



An NGO supporting the indigenous Jumma Peoples of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh

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

Phone: 03-3831-1072 FAX: 03-3831-1072 E-mail: office@jumma.sytes.net

May 8th, 2008

Honorable Adviser A F Hassan Aariff,
Ministry of Law, Justice & Parliament Affairs

CC: Honorable Ambassador, Ashraf-ud-Doula, Bangladesh Embassy, Tokyo

Subject: Appeal for release of indigenous detainees and re-investigation

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the cases of Mr. Santoshita Chakma (Bakul), General Secretary, Returnee Jumma Refugee Welfare Association and Mr. Ranglai Mro, Sualok UP Chairman (Bandarban), and some 50 other indigenous leaders of the CHTs detained during the emergency.

Mr. Santoshita Chakma is personally known by many Japanese people as a refugee leader working selflessly to protect the lands and rights of indigenous peoples. We were greatly shocked to learn that he was arrested June 3rd 2007 after attending a meeting of the refugee rehabilitation taskforce, and is now facing charges of murder and extortion. Mr. Ranglai Mro is an outspoken Mro leader who tried to protect ancestral lands from expansion of a military facility. We have heard he was tortured brutally after his arrest on Feb. 23rd 2007, and given a draconian 17 years sentence for possession of arms. Both of their families have suffered great psychological trauma and economic hardship making it difficult to continue their children's education.

We are deeply concerned that Santoshita, Ranglai, and approximately 50 other indigenous leaders (please refer to the attached partial list) may have been falsely charged to suppress their activities for indigenous rights. We have heard disturbing reports of torture, fabrication of charges and undue intervention into the judiciary by military authorities in cases against indigenous activists. For instance, there are serious doubts that torture led to the deaths of Mr. Suresh Mohan Chakma s/o Phedera Chakma three days after his detention on March 3rd 2007 by Ghilachari Army camp in Naniarchar, Rangamati district, and of Rasel Chakma s/o Paritosh Chakma during detention by the military in Naniarchar on August 5th 2007. It is reported that Mr. Satyabir Dewan, General Secretary of the PCJSS and others have been arrested for illegal possession of weapons after the army had planted arms in their dwellings. It is also claimed that military officers verbally ordered the judges to declare punishment in the case of Mr. Satyabir Dewan and other indigenous leaders.

We urge you to immediately release and withdraw all charges against Mr. Santoshita Chakma, and to grant bail to Mr. Ranglai Mro pending disposition of his case. Furthermore, we call upon you to launch a re-investigation into the arrests and detentions of all indigenous Jumma leaders to ascertain whether there were any abuses such as torture, fabrication of charges, or undue intervention into the judiciary. We ask that the results of the re-investigation be made public, and if any abuses are uncovered, that appropriate measures, including criminal or disciplinary proceedings, be taken against those responsible. Finally, we encourage you to ensure the humane treatment and administration of justice for all detainees.

