

13 April 2006

Begum Khaleda Zia
Honorable Prime Minister
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Your Excellency,

We are writing to express our serious concern regarding the violent attack perpetrated by Bengali settlers against the indigenous inhabitants of Sa Prue Para, Joysen Para, Chakra Karbari Para and Nua Para villages in Mahalchari sub-district of Khagrachari Hill District on 3 April 2006. We are deeply shocked and angered to learn that two young Marma women were cruelly gang raped by the settlers. A Buddhist orphanage and many homes were ransacked, and some 30 indigenous people were injured, several of them critically, in the settlers' attempt to grab land. It is particularly disturbing to note that the personnel of the Nuapara Arms Police Battalion Camp, located only about 200 yards from the area of the incident, did nothing to stop the attack, and were seen at the scene of the crime.

This incident has occurred in the context of intensified illegal grabbing of indigenous peoples' lands by Bengali settlers in the region:

- More than 115 houses have been built on some 100 acres of titled indigenous land in the nearby Gamaridhala area, allegedly with the assistance and protection of local military forces. Promises by military authorities to withdraw the houses remain unimplemented.
- The Buddha Shishu Ghar orphanage has lost almost all of its titled land to illegal land grabbing.
- On March 4th, several indigenous residents involved in non-violent protests against this land grabbing were severely beaten and arrested by army personnel. The next day, military barged into the Khagrachari court, escorted two of them outside, placed firearms in their hands and took false photos of them. They remain in police custody, facing false charges of illegal weapons possession.

How can Bangladesh seek a seat on the UN Human Rights Council when its own human rights situation is in such disorder? How long must the indigenous peoples of the Chittagong Hill Tracts suffer in silence as they are robbed of their lands, lives, and dignity with total impunity, under the very noses of the security forces purportedly there to protect them? Must Bangladesh repeat the crimes that the white men perpetrated against the indigenous peoples of the Americas, or the Japanese against the Ainu people? Should not a nation that fought so nobly to safeguard its own language and identity, also respect the wishes of indigenous peoples to maintain their own way of life?

We strongly urge the government to immediately take the following actions to correct the injustices of this heinous incident:

1. bring to justice the perpetrators of the 3 April communal attack, particularly those involved in the rape incident.
2. provide free treatment to the injured, compensation for damages, and protection from any further violence or land grabbing.
3. investigate the role of Nuapara arms police battalion in the 3 April incident, and the military authorities in land grabbing in the Gamaridhala area. Take disciplinary/legal action against personnel derelict in fulfilling their duties or responsible for aiding/abetting illegal activities.
4. remove the new houses built by Bengali settlers on disputed lands in Gamaridhala, and return the land to the indigenous land owners.
5. release the indigenous people arrested on March 4th and withdraw the false cases against them.

We shall bring the above issues to the attention of our government, particularly the authorities in charge of official development assistance. Any inaction on these matters will not go unnoticed.

Sincerely yours,

Takashi Shimosawa,

President,

Jumma Net

5F Marukou Bldg., 1-20-6 Higashi Ueno, Taito-ku, Tokyo 110-0015

Tel/Fax: 03-3831-1072

E-mail: office@jumma.sytes.net

CC:

Mr. Mani Swapan Dewan, Honorable Deputy Minister, Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs

Mr. Md. Lutfozzaman Babor, Honorable State Minister, The Ministry of Home Affairs

Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the UN

Endorsed by the following organizations:

Asian Centre for Human Rights

Australia Jumma Federation

Ayus - A Network of Buddhist Volunteers on International Cooperation

Chittagong Hill Tracts Children's Fund

International CHT Committee for Peace (ICCP)

Japan CHT Committee

Jumma Peoples Alliance (JPA)

Jumma Peoples Network of the Asia Pacific
Jumma Peoples Network UK (JPN UK)
Jumma Peoples Network-Japan
Network for Indonesian Democracy,Japan
NIPPONZAN MYOHOJI
Organising Committee CHT Campaign
Shimin Gaikou Centre (Citizens' Centre for Diplomacy)
The Buddhist NGO Network of Japan (BNN)
The International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism (IMADR)
The Japan Citizens' Coalition for the UN International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples
The Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO)
Walking together with the Jummas
WE21 JAPAN
WE21 JAPAN Hiratsuka
WE21 JAPAN Izumi
WE21Japan Asahi
WE21Japan Ebina
WE21Japan Hodogaya

