As the present century draws to a close one of the prominent features of the changing global scenario is highly politicised ethnicity or what one authority has called "ethnic dissonance". Until the forces of such changes were let loose concentration of ethnic dissonance had been in Asia and Africa. But today even much of Eastern Europe and parts of the Soviet Union are examples of worst case scenario. Since decolonisation the countries of South Asia including Burma, once parts of an Indocentric British empire, have remained vulnerable to ethnic turmoils, occasionally resulting in strident autonomy aspirations and even secessions.

Emerging with an identity emphasising on ethnic distinctiveness as against a dominant one that it had been under for about two and a half decades Bangladesh had to cope with the problem of politicised and militant ethnicity from the very beginning. At the inception of statehood, however, Bangladesh, with its near demographic homogeneity did not appear to be poised for facing such an eventuality. But over the years ethnic turmoil that originated in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) has not only jeopardised nation building process but also created sources of insecurity for Bangladesh with cross-border ramifications.

Beginning with an emphasis on internal dimension of national security for a small, weak and developing country like Bangladesh the discussion identifies politicised and militant ethnicity as one source that threatens Bangladesh. The conceptual context of the discussion is provided by a section that draws attention to the various stages in the gradual evolution of politicised and militant ethnicity; and takes a special note of the stage/stages where ethnicity...
creates security concern for the dominant elite. The major part of the discussion focuses on two interrelated aspects of such security concern of Bangladesh: intraborder and transborder. The next section is heuristic that prognosticates unwanted scenario as well as suggests some steps for righting the wrongs that are apparent in the circumstances. The concluding section summarises the major observations.

**Internal Dimension of Bangladesh Security**

Defined mostly in military terms the traditional concept of security does not take into account the domestic dimension of the problem. Crafted as it is on Western perception such an approach concentrates either on the narrow concept of states security threats to which emanate from sources of cross-border origin or broadens the concept by linking state security to international security, and even individual security. But such an approach, as has been pointed out by some observers, is inadequate in considering security concerns of most of the Third World states, including Bangladesh, for states situated as Bangladesh is with low-level of socio-political cohesion and various fissiparous issues internal dimension of security is more crucial than the external one.

But such identification of the domestic source of threat as the more important one may create some practical problems in the field of governance. In the case of domestic threat considered with higher priority government has to be provided with powers and even tools not found necessary under ordinary circumstances. And, given the context of such states there is the likelihood of these powers and tools being used for the purpose of either to consolidate or legitimate an unwanted administration. On the other hand, the internal dimension cannot be neglected either, as Barry Buzan raises the pertinent point, "The fate of particular government may not be of much account to the state as a whole, but the congenital weakness of the government brings into question the integrity and even the existence, of the state, and therefore has to be regarded as a national security issue."

Therefore, we have sufficient ground to agree with this author when he emerges with the contention making allowance for the higher significance of domestic factors.

Accepting priority of internal dimension of national
security for small and weak states it is now pertinent to delineate the parameters of such an approach. Indeed this concept is related "with the establishment of an internally secured political order, economic management, and efficacy of political institutions and processes". Threat to any or all of these elements anywhere or all over a state would create a security situation.

Ethnicity and Security: Conceptual Framework

Ethnicity per se is not always related to any question of security of a state; it becomes a security issue only when it is politicised. A politicised ethnicity is synonymous with ethnonationalism; and nationalism of a part within a whole group of people is a problem that has numerous dimensions. A politicised ethnicity is the outcome of some period of gestation through a few identifiable stages of the growth of ethnic consciousness. It has been indicated that a particular ethnic group, as it becomes politicised, passes through at least six stages of varying consciousness about its identity and also about how best to retain the same. The stages are as follows:

1. ethnic awareness;
2. ethnic evaluation;
3. demands for equality, fairness, justice in various spheres of national life against perceived or real discrimination and grievance;
4. demand for a separate province, region, state or larger share of power from the dominating elites;
5. threat of secession (which may be a bluff secession) to extract concessions made at the third and fourth stages; and
6. actual secession when politicised ethnic group refuses to recognise the legitimacy of the larger political community and engages in a struggle for a separate state or for its merger in a neighbouring political community.

Although it has been posited earlier that the process of politicization of ethnicity passes through these six stages it does necessarily follow that each and every ethnic community would meticulously follow this model. It may move gradually from one stage to the other or it may, with higher dynamism, skip over one or more stages to concentrate on the more
aggressive one. At the same time it may so happen that a particular ethnic community, depending on its circumstances or internal dynamics would move up and down the ladder of these stage. For example, it is on record that an ethnic group demanding secession could settle down for autonomy within the framework of the state against which it once threatened secession.

