UNEVEN DEVELOPMENT: THE POLITICS OF PAHARI-BENGALI DISCOURSE IN CHT

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the situation of local capacity for participating in development programs that initiated by the government and various development agencies for the betterment of Pahari people in the CHT. It will uncover the secret process of 'Pahari' (the Hill People) -Bengali polarization in relation to the development programs in after accord situation. The recurrent process of dichotomization by the state in the name of development has intensified gradually. The state policy of continuous intrusion and alien treatment to the 'Pahari' people made them suspicious that anything comes from plain land. So, this paper emphasizes the interaction between the state policy and the ethnic minority constructing the discourse 'Pahari'-Bengali in Bangladesh through the development programs in relation to historical ascendency as well as current experiences. It unfolds, how state policy justifies authoritative dominance and legalizes the power exercise practiced by ethnic majority and how these processes wipe out the sense of cultural identity of 'Pahari' people on the pretext of development.

Keywords: CHT accord, Development, Development agency, Pahari-Bengali discourse, State policy.

INTRODUCTION

This paper is mostly based on field experiences leaning to the rigorous review on secondary resources with qualitative approach, reflecting counter scenario of the established and popularized notion of development for underdeveloped or marginal people. The major objective

of this paper is to examine the situation of before accord and after dynamics of changing trends that how the peace process opened the door for state intervention and made the opportunity for imposing central provision. It is a common trend among the academician that many of them want to consider the accord is the landmark in the history of Bangladesh and believe that it paves the way for the peace, development and representation of the region's people. But this paper will preface counter narratives and rises questions about the intervening policy of the state on the pretext of development, control and security. The qualitative approach has been followed by the observation for particular fact and employing existing literature on the CHT for searching the reality behind the fantasy.

In the conventional understanding of development perspective is providing traditional means of measurement on economic generation with various numerical parameters consisting income growth and GDP (Gross Domestic Product). It may connote improvements in well-being, living standard and opportunities. It may also refer to the historical process of commodification, industrialization, modernization or globalization (Marc and Angelique, 2005, p. 1). It can be legitimizing strategy for the state, and its ambiguity lends itself to discourse of citizen entitlement as well as state control (Cooper and Packard, 1997). Although the radical theoretical tradition of development theories, covering various dependencies and neo-Marxist analyses tried to explain issues such as dependency[1] and underdevelopment, dependent development, class and the state, articulation of the modes of production, and so on (Randall and Theobald, 1985; Simon and Ruccio, 1986), their primary emphasis remained in the economic sphere. Out of the stereotypical conception of development, anthropologists have considered two theoretical debates in the disciplinary arena for understanding development: 'formalists' and 'substantivist'. Formalists[2] believe in the universal model of development largely symmetrical to the development theory of classical economists. On the other hand, substantivists[3] argue that development indeed culturally contextual, locally specified and embedded in local discourse (Uddin, 2013). Considering both of the theoretical debate about development, this paper will analyze the dichotomy between '*Pahari-Bengali'* relating to the development programs taken by the state and different development agencies. It also unveils the politics of exclusion, state agency, identity politics, ethnic minority issues, motives and motivation of governmental and non-governmental development organization in relation to the local effects and the central state power relation between hill and plain which intensified the Pahari-Bengali discrepancy in their day to day experiences.

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[1] Theotonio Dos Santos, "The Structure of Dependence," in K.T. Fann and Donald C. Hodges, eds., *Readings in U.S. Imperialism.* Boston: Porter Sargent, 1971, p. 226

[2] Dalton, "Theoritical Issues in Economic Anthropology," 356-385; Smith, "Regional Analysis in World System Perspective"; Salisbury, "Anthropological Economics and Development Planning."

[3] Polany, *The Great Expectation*, Polany, *Trade and Market in the early Empire*.

The Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) in Southeast Bangladesh, consisting of the districts of Rangamati, Khagrachari and Bandarban are the home of at least eleven or more diverse Indigenous People.[4] The *Adibashi* (Indigenous People), often termed *Pahari* (Hill People), are remarkably distinguished from the people of the plains in terms of their ethnicity, socio-cultural and socioeconomic perspectives. Because of their traditional subsistence patterns of practicing shifting cultivation they are also collectively known as 'Jumma'[5] people. The CHT has geopolitical and strategic significance for Bangladesh and South Asia, due to its location and sharing boarder with India and Myanmar, and the porosity of the boarder; its treasury of natural resources, cultural heritage and socioeconomic and geopolitical dimension[6].

There were several vantages in the historical events which won't consider in the context of the nation building process and boarder allocation in South-Asian region. Identity crisis, land issues, minority problems, ethnic polarization, cultural differences, adverse state policies, intrusion of state politics, [re]militarization, and religious militancy are the common issues which intensified the regional problem. During the constitutional debate within the basic principles, the state has emphasized exclusively on Bengali culture, heritage, and language which exclude 'cultural other'. The constitution declared 'Bangladesh' as a Bengali nation state which otherwise excluded the existence of different ethnic identities other than Bengalis. Moreover, the process of nation building in Bangladesh at that time apparently imposed the homogenous sense of nationalism upon the existing different ethnicities other than Bengalis. The negligence of the state to recognize the identity of *Adibashi*[7] people and their political and economic marginalization led them to form the JSS[8] and claimed Jumma Nationalism for all Pahari People in March 1972. Thus the seeds of Jumma nationalism – an identity that the JSS now claims for Pahari people – were shown (Mohsin 1997:58). Consequently, a tension between the state and the JSS rose through unprecedented militancy and an opportunity for accommodation and co-existence was lost that led the Pahari people to go for an armed struggle besides political movement. In addition, considering the economic and infrastructural development of the region, the government felt to call in the armed forces as a security force in "Aid of Civil Power" in1976 that has created the situation of CHT worst and the confrontation between security forces and Shanti Bahini has turn the situation into insurgency (Shelley 1992:133). For the last twenty five

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[4] It depends on the basis of classification; some authors noted that there is 12 or more ethnic group in the CHT. For example see, Pandy, Pranab Kumar and Jamil, Ishtiaq. 2009. 'Conflict in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh', Adnan, Shapan and Dastider, Ranabir. 2011. 'Alienation of the Lands of Indigenous Peoples in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh. Note that the 1991 census erroneously listed Mro and Murang as two separate groups.