Endorsed by the following individuals:

Abe, Manami, Hokkaido, Japan
Akama, Jyoji, Rissyokouseikai, Chiba, Japan
Amino, Nana, Yamanashi, Japan
Ando, Ryoko, Tokyo, Japan
Aoyama, Aki, Tokyo, Japan
Arai, Katsumi, WE21 JAPAN,
Arai, Toshiyuki, Rissyokouseikai, Chiba, Japan
Arimura, Humie, Nipponzan Myohoji, Japan
Asapathanwong, Tharaporn, Asian Resource Foundation, Thailand
Azukizawa, Chikayo, Saitama, Japan
Bannerman, Ian, Chiang Rai, Thailand
Bujang, Mark, Programme Coordinator, Borneo Resources Institute (BRIMAS), Sarawak, Malaysia
Cazedessus, Jules, New York, USA
Chakma, Kulottam, Sydney, Australia
Chakma, Bishwa Jit, Sydney, Australia
Chakma, Sanchay, Asian Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Network, former UPDF member,
Switzerland
Chakma, Suhas, Director, Asian Centre for Human Rights, India
Chakma, Prasenjit, ,
Chatterjee, Ardhendu S, Development Activist, West Bengal, India

Coop, Stephanie, Graduate School of Law, Aoyama University, Tokyo, Japan
Date, Miyuki, WE21 JAPAN Hodogaya, Kanagawa, Japan
Dewan, Rupayan, Councillor, Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council, Bangladesh
Egami, Akira, Nipponzan Myohoji, Japan
Eimon, Ivar, Tokyo, Japan
Elizaga, Rick, Kyoto, Japan
Enda, Fumie, WE21JAPAN Midori, Japan
Enda, Kiyoshi, Kanagawa, Japan
Enda, Tetuya, Kanagawa, Japan
Enda, Youya, Kanagawa, Japan
Endo, Teruko, Saitama, Japan
Erni, Christian, Social Anthropologist, Ph. D., IWGIA Programme Coordinator Asia,
Eskildsen, Roy, Bang Saeng, Thailand
Eskildsen, Suree, Bang Saeng, Thailand
Eskildsen, Stephen, Chattanooga, TN, USA
Eto, Masahiko, Tokyo, Japan
Fujii, Miki, Staff writer at Daily Yomiuri published by Yomiuri Shimbun, Tokyo, Japan
Fujikawa, Tinnawanso Kiyohiro, Ven., ,
Fujimoto, Nobuki, Student of Graduate School, Osaka City University, Osaka, Japan
Fujioka, Hikari, Tokyo, Japan
Fujioka, Mieko, Guatemala Project Coordinator, IMADR, Japan
Fukui, Kikuno, WE21 JAPAN,
Fukuyama, Toshie, Tokyo, Japan
Fukuzawa, Ikufumi, DesignFF Co. Ltd., President, Yokohama, Japan
Furusawa, Toshio, , Japan
Furusawa, Mei, Kanagawa, Japan
Furuya, Noriko, Ibaraki, Japan
Gunji, Mayumi, WE21, Japan
Gupta, Atul, ,
Gyurmet, Skarma, Tokyo, Japan
Haejima, Wataru, Photo Journalist, Tokyo, Japan
Hamano, Sachiko, Japan Overseas Christian Medical Cooperative Service, Tokyo, Japan
Hanamori, Miyoko, Saitama, Japan
Hani, Sawako, Tokyo, Japan
Hara, Mizuho, Hokkaido, Japan
Haraguchi, Rituko, WE21 JAPAN Midori, Japan
Hariki, Keiko, Kansai NGO Council, Japan
Hashimoto, Mari, Kyoto, Japan
Hatanaka, Naoko, Kyouto, Japan
Hatanaka, Katuyuki, Kyouto, Japan

