycott calling, forcefully shifted 42 Jumma families from Kathalmuni Para, Kyaba Para, Uday Kumar Para and Arun Kumar Para to other locations. Later on, after suffering miseries for few days, though the villagers could come back to their homes at the mediatory role played by Tripura Kalyan Sangsad, the UPDF has not put an end to their terrorist activities even to a slightest extent as yet. As part of their hunting for hard cash, they kidnapped one Jahangir Alam, a local leader of Awami League party from Balyachari of Matiranga union on 16 June 2013 and they released him afterwards at the cost of paying ransom.

At last, during a raid conducted by the UPDF armed terrorists in a Bengali-settlers' village named Noya Para under Taindong union of Matiranga upazila at the wee hours of 31 July 2013, opened fire to disperse the Bengali settlers. Following this incident, the Bengali settlers gathered at midnight and attempted to attack the Jumma villages in no time. For fear of encounters, some 250 Jumma families fled into the nearby jungle or compelled to find shelter across the Indian border line. The next day, they came back at the assurance given by the administration and BGB. Earlier, in the face of Bengali settlers' attack on 4 August 2012, the villagers of Kadamtali village of Barnal union numbering 165 compelled to cross the border line for shelter. They came back to their homesteads at the assurance given by the administration and BGB following the flag-meetings held between the Border Security Force of India and Border Guard Bangladesh. But it was most unfortunate that the administration and BGB did not undertake effective measures worthy to their assurance. The authority, as it did not take any drastic action against the terrorist activities of UPDF so is its indifferent posture against the violent communal design of the Bengali settlers. It may be concluded that it is for the reason of being inactive and indifference on the part of law-enforcing agency and the

authority, the Bengali settlers dared to perpetrate heinous attack upon the Jumma people at the broad day light on 3 August 2013 ostensibly at the connivance of the administration and law enforcing agencies.

Main motive of the Attack:

The government authority stepped upon a vain attempt to establish the communal attack to have been sponsored by the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP). The local administration says that Kamal Hossain, who was mispropagated to have been abducted, is a partisan member of BNP and the incident has been a deliberate move intending to deform the very image of the government. Indeed, the government authority is apparently in an ill-attempt to flow the heinous communal attack towards different direction. In fact, the attack was aimed at demoralizing the Jumma people and ultimately to grab their ancestral lands by staging mass-scale eviction.

It is noteworthy that the Bengali Muslim marauders first started mass infiltration into Feni valley following the independence of Bangladesh and began to grab the lands of the native Jumma people on various pleas and trickeries. In 1979, the Feni Valley has been one of the spots targeted for illegal settlement of 400,000 Muslim Bengali population from different plain districts of Bangladesh. There has been no pause to the flow of illegal settlement and forcible occupation of lands in the Feni Valley even after signing of CHT Accord of 1997. To achieve the objective, the Bengali settlers continued to perpetrate communal attacks one after another at the indulgence of the administration and law enforcing authority. The communal attack carried out on the last 3 August 2013 was undoubtedly a part of the whole blue print.

Action taken by government authorities:

The police and BGB did not take adequate measures against the attacking Bengali settlers during their massive attack upon the Jumma people conducted in the day light. It rather appeared that the law-enforcing agency indirectly offered an opportunity to the Bengali settlers by playing a passive role

during the violent incident. Later, BGB and police gave assurance of security to lives and properties of the Jumma villagers and urged them to return to their villages; however, the Jummas disagreed to return to their homes. They made a point alleging that in each incident taken place earlier, BGB and police had given such assurance, but they did not keep their words accordingly even for once.

It is important to mention here that the Jumma villagers took shelter in the 'no man land' - the part of Indian territory at the 8-point-fenced gate under Karbuk sub-division in Tripura state. The residents of Sharat Bikash Para, Bhagaban Tila, Alendra Para, Mog Para, Pran Kumar Para, Golmoni Para and Mathuram Para under Karbuk sub-division, including the BSF, local administration, local Panchayet etc. supplied tents, drinking water and food to the victims.