Sincerely,

Takashi Shimosawa

President, Jumma Net, Japan

1. Partial list of indigenous Jumma activists arrested during emergency:

Sl.	Name and address	Designation	Date of arrest & jail now staying	Description of case	State of case and jail staying
1.	Bikram Marma, Chandraghona Christian Missionary Hospital, Kaptai upazila	President of PCJSS, Kaptai upazila branch	04/02/07, Chittagong jail	Case with Chandraghona police station, section- 19(a)(f) of Arms Act 1878	Sentenced 17 years imprisonment by Chittong judge court declared in July 2007.
2.	Sumit Chakma Jurachari, Rangamati	Assistant General Secretary (AGS) of PCP, Rangamati district branch	06/02/07, Rangamati jail		Case is running
3.	Sai Mong Marma, s/o Abu Mong Marma, Raikhali, Chandraghona area, Kaptai upazila	Organising Secretary, Kaptai upazila branch of PCJSS	11/02/07, Chittagong jail	GR no. 25/07, Chandraghona police station, section- 19(a)(f) of Arms Act 1878	Sentenced 10 years imprisonment by Chittagong judge court declared in July 2007
4.	Satyabir Dewan (56) s/o Hira Lal Dewan, Balpiya Adam, Rangamati Town	General Secretary of PCJSS	18/02/07, Rangamati jail	1. Case no. 6 of Kotowali police station dated 18-02-2007, section 19(a)(f) of Arm Act of 1878 for keeping illegal arm; 2. Case no. 1 of Jurachari police station dated 01-12-2006, section 364/34 of BPC for killing; 3. Case no. 12 of Kotowali police station dated 25-02-2007, section 25(b) of SPA 1974 for keeping illegal foreign coin; 4. Case no. 9 of Kotowali police station dated 29-01-2007, section 302/34 of BPC for killing; 5. Case no. 1 of Naniarchar police station dated 12-06-2006, section 326/307/34 of BPC for attempt to murder	Sentenced 17 years imprisonment by Chittagong judge court declared in July 2007 for arm case in June 2007 and other cases is running.
5.	Bimal Kanti Chakma (50) s/o Dhirendra Lal Chakma, Banjogichara, Jurachari upazial	Central Member of PCJSS	18/02/07, Rangamati jail	Section- 364/302/34 of BPC for killing after kidnap	Case is running.
6.	Ranjit Kumar Dewan (50) s/o Satyandra Nath Dewan Banjogichara, Jurachari upazila	President of Jurachari upazila branch of PCJSS	18/02/07, Rangamati jail	Section- 364/302/34 of BPC for killing after kidnap	Case is running
7.	Udayjoy Chakma (47) s/o Chandrajoy Chakma,	General Secretary of	18/02/07, Rangamati	Section- 364/302/34 of BPC for killing after	Case is running

	Ghilatali, Jurachari upazila	Jurachari upazila branch of PCJSS	jail	kidnap	
8.	Mayachan Chakma (46) s/o Kshirode Ranjan Chakma, Banjogichara, Jurachari upazila	Orgamising Secretary of Jurachari upazila branch of PCJSS	18/02/07, Rangamati jail	Section- 364/302/34 of BPC for killing after kidnap	Case is running
9.	Ranglai Mro (45), Ujanai Para, Bandarban Town	Chairman of Sualok union council and headman of Sualok mouza	23/02/07, Chittagong jail	Arms case with BAndarban police station	Sentenced 17 years imprisonment by Chittagong judge court declared in July 2007 for arm case in June 2007.
10.	Balabhadra Chakma alias Pranjal (45) s/o Kalendra Chakma, College Tilla, Dighinala upazila	Vice President of Dighinala upazila branch	05/03/07, granted bail	Case no. 2 of Dighinala police station dated 06-03-2007, section 385/507 of BPC	Case is running
11.	Manubha Ranjan Chakma (47) s/o Sudhir Chandra Dewan, Karengatali, Baghaichari upazila	President of Baghaichari upazila branch of PCJSS	05/03/07, Khagrachari jail	Case no. 6, dated 15/02/07 of Dighinala police station, section- 326/307/302/34 of BPC and Case no. GR 37/2007, section 302 of BPC, and case no. 49/2007, section 307/34 of BPC	Case is running
12.	Tatindra Lal Chakma alias Pele (55), Khagrachari Town	Central Committee member of PCJSS	05/05/07, Khagrachari jail	1. Case with Dighinala police station, section- 385/386 BPC 2. Case under section- 16(2) of Emergency Power Act 2007	Case is running
13.	Nagor Chakma (31) s/o Sudhir Chandra Chakma, Baradam, Dighinala upazila	Businessman	05/05/07, Khagrachari jail	Case with Dighinala police station, section- 385/386 BPC	Case is running
14.	Amar Jiban Chakma (36), Rangamati	Chairman of Ghilachari union parishad	07/05/07, Rangamati jail	Fake currency and drug case with Naniarchar police station	Case is running
15.	Santoshita Chakma alias Bakul, s/o Sidhir Chandra Chakma, Mahajan Para, Khagrachari Town	General Secretary of CHT Returnee Jumma Refugee Welfare Association	03/06/07, Khagrachari jail	1. GD no. 138 dated 03/06/07 of Khagrachari police station, Section- 16(2) of Emergency Power Act 2007 2. Case no. 6, dated 15/02/07, section- 326/307/302/34 BPC	Case is running
16.	Bholash Tripura, s/o Jamaddar Tripura, Khagrapur, Khagrachari	Finance Secretary of Khagrachari district branch of PCP	14/06/07, Khagrachari jail	Case with Khagrachari police station, section- 19(a) of Arms Act, keeping illegal arms	Case is running
17.	Fattua Chakma alias	a returnee	16/06/07,	GR-179/07 of	Case is running