Hattori, Takashi, Ayus, Osaka, Japan
Hayashi, Masaaki, Journalist, Japan
Hida, Yoshio, Tokyo, Japan
Hirano, , Shizuoka, Japan
Hosokawa, Komei, Professor, Kyoto Seika University, Kyoto, Japan
Hujii, Minako, NETTOWAKUYOKOHAMA KOUNAN, Kanagawa, Japan
Hujimura, Yoko, Peace Brigades International (PBI),
Hujita, Humio, Ven., Nipponzan Myohoji, Japan
Ichihara, Ayuko, Tokyo, Japan
Ichinohe, Shoko, Aomori, Japan
Iijima, Saeko, Tokyo, Japan
Ikeuchi, Kiyoko, Saitama, Japan
Inagaki, Kiyu, Kyoto, Japan
Inoue, Kenji, Ayus, Tokyo, Japan
Inoue, Ikue, Saitama, Japan
Iseki, Tamaki, Saitama, Japan
Ishida, Yoko, Rissyokouseikai, Chiba, Japan
Ishikawa, Kuniko, Tokyo, Japan
Ishikawa, Yusuke, Tokyo, Japan
Ishimoto, Hiromichi, ,
Isikawa, Naoko, Kanagawa, Japan
Isoda, Noriko, Kanagawa, Japan
Isogawa, Midori, WE21 JAPAN Midori, Kanagawa, Japan
Ito, Miwako, WE21 JAPAN,
Ito, Shingo, Rissyokouseikai, Chiba, Japan
Ito, Nobumichi, ,
Iwashita, Ryoko, Tokyo, Japan
Iwata, Yoshiko, Saitama, Japan
Iwata, Michiko, Chiba, Japan
Iwaya, Sachiko, Kanagawa, Japan
Iyobe, Noriko, Saitama, Saitama
Izumi, Empuku, Kanagawa, Japan
Kaida, Machiko, Phnom Penh,, Cambodia
Kamata, Yoji, Kanagawa, Japan
Kameyama, Koujiro, MTK, Kanagawa, Japan
Kanazawa, Kentaro, Hyogo, Japan
Kataoka, Kazuko, WE21 JAPAN,
Kawabata, Kumiko, WE21JAPAN Midori, Japan
Kawabata, Akitugu, Kanagawa, Japan
Kawabata, Ryo, Kanagawa, Japan

Kawabata, Issei, Kanagawa, Japan
Kawabata, Maki, Kanagawa, Japan
Kawabata, Touma, Kanagawa, Japan
Kawabata, Haruka, Kanagawa, Japan
Kawakami, Masae, Saitama, Japan
Kawaki, Kieko, WE21JAPAN Midori, Japan
Kawamura, Tomoko, WE21 JAPAN,
Kawamura, Akio, Associate Professor, Kobe College, Hyogo, Japan
Kawamura, Betsy, London, UK
Kikuchi, Takashi, Nonviolent Peaceforce, Japan
Kimura, Iori, Tokyo, Japan
Kinoshita, Yoshihito, Kanagawa, Japan
Kishira, Keiko, Saitama, Japan
Kitawaki, Mitsuko, Saitama, Japan
Kizu, Hiromitsu, Ven., Nipponzan Myohoji, Japan
Kobayashi, Hiromi, Kyoto, Japan
Kobayashi, Taizen, ,
Kohiki, Gyojo, Ven., Nipponzan Myohoji, Japan
Koike, Hiromi, Japan Overseas Christian Medical Cooperative Service, Japan
Konno, Chieko, Saitama, Japan
Kono, Miyuki, WE21 JAPAN Hodogaya, Kanagawa, Japan
Kudo, Setsuko, JUBILEE KANSAI NET-WORK, Hyogo, Japan
Kuroda, Yumi, Saitama, Japan
Kurosawa, Masako, Kanagawa, Japan
Maekawa, Minoru, President of SOKSABAY JAPAN,
Masuoka, Ken, Tokyo East Timor Association, Japan
Matsumoto, Makiko, , Japan
Matsumoto, Keiji, Tokyo, Japan
Matsumoto, Miki, Kyoto, Japan
Matsumoto, Tomokazu, ,
Matsushima, Jun, Meiji University, Chiba, Japan
Matsushima, Kayo, Rissyokouseikai, Chiba, Japan
Mazane, Kazumi, Okayama University, Okayama Prefecture, Japan
McDonnell, James, Tokyo, Japan
McDonnell, Randall, Michigan, USA
Mio, Satoko, Rissyokouseikai, Chiba, Japan
Mita, Chikako, Shabuj Bangla, Tokyo, Japan
Miwa, Tio, Rissyokouseikai, Chiba, Japan
Miyakawa, Ikumi, WE21 JAPAN,
Miyama, Tomoyo, Rissyokouseikai, Chiba, Japan