The first two stages are psychological and represents a state of mind. Pushed by hostile environment and controlled by a larger community this state of mind may get politicised and start asserting its distinctiveness at the third stage. An ethnicity thus politicised creates security concerns for the larger community from the fourth stage upward with an escalation in the intensity of identity assertion. At the sixth or final stage, ethnicity gets militant with its tools of a violent struggle with cross-border or even with extra-regional linkages and ramifications. Empirical evidence suggests that at this stage ethnicity poses a major security threat to the concerned state.

Ethnicity and Security of Bangladesh

The ethnic turmoils that have gripped Bangladesh from the time of its birth is localised in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT). Three major and ten minor tribes inhabiting this territory, about one-tenth in size of the total landmass of Bangladesh, bordering on India and Burma (Myanmar) have remained suspect to the centre since the Pakistan days. There are, however, historical explanations for such suspicion. In 1947, some parts of CHT, including Rangamati, hoisted Indian flag in a bid to join India, and also as a mark of protest against the Radcliffe Award. In 1971, when the liberation war was being fought Chakma chief Raja Tridiv Ray sided with Pakistan and a large number of tribal youths joined Pakistan government sponsored anti-Bangali armed groups named 'Mujahid' and Civil Armed Force. Consequently, the government that took over administration in 1972 viewed the tribals in the same way as had been done by the Pakistan government after 1947. Consequently, as a periphery, situated as it is in a limitrophic region, CHT was destined to remain very remote from the centre under both administration.
At its birth, however, Bangladesh inherited an incipiently politicised ethnicity in CHT that had its origin in the mid-sixties. And, in 1972, this ethnicity appeared to have already crossed the first two of the six stages suggested above in the conceptual framework. Two steps taken during the Pakistan period were responsible for creating the base for gradual politicisation of mainly the Chakmas. The first one related to constitutional provisions affecting administrative status of CHT. By the Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation, 1990 the area was accorded the status of an excluded area, a step that was up to the satisfaction of the tribals. The 1956 Constitution of Pakistan retained this regulation and status of the area; but an amendment to the constitution (Act 1, 1964) repealed the regulation and abolished the excluded status of CHT. A step like this was interpreted by the tribal elite as a planned move to tamper with their ethnic distinctiveness.

Another step by the Pakistan government was the Karnaphuli Multipurpose Project (1957-1962) that submerged 54000 acres of settled and fertile land, and displaced about 100,000 persons. Of the affected families only 12,000 could be settled in about 20,000 inferior lands. Basically an economic issue thus created was gradually transformed into a delicate multidimensional problem by the incept handling by the successive regimes in Pakistan and Bangladesh period.

By 1971-72, immediately after independence of Bangladesh, this incipient politicisation of tribals received fresh impetus as hordes of Bengalee freedom fighters literally went on rampage throughout the area apparently to avenge the anti-Bangladesh role of these people. It was also reported that some of the tribal collaborators of Pakistan were tortured to death as they surrendered to Bangladesh authorities.

Thus by 1972, the tribals had been sufficiently politicised and were at the third and fourth stages. This was demonstrated by the charter of four point demands presented to the Dhaka government in January 1972. The demands were:

1. autonomy for the Chittagong Hill Tracts, and the establishment of a special legislative body;
2. retention of Regulation 1900 in the new Constitution of Bangladesh;
3. continuation of tribal chief's offices; and
4. a constitutional provision restricting the amendment of Regulation 1900 and imposing a ban on Bengali settlement in CHT.

But faced with a hostile reaction from the Dhaka government the tribals began the process of moving up the higher stages of politicisation. By 1973, Parbatya Chattogram Gana Sanghati Samiti (PCJSS), a political front and Shanti Bahini (SB). A military wing were formed to press for the autonomy demand. By about 1975 the autonomy demand was taking on the character of independence movement for a "Jummaland". With the formation of the military wing of the tribals the Dhaka government mounted a military offensive; this drove the tribals to insurgency and flight across the border in search of sanctuaries and assistance; and each of which they were happy to get. Immediately before the political change-over in mid-1975 a joint Indo-Bangladesh counter insurgency operation was reported to have been planned. But the plan fell through as Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was assassinated. And ever since then the Shanti Bahini insurgents have found not only safe sanctuaries in Tripura and Mizoram but also springboards for launching guerrilla attacks deep into the hill districts. It thus appears that between 1973 and 1975 the tribals have crossed the fifth stage and reached the sixth, and the overall situation has ever since remained frozen at that stage with unabated insurgency mostly launched from across the border.