On 4 August 2013, State Minister for CHT Affairs Ministry Mr. Dipankar Talukdar, chairman of the Khagrachari Hill District Council Mr. Kujendra Lal Tripura, Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Khagrachari district Mr. Masud Karim and Superintendent of Police (SP) Sheikh Mizanur Rahman, acting commander of Jamini Para Zone of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) Colonel Shihab Uddin Shoib and commander of Tanakka Para camp (BOP) Badshah Mia, Officer-in-Charge of Matiranga police station Moin Uddin visited the Taindong area of Matiranga upazila. They went to the border side and requested Jumma villagers to return home. Around 2,000 Jumma villagers, who crossed the border for life sake, agreed to return to their villages following a security guarantee given by Dipankar Talukdar and Kujendra Lal Tripura. The State Minister also promised them to provide adequate compensation for damages done to them.

Besides, a total of 380 families of indigenous Tripura community from Purabari, Headman Para, Laifu Kumar Karbari Para and Krishna Doyal Karbari Para under Taindong union fled to the neighbouring Panchari upazila. The government authority was in dark about these families till 5 August. On facilitation provided by the Tripura Kalyan Sangsad, local residents and NGOs, the

administration brought back the Tripura families from Panchari upazila to their respective villages of Matiranga upazila in the evening of 6 August 2013.

Those returnees whose houses were set to ablaze took shelter in the school houses on temporary basis. It is learnt that the returnee villagers have been passing their days in penic.

PCJSS protest:

On 5 August 2013 at 10:30 am the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS) formed human chain in Rangamati and Bandarban district headquarters in protestation of the massive communal attack, arson and looting the Jumma villages by Bengali settlers in Taindong-Matiranga areas and the atrocities of the UPDF terrorists and indifferent role of the government authority. The human chain was followed by submission of a memorandum to the Prime Minister through the Deputy Commissioner of Rangamati Hill District. In this memorandum PCJSS demanded the followings:-

1. To return back all the communal-attack-affected Jumma villagers to their respective villages and to rehabilitate them with adequate compensation;
2. To conduct a judicial inquiry into the communal attack upon the Jumma villagers on 3 August 2013 and award exemplary punishment to those who were involved in the attack.
3. To impose a ban upon the UPDF, the anti-CHT Accord armed terrorist outfit and take legal action against its terrorist activities.
4. To rehabilitate the Bengali settlers outside CHT with dignity.

Compensation:

Despite the assurance given by the State Minister Dipankar Talukder including the local administration and law enforcing authority the Jumma people are still skeptical of receiving due amount of compensation with honorable rehabilitation.

Among the 870 affected Jumma families, more or less 748 families received government relief so far. Of them, 368

families of Headman Para, Laifu Kumar Para, Pura Bari and Krishna Doyal Para received only 10 kg of rice per family. Besides, 122 families did not receive any relief. Of them, 87 families belonging to Tonga Mahajan Para and Talukdar Para crossed the India-Bangladesh border.

It is reported that the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) of Matiranga upazila provided 25 kg of rice, 2 kg of flattened rice and 250 gm of molasses to each family whose houses were burnt to ashes. The BGB distributed 17 kg of rice, 1 kg of salt, 1 litre of soyabean oil and 500 gm of sugar to

each family. A package of 10 kg of rice, 1 gamcha, 1 lungi and 1 pachra was issued to each family by Taindong Union Council. The local Army unit provided a total of 31 pieces of tent and 100 lungies to the victims.

The affected families have been suffering miserable life due to lack of adequate compensation and rehabilitation promised by the government authorities including the state minister.