Miyashita, Waka, Osaka, Japan
Mochida, Kanshin, Ven., Honkyuji Temple, Tokyo, Japan
Mochizuki, Nobuko, Tokyo, Japan
Mori, Kuniko, Saitama, Japan
Morii, Tetsuya, Tokyo, Japan
Morimoto, Kazuo, Survival International, Chiba, Japan
Murata, Yasumi, Meijo University, Nagoya, Japan
Nagahama, Emiko, WE21 JAPAN,
Nagayama, Takako, Kanagawa, Japan
Nakahara, Takanobu, Hiroshima, Japan
Nakahara, Takanobu, Hiroshima, Japan
Nakajima, Takamasa, Rissyokouseikai, Chiba, Japan
Nakamura, Michiko, WE21 JAPAN Asahi, Kanagawa, Japan
Nakano, Shogo, Niwano Peace Foundation, Tokyo, Japan
Nakano, Kimie, Tokyo, Japan
Nakano, Takahiro, Tokyo, Japan
Nakano, Yoshikazu, Fukuoka, Japan
Nakano, Itsuko, Fukuoka, Japan
Nakase, Junko, Kanagawa, Japan
Nakashima, Akiko, WE21JAPAN Midori, Japan
Namise, Yoshiko, WE21 JAPAN,
Naruse, Etsuko, WE21 JAPAN Asahi,
Nasu, Kosho, ,
Natori, Tomoko, Tokyo, Japan
Niekawa, Kyoko, WE21 JAPAN Hodogaya, Kanagawa, Japan
Nomura, Tamio, Amnesty International, Japan
Nomura, Shushin, ,
Ogasawara, Hiroko, Saitama, Japan
Ogaura, Fukuko, WE21JAPAN Midori, Japan
Ogawa, Hideyo, WE21 JAPAN,
Ohata, Yutaka, Nonviolent Peaceforce Japan
Ohki, Kenji, Shimonoseki (Yamaguchi) East Timor Association, Japan
Okada, Maho, WE21 JAPAN,
Okanouchi, Tadashi, Professor, HOSEI University, Tokyo, Japan
Okazawa, Tomohiro, Tokyo, Japan
Okochi, Hidehito, Executive Director, Campaign for the Children of Palestine
Okuda, Junji, Hokkaido, Japan
Okuda, Chieko, Osaka, Japan
Onte, Masako, Saitama, Japan
Oosugi, Yoko, Kyoto, Japan