Having thus discussed the gradual rise and development of politicised and militant ethnicity we now propose to look at the specific security dimension in the two suggested perspectives.

**Intra-border Security Dimension**

Intra-border security of Bangladesh is being threatened by the politicised ethnicity in three different ways: political, economic and threat to life in CHT.

**Political:** The two demands of PCJSS for retention of Regulation, 1900 and provincial autonomy are considered challenges to political and administrative integrity of Bangladesh. The motives for retention of the Regulation are to flush out the non-tribal settlers from the hill districts and to put a
stop to any such future intrusion and to secure absolute control of the hill people over land. Indeed this is mainly a land question for tribals and non-tribals. Non-tribals so far settled in the area are landless poor from some worst affected regions of Bangladesh. There is however, no denying the fact that the policy of settling landless poor has had a political motive, and certainly not humanitarian or economic. But the government counterpoint stress the constitutional right of citizens of Bangladesh to live anywhere in the country.\textsuperscript{16} It is argued that the spirit of this constitutional provision ensuring a fundamental right is contradictory to that of the Regulation. But the inexorable pressure of circumstances created by the increasing military of tribals has compelled the government to forego such a rigid interpretation and put restrictions on or even a stop to Bengali settlements. This was done once even in 1973; and in 1989, the new local government councils were empowered to veto on transfers of land to new settlers. Nevertheless, the Regulation remains suspended and thus a sentimental (in tribal view, real) reason continues to boost tribal political consciousness.

The term "provincial autonomy" as used by PCJSS and SB is not always clear in its implications. A careful reading of statements so far issued by them may lead us to interpret the term as meaning autonomy with a special legislative body. In 1986, Upendralal Chakma, the then Adviser to President on Tribal Affairs (now in India) made a statement that gave a hint that this provincial autonomy would be on the model of the states of Mizoram and Nagaland in India.\textsuperscript{17} But unlike India Bangladesh has a unitary structure; and accommodation of this demand would require a major change in the Bangladesh constitution. During the six sessions of dialogues with the Dhaka government between October 1985 and December 1988 the representatives of PCJSS put forward a demand for "regional autonomy" a demand which by implication is certainly not similar to "provincial autonomy". There are sufficient grounds to believe that what they really seek is a provincial status. By the Local Councils Act (Act 19, 20, 21, 1989) the Dhaka government constituted three local government bodies each at Rangamati, Bandarban and Khagrachari. This was an administrative innovation that
instituted administrative autonomy and thus fell for short of the demand for provincial autonomy; and rejected by PCJSS.

Besides being a challenge to the unitary state structure of Bangladesh the demand for provincial autonomy is being rejected by the Dhaka government on other grounds as well. As loyalty of the hill people is always a suspect to government and as their cross border and extra-regional linkages are known giving provincial autonomy to them is considered a highly risky policy option. Endowed with vast forest and mineral resources CHT is geopolitically significant; and this is a factor that also militates against any decision agreeing to provincial status.

**Economic:** Economically, the ethnic turmoils in CHT pose a challenge to a resource poor state like Bangladesh. On the one hand, huge amount of money is pumped into various special projects aiming at an accelerated development in the area; and on the other, counter-insurgency operations for over two decades by a large military establishment have placed a heavy strain on the limited resources of the country. A cumulative result of all these is that this one-tenth part of Bangladesh sucks off a big portion of national resources in both ways; and creates a difference in per capita resource outlay from other regions of the county. This phenomenon, if not handled rightly and carefully, has the potential to turn into a difficult intra-country and inter-region political issue.

The following two tables (Table 1 and 2) show sector-wise expenditure in CHT since 1975 up to 1991.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Schemes taken up</th>
<th>Amount spent (Tk. in Million)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Communication</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>53.970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sports and Culture</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>24.311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Agriculture</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>60.294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Construction</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>31.352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Education</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>55.971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Social Welfare</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>64.619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Cottage Industries</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4.491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Management Expenditure</td>
<td></td>
<td>331.186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>767</strong></td>
<td><strong>331.186</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board, 1990
### Table -2
**Special Five Year Plan for CHT**