	Jangi	member of PCJSS	Rangamati jail	Longadu police station, dated 22-06-07, Section-365/386/34 BPC, kidnapping and collection of ransom and Case with Kotowali police station, Section-364/302/34 for killing after kidnap	
18.	Runtu Chakma	Member of Khagrachari upazila branch, PCJSS	18/07/07, Khagrachari jail	Arms case	Case is running
19.	Saprue Marma (70) s/o Niche Marma Fasya Mahajan Para, Maischari union, Mahalchari upazila	Villager	10/020/07, Khagrachari jail		
20.	Mongshe Marma (32) s/o Chai Prue Marma Fasya Mahajan Para, Maischari union, Mahalchari upazila	Villager	10/020/07, Khagrachari jail		
21.	Ripon Chakma from Noa Bazaar of Batnatoli of Manikchari upazila	UPDF activist	May 07 2007, Khagrachari jail		
22.	Milton Chakma from Chengi Bridge in Khagrachari town	UPDF leader	29 May 2007, Khagrachari jail		

2. Partial list of false case lodged against indigenous Jumma activists during emergency:

Sl.	Name of the activists	Address	Description of case
1.	Shaktipada Tripura	Khagrapur, Khagrachari	Case with Khagrachari police station, section- 19(a) of Arms Act, keeping illegal arms
2.	Laxmi Prasad Chakma s/o Satyabrata Chakma	Kalyanpur, Rangamati	1. GR-179/07 of Longadu police station, dated 22-06-07, Section- 365/386/34 BPC, kidnapping and collection of ransom and 2. Case with Kotowali police station, Section- 364/302/34 for killing after kidnap
3.	Hitoshi Chakma (40)	Balpiya Adam, Rangamati	GR-179/07 of Longadu police station, dated 22-06-07, Section- 365/386/34 BPC, kidnapping and collection of ransom
4.	Sahan Chakma (43)	TTC Area, Rangamati	-do-
5.	Sukhamoy Chakma (40) s/o Jagadish Chakma	Hemachandra Para, Longadu	-do-
6.	Mangal Kanti Chakma (32) UP Chairman	Longadu	-do-
7.	Nirode Ranjan Chakma (Raktim) (52)	Harikata, Longadu	-do-
8.	Nirmal Kanti Chakma (32) s/o Dinaram Chakma	Jurachari	-do-
9.	Prabartak Chakma (45) s/o Sudhabar Chakma	Jurachari	-do-
10.	Suresh Kumar Chakma (43) Chairman, Banjogichara UP	Jurachari	-do-
11.	Sindhu Priya Chakma (30) s/o Bishnu Chakma	Jurachari	-do-
12.	Ritan Chakma (28)	Jurachari	-do-
13.	Ashapura Chakma (42)	TTC Road, Rangamati	-do-
14.	Tribindu Chakma s/o Fulkamal Chakma	Aimachara, Barkal	Section- 364/302/34 of BPC for killing after kidnap
15.	Utpal Chakma s/o Birasen Chakma	Aimachara, Barkal	-do-
16.	Jayanta Lal Chakma s/o Khamar Chakma	Madyam Balukhali, Jurachari	-do-
17.	Kenon Babu Dewan s/o Jatindra Dewan	Ghilatali, Jurachari	-do-