Ootomi, Akira, Editor in Chief, Chechen News, Japan
Osada, Noriko, Tokyo, Japan
Prajnalankar, Bhikkhu, Ven., , General Secretary, Peace Campaign Group, New Delhi, India
Rosan, Daido, Ven., monk/professor, Saitama, Japan
Saito, Aya, Tokyo, Japan
Saito, Bunji, ODA-NET, Kanagawa, Japan
Saitoh, Kiyoshi, Heiraku J.H. School, Yokohama, Kanagawa, Japan
Saitoh, Akiko, Risshokouseikai, Chiba, Japan
Sakamoto, Masakazu, Rissyokouseikai, Chiba, Japan
Sakamoto, Chihiro, Kyoto, Japan
Sasaki, Shiro, Rissyokouseikai, Chiba, Japan
Sekimoto, Hiroko, Saitama, Japan
Shibamiya, Kiyomi, Kanagawa, Japan
Shibata, Nobuyuki, Fukuoka, Japan
Shibata, Kazuo, Fukuoka, Japan
Shibata, Masae, Kanagawa, Japan
Shibutani, Masako, Kyoto, Japan
Shigeta, Yuko, WE21 JAPAN,
Shigeta, Shincho, ,
Shimata, Takako, Saitama, Japan
Shimizu, Ai, Tokyo, Japan
Shimizu, Kimiko, Saitama, Japan
Shinya, Hisako, Nagano, Japan
Shiomi, Toshiyuki, Professor of Tokyo University, Tokyo, Japan
Simazaki, Kazumi, WE21JAPAN Midori, Japan
Sonoda, Kumiko, WE21 JAPAN Hodogaya, Kanagawa, Japan
Sugahara, Tomoyuki, ,
Suganuma, Katue, WE21 JAPAN,
Sugiyama, Naoko, Kunitachi, Tokyo, Japan
Suzuki, Junko, Kanagawa, Japan
Suzuki, Itsuko, MTK, Tokyo, Japan
Suzuki, Yumiko, WE21 JAPAN Hodogaya, Kanagawa, Japan
Suzuki, Sumiko, WE21JAPAN Midori, Japan
Takahashi, Kana, Rissyokouseikai, Chiba, Japan
Takahashi, Baku, Aichi, Japan
Takai, Keiko, Tokyo, Japan
Takamoto, Yoshihisa, Nipponzan Myohoji, Japan
Takaoka, Hisako, Kyoto, Japan
Take, Tokiko, Rissyokouseikai, Chiba, Japan
Takeda, Takao, Ven., Nipponzan Myohoji, Japan

Takeuchi, Kaori, ,
TAMEiSHei, Saitama, Japan
Tanaka, Shozou, , Japan
Tanaka, Keiko, Tokyo, Japan
Tatematsu, Yukiko, Kanazawa, Japan
Tatematsu, Mikio, Kanagawa, Japan
Tatsuno, Keiko, Tokyo, Japan
Terao, Terumi, Meritus professor of Nagoya Institute of Technology, Japan
Teshima, Takemasa, Ph. D., Fukuoka, Japan
Thomas, Elizabeth, ,
Todaka, Jinko, WE21 JAPAN,
Toga, Tatsuro, Tokyo, Japan
Toomata, Toshiko, Kanagawa, Japan
Toyoshima, Fumie, WE21JAPAN Midori, Japan
Tsuji, Tomoko, Tokyo, Japan
Ueda, Rei, Tokyo, Japan
Ueda, Nami, Keio University, Tokyo, Japan
Uozumi, Kohsei, Ibaraki, Japan
Ushio, Kimiko, Tokyo, Japan
Wakayama, Kazuyo, Rissyokouseikai, Chiba, Japan
Watabe, Eriko, Saitama, Japan
Watanabe, Hiroko, WE21 JAPAN Hodogaya, Kanagawa, Japan
Watts, Jonathan - INEB - Kamakura, Japan
Winchester, Mark, Hitotsubashi University, Japan
Wong, Meng Chuo, , Malaysia
Yamada, Keiko, ,
Yamagata, Tatsufumi, Tokyo, Japan
Yamaguchi, Kanoh, Journalist, Saitama, Japan
Yamaguchi, Kazue, Kanagawa, Japan
Yamanaka, Nobuyuki, Hyogo, Japan
Yamato, Keiko, Tokyo, Japan
Yamauchi, Mayu, Japan Overseas Christian Medical Cooperative Service, Tokyo, Japan
Yamazaki, Yumiko, Kanagawa, Japan
Yamazaki, Midori, Tokyo, Japan
Yanagi, Yukiko, Saitama, Japan
Yazawa, Toru, , Japan
Yoshida, Miyuki, Kyoto, Japan
Yoshimizu, Rie, Rissyokouseikai, Chiba, Japan
Yoshitake, Sanae, WE21 JAPAN Ninomiya, Kanagawa, Japan
Yukishita, Yoichi, Tokyo, Japan