**Execution period 1984-1991**  
**Total No. of Projects : 19**  
**Total Project Cost : Tk. 26,21,300 million**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Project</th>
<th>Total Expenditure (Tk. Million)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Road Communication</td>
<td>1295.749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Telecom Service</td>
<td>195.853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Electrification</td>
<td>398.512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Water Supply</td>
<td>159.998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Integrated Afforestation and Jamuna Rehabilitation</td>
<td>219.920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Pulp-Wood Plantation</td>
<td>39.701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Infrastructure for Jumia Rehabilitation</td>
<td>24.483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Horticulture</td>
<td>33.344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Special Agriculture</td>
<td>37.460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Cotton Cultivation</td>
<td>6.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Health</td>
<td>31.650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Livestock</td>
<td>17.352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Fisheries</td>
<td>4.300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Cottage Industry</td>
<td>32.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Tourism</td>
<td>6.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Education</td>
<td>80.600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Family Welfare</td>
<td>14.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Construction of Bandarban Stadium</td>
<td>10.332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Construction of Khagrachari Shishu Sadan</td>
<td>2.746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2630.000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board, 1991*

Moreover, the refugees returning from across the border are to be rehabilitated at the cost of Tk. 15 crore.

In the absence of relevant data and information regarding expenditure on military establishment in CHT it is difficult to compute the total outlay of resources in this sector. But the size of this establishment may give us some idea. The 24th Infantry Division is in charge of CHT. The army has four Brigade Headquarters at Rangamati, Khagrachari, Dighinala
and Bandarban. There are garrisons in Ruma and Alikadam and base camps in each upazila headquarters and in some villages as well. There are also road protection camps to prevent *Shanti Bahini* attacks. There are over 230 army camps, more than 100 Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) camps and over 80 police camps. Besides, there are armed Ansars and Village Defence Parties. At Kaptai, there is a naval base and a battalion of navy are deployed in CHT. The strength of the 24th Infantry Division is confusing. One estimate puts it at 80,000 personnel. But considering the size of Bangladesh Army this figure seems too high. Again, there is a feeling that there could be at least one member of the security forces for every ten hill people.

**Threat to life in CHT**

Normal life in CHT is disturbed, disrupted and even threatened by the ubiquitous guerilla operations of SB insurgents and even by counter-insurgency operations of security forces. There have also been instances of Bengali reprisals against tribals as sequels to SB attacks and also of excesses by the security forces. The following table provides a quantitative analysis of casualties suffered as a result of SB operations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Killed Bengali/Tribal</th>
<th>Injured Bengali/Tribal</th>
<th>Kidnapped Bengali/Tribal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991 (up to August)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Compiled from "Handout on CHT". Chittagong Cantonment, 1991 and "Deshbashir Kache Ashahy Parbotyabashir Khola Chithi, 1991" (Open Letter of Helpless Inhabitants of Hill Districts to Countrymen), distributed by Parbatya Nagarik (an organisation of non-tribals).*
As mentioned earlier, SB, the insurgents originated in 1973. The early recruits along with weapons, came from the two groups of armed collaborators of Pakistan army. Over the years the recruitment sources have been diversified and better training facilities arranged. Since the mid-seventies most of the SB recruits came from amongst refugees who had crossed over to India. Through factional infighting and desertion the number of SB has slimmed down over the years; and it is now reported that the total strength would be about 3,000. Out of these, approximately, 2000 belong to the armed cadre, though not all of them possess weapons.

Weapons used by SB are of various origin. Initially, they had weapons of Chinese origin received from Pakistan army in 1971. But since acquiring sanctuaries on the Indian soil they started acquiring Indian weapons. The weapon types of insurgents are as follows:

- rifles, sub-machine guns, light machine guns of Chinese origin;
- old model rifles and light machine guns of British origin;
- rifles, submachine carbines and light machine guns of Indian origin;
- rifles of German and Czechoslovak origin;
- single and double barrel shot guns,
- hand grenades;
- 2"/60 mm mortars; and
- explosives.

Aided by the favourable terrain of CHT the insurgents follow the tactics of guerilla warfare. In general, however, their activities are of the following types:

- ambush on security forces either on land or water;
- harassing fire on security forces camps and village of non-tribals;
- killing of non-tribals as well as tribals not supporting them;
- kidnapping of government officials and prominent citizens including tribals for ransom;
- sabotage activities against power grid lines bridges, culverts, road, construction plants and forest resources extraction equipments;
f. firing on civil transports both on land and water; and

Transborder Security Dimension

Experience suggests that domestic ethnic turmoils not only threaten security of states internally, there may also be spillover effects across state boundaries and in the process a straining of inter-state relations with serious security implications may occur as well. This happens when contiguous ethnic groups draw support, material as well as moral, from each other. In such cases, domestic ethnic conflicts acquire a transborder character and may even get complicated through trans-regional linkages with expatriates and also with extra-regional powers having stakes in the region. The most publicised example of such a phenomenon is the strained Indo-Sri Lankan relationship on the Tamil issue.