Case filed:

A case was filed against 175 people including against 30 persons by names, with the Matiranga police station in connection with the attack, on 5 August 2013. Police arrested 7 settlers including Md. Kamal Hossain for their alleged involvement in the attacks. The other arrestees were Abed Ali (UP Member), Abu Hanif, Md. Kamruzzaman, Amir Hossain and Jahangir Alam. The arrested people were produced before the court on 7 August 2013 and the Court sent them to the jail. Besides, on 8 August 2013 in the evening, police arrested two alleged persons identified as Mr. Sirajul Islam, former chairman of Taindong union and assistant organising secretary of Matiranga BNP and Abu Hanif alias Edhan from Biojid Bostami area in Chittagong city.

Affected families and damages of the attack:

Sl. no.	Name of village	No. of affected families	No. of houses burned	No. of families	
				received relief	did not receive relief
1.	Bandarshing Para (Bhgaban Tila)	73	3	43	30*
2.	Baga Para	143	12	138	5*
3.	Sorbeswar Para	70	18	70	—
4.	Monudas Para	59	—	59	—
5.	Tonga Mahajan Para	44	—	—	44**
6.	Talukdar Para	43	2	—	43**
7.	Asalong Mog Para	70	—	70	—
8.	Headman Para	162	—	162 ^a	—
9.	Krishan Doyal Para	7	—	7 ^a	—
10.	Laifu Kumar Para	140	—	140 ^a	—
11.	Pura Bari	59	—	59 ^a	—
Total		870	35	748	122

* These families fled into the jungle. They did not receive any relief.

** These families took shelter inside Indian territory. However, they have not been provided any government relief as yet.

^a These families got only 10 kg of rice per family.

Jumma villagers beaten and wounded: Total- 12

1. Amrita Chakma (29) s/o Mahendra Lal Chakma of Bandarshong Para
2. Kala Kazi Chakma (36) s/o Jaliya Mohan Chakma of Baga Para
3. Bakul Kanti Chakma (44) s/o Brajendra Lal Chakma of Baga Para
4. Bishwaketu Chakma (45) s/o Banshi Mohan Chakma of Baga Para
5. Sachilmoy Chakma (30) s/o Ratnakar Chakma of Baga Para

6. Jiban Bikash Chakma (25) s/o Madan Mohan Chakma of Baga Para
7. Meriya Chakma (50) s/o Swara Mohan Chakma of Baga Para
8. Fani Bhushan Chakma (44) s/o Surendra Lal Chakma of Baga Para
9. Shukka Moni Chakma (Shukra) (30) s/o late Purna Bahu Chakma of Bandarshing Para
10. Chameya Chakma (30) s/o Rong Moni Chakma of Baga Para
11. Binoy Chakma (52) s/o late Birendra Lal Chakma of Baga Para
12. Anil Kanti Chakma (25) s/o late Mandri Mohan Chakma of Baga Para.

N.B. A mobile phone and taka 7,220 from Amrita Chakma and a mobile phone from Bakul Kanti Chakma, project chairman of India-returnee refugee have been seized.

Bengali settlers who led the communal attack:

1. Md. Shafique Mian (35) s/o Suraj Mian of Battali Tanakka Para
2. Md. Khokan Mian (30) s/o unknown of Baga Para
3. Amir Hossain (tailor) (50) s/o Farid Uddin of Baga Para
4. Md. Emran (25) s/o unknown of Baga Para
5. Md. Nayeb Ali (35) s/o Khalem Ali of Sinduk Devi, Tanakka Para
6. Md. Kamal (36) s/o Ashraf of Baga Para
7. Iqbal Hossain (20) s/o Kamal Uddin of Baga Para
8. Nurul Islam (30) s/o Ana Mian of Baga Para.

Please visit the following link for list of the victims of this incident: www.ipdpcjss.wordpress.com

Photographs of houses burnt to ashes during the attack





A huge mass of burnt paddy



A stranded Jumma Villager Tanay Shashi Chakma in front of the remains of his burnt-down house



A Gathering of homeless Jumma villagers

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