The transborder security dimension of CHT ethnicity arises out of reported Indian involvement. The first reported Indian involvement was during the Mujib government when a joint Indo-Bangladesh operation against the insurgent was planned. But the plan could not be carried out because of a sudden political change in Bangladesh by mid-1975. Since then the Indira Gandhi government gave active support to the insurgents allowing them to operate from bases in India. At present there are more than 25 camps in Tripura and six to ten in Mizoram; and three in Burma. Besides getting moral and mutual support from India the SB insurgents also get tactical advice from relevant quarters. Even as late as 1991, Upendralal Chakma, now in India, is reported by India press to have admitted that leadership of SB is now in the hands of Indian intelligence officials. He has also stated, "Over the last fifteen years the Jana Sanghati Samiti has not achieved anything; on the contrary, atrocities of the Santi Bahini have pushed that hill region to a medieval barbarity". There have been reports of SB raiding Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) camp along the border and deep into Bangladesh territory under cover of Indian Border Security Forces (BSF). Recent reports of Indian origin suggest that there is likelihood of SB and United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) operating jointly in the jungles along the Indo-Bangladesh border.
occasionally the Indian press is also found engaged in campaigns to uphold the cause of SB. In July 1986, for example, Jugantar, a leading Calcutta based vernacular daily laboriously tried to justify in its editorial the position of SB. The editorial claimed that in 1947, CHT, with a 97 per cent non-Muslim population should have gone to India according to the rules of partition and that the Indian flag fluttered on the Hill Tracts for six days even after 14 August. The tenor of the editorial suggested as if a historical wrong should be righted.27

How ethnicity complicates inter-state relations of two neighbouring states with security implications for both can be seen from the frequent Indian allegation, ostensibly to counter allegation by Bangladesh, that some tribal insurgents of India get support and training on Bangladesh territory. In November 1991, for example, Assam Chief Minister Hiteswar Saikia categorically stated that ULFA was receiving shelter and support from Bangladesh. In fact, considering the state of the nation with proverbial resource constraint, such a venture for Bangladesh is an improbability.28

Allegations and counter-allegations aside, there cannot be any denying the fact that the Chakma issue, unless resolved through mutual understanding would remain a highly sensitive issue straining mutual relations.

The Future Ahead

For Bangladesh there are a number of reasons to see to a speedy solution to this issue. As has been emphasised in this discussion, this is a security issue for Bangladesh in both intraborder and transborder perspectives. For obvious resource constraints this poor country cannot really afford to go on battling with the insurgents for an indefinite future by keeping a large military establishment bogged down in that most difficult terrain. Again, and as has been made clear in the analysis, a protracted counter-insurgency operation draining a huge amount of scarce resources may jeopardise whatever nation-building efforts that have been undertaken or could be undertaken. For India, a country that itself is now being threatened by strong centrifugal challenges from countless directions, it would not be a wise policy to keep harbouring insurgents from across the border with a motive
to maintain a stranglehold over a weak and poor neighbour. India cannot really hope to sort out its own ethnic dilemmas while playing host to ethnic insurgents from the neighbouring countries.

The solution to this issue should involve a two-dimensional approach. Bangladesh should seek a meaningful and broadbased political accommodation on the basis of a national consensus. With a democratic government in power Bangladesh has the means at its disposal to craft a national consensus. This move by Bangladesh should be aided and abetted by India in helping the exiled insurgents to reciprocate.

Conclusion

As a weak and poor nation Bangladesh has many sources of insecurity, the internal being the more crucial one. Again, of the internal sources the politicised ethnicity demands immediate attention, as through inept handling by successive regimes the issue has grown difficult and multidimensional. A transborder linkage has rendered the issue most intractable. As things stand, any realistic effort at solution involves three concerned parties: Bangladesh, India and the Shanti Bahini. All these parties stand to gain from a quick and satisfactory solution. The Shanti Bahini, which itself has gone through so many vicissitudes over the years, should realise, as the Mizos have done after more than two decades, that the desired option can be found only through meaningful dialogue and negotiation and certainly not through indefinite and inconsequential bush wars.
Notes and References


10. The Chittagong Hill Tracts is now divided into three districts: Rangamati, Khagrachari and Bandarban. Area and population of these three districts are as follows:

- **Rangamati**: Area 2,351 square miles; Population 301,753 (1981 Census); Tribals, 184,815; Non-tribals, 116,938; Tribes: Chakma, Marma, Tripura, Tanchangya, Lushai, Pankho, Khiyang; and Mro.
- **Khagrachari**: Area 1,000 square miles; population, 281,731 (1981 Census); Tribals 167,125 Non-tribals 114,606; Tribes: Chakma; Marma; and Tripura.
- **Bandarban**: Area 1,738 square miles; Population 171,500 (1981 Census); Tribals 90,422; Non-tribals 81,078; Tribes: Marma, Mro, Tripura, Tanchangya, Bom, Chak, Chakma, Khiyang, Khumi, Lushai, and Pankho.

11. The tribal sources, however, have different explanations for the same set of events. The tribal elites were of the view that as per the principle of division of the subcontinent into India and Pakistan CHT should have been included into India. Their role during the liberation war was, as they argue, was not the result of a mere snap-decision; on the contrary, it was the outcome of stepmotherly treatment meted out to them by the Awami League leaders who were in charge of the resistance movement. Despite express desire by Chakma Youths to join the liberation war the political leadership remained cool towards them throughout the early phase. But K.K. Ray, a member of Chakma royal family and Mong Chief Mong Prue went over to India and joined the war effort. The Chakma sources also argue that Raja Tridiv Roy, had to seek the umbrella of Pakistani support as he had to be contacted by the liberation forces, nor was he himself successful in arranging for the sought after contract. It is to be noted that in the 1970 general election he had been elected an independent member of the Pakistan National Assembly. Again, countering the Awami League allegation of the tribals having gone over to the Pakistan side they also point out that without their active cooperation the fleeing East Bengal Regiment under the command of Major Ziaur Rahman could not have crossed over to India through the Hill Tracts region. Information gathered by author on three trips to the three hill districts. See also *Tin Parbatya Zilae Sthanio Sarkar Parishad Baybastha; Oitihasik Prekkhapat O Bastabata*, (The System of


14. The tribal members of 'Mujahid' and Civil Armed Force, who went into hiding immediately after the birth of Bangladesh began to appear in public by the end of 1972; and began supporting the political demands of PCJSS. In those days of general breakdown of law and order throughout the country these armed youths with their training and organizational ability rendered a valuable service, although unofficially, by helping restore normalcy in the rural areas of the hill districts. It is reported that they were even effective in checking theft and robbery. The common people, in gratitude, called the M Shanti Bahini (Peace Force). These very youths became recruits for the military wing of PCJSS and retained their ascribed name.

15. Meaning a land of Jummas, a word which is a distortion of the original word Jumya, which means tribal farmers who grow crops on the slopes of hills. Another origin suggests that the word Jumma is a pejorative one given by the Bengalis to describe illiterate and underdeveloped tribals. But by the early seventies Manabendra Narayan Larma and his brother Shantu Larma, the two tribal leaders were found exhorting tribal nationalism with the slogan of "Jummaland".

16. Section 36 of the Constitution reads: "Subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the public interest, every citizen shall have the right to move freely throughout Bangladesh, to reside and settle in any place therein and to leave and re-enter Bangladesh".

17. Bangladesh Observer, 31 December 1986. In July 1986, after twenty years of continuous insurgency the Mizos under their leader Laldenga signed a "Memorandum of Settlement" with the Central Government. Under the new arrangement, Laldenga headed the interim administration but his cabinet was a mixed one taking members from Mizo National Front (MNF) and the Congress (I). With a promise for full statehood the Mizo National Army (MNA), the military wing of MNF, numbering about 1500 laid down arms. A constitutional amendment was also proposed at that time to put Mizo religious and social practices outside the federal laws. And, finally, MNF was to emerge as a mainstream
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political party. See New Nation, 2 July 1986.


20. See above.

21. Bangladesh military sources put the total strength of SB at 700 to 1000. See Report, p. 47.

22. Ibid. p. 16.

23. Ibid. p. 47.


28. Sheikh Hasina, the Opposition Chief, when confronted with this allegation, and also that ULFA has bank accounts in Dhaka replied to Indian Journalists at Calcutta Airport, "I don't believe this too. Give me the account numbers and I will look into it". Daily Star, 26.11.91. Since Sheikh Hasina was not given any of the account numbers, the allegation seems to be a mere propaganda gimmick.