[5] According to Van Schendle, the Jumma identity was constructed as a bid for ethnic innovation to cope with marginalization and loss of power. van schendle, Williem. 1992. 'The Invention of the Jummas'.

[6] Bordering the Arakan and Chin States of Burma/Myanmar, and Tripura and Mizoram States of India (Background of Jummas & CHT: 2002).

[77] Adibashi is the term that used for indicating ethnic people living in the three hill district of Chittagong.

[8] JSS stands for *Jana Shamhoti Shomiti*, a political organization of Pahari (Indigenous) people.

years the *Pahari-Adibashi* people have been involved in a struggle for regional autonomy from the Bangladesh state. The main roots of the crisis on CHT centered on the land issue, the political migration of landless Bengali people, continuous process of [re]militarization, state politics of identity and controlling administration by non-inhabitants. Besides, discrimination, deprivation and exploitation in social, cultural, socio-economic and political fields and the process of 'Bengalization' were other bones contention (Tripura, 1992; Ahmed, 1992; Mohsin, 1997a).

Notions of Development: Transforming connotation

As a study of empirical, multidimensional discipline anthropology studied the contemporary social groups and their interactions, placed in a diachronic perspective, and combining the analysis of practice and of conceptions (Sardan. 2005). Many anthropologists studied various societies in different parts of the globe for searching the cultural context and local dimension of development models generated in Western discourse following the modernization theory (Uddin, 2013). So, the word development is an unstable term regarding the concept, ideology and practice which claims critical understanding in anthropology. Because, the concept of development is multidimensional that continuously transform its connotation with regional settings and global order. Therefore, anthropologist consideration of development embraces the global politics of west vs. rest, capitalists vs. non-capitalist, developed vs. underdeveloped. The idea of development is also used to project the structure of relationship between colonialism and post-colonialism (Uddin, 2013).

Notions of development can be traced back at least to the late-18th century rise of industrial capitalism, which "for the first time allowed productive forces to make a spectacular advanced," thus permitting people to imagine dramatic material progress (Larrain, 1989). Development in the late-18th century and 19th century Europe "was meant to construct order out of the social disorders of the rapid urban migration, poverty and unemployment (Cowen and Shenton, 1996). Two constructing approach to "development" and "underdevelopment" are encountered in the anthropological understanding of development history. One locates the concepts of development squarely in the enlightenment and transition from feudalism to capitalism, the period of history. Another perspective, inspired by post-structuralist scholarship, analyzes "development" as a post-World War II discourse intended to justify the remarking of the "Third World" and suggested that "underdevelopment" also primarily a discourse originated in a 1949 speech by Henry Truman (Escobar, 1995; Kearney, 1996; Sachs, 1992).[9] Uddin (2013) quoted, "within

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[9] Escobar (1997) later wrote that "even if its roots back to the development of capitalism and modernity – development has been shown to part of an origin myth at the heart of the occidental modernity – the late 1940 and

some intellectual circles, the concept of development has been declared dead',[10] while Escobar[11] explains it as a set of ideas and practices used for colonial and neo-colonial dimension, and therefore, it is still alive and works."

Policy theorists and planner's rethought unequal relationship between rich and poor nations and the development dream 'colonized reality' (Escobar, 1995:5). Hart (1992)[12] mentioned that "The protagonists of the cold war designated the poor remainder of humanity 'the Third World' and gave the name development to their economic predicament." A new generation of technocrats increasingly viewed poverty alleviation not as an outcome of "self-regulating process of economic growth or social change" but of concerted action by both rich and poor nations working in cooperation with new international aid agencies and financial institutions (Cooper and Packard, 1997:1). Anthropologist James Ferguson (1990) portrayed these development institutions as an "anti-politics machine" they could only cast development problems in apolitical, ahistorical, techno-managerial terms – disguising the profound political questions at stake in common intervention in agriculture, health or education program (Edelman and Haugerud, 2005).

Over the last four decades, the conventional growth centered development (Korten, 1990) model has neglected diverse local economics and indigenous knowledge in order to modernize ethnic communities in the southeastern part of Bangladesh. This kind of conventional intervention have been accelerated through the construction of dams, implementation of forestry programs, establishing land controls, and the framing of rules and regulations in the name of investment, growth and extension of market. This massive process was designed to regulate the lives of ethnic communities/minorities and hill people through centralized policies of development that undermined people's decision-making capacity, participation, creativity, knowledge, and livelihoods in the regions of Bangladesh (Buergin, 2000; Dewan, 1993; Moshin, 2003; Poffenberger, 2006; Trakarnsuphakorn, 2007; Sato, 2000; Sudham, 2002, 2007; Tripura, 2000). Despite the huge extension of the growth model of development interventions, there has been increasing social and cultural resistance among the ethnic communities to revitalize their cultural knowledge, cultural rights and livelihoods through a participatory development approach (Barney, 2007; Buergin, 2000; Darlington, 1998, 2000; Sudham, 2002).

In recent year number of writings has been published (Escobar, 1984, 1991, 1997; Ferguson, 1990; Roe, 1991, 1995; Sachs, 1992; Hobart, 1993a; Crush, 1995; Moore and Schmitz, 1995;

1950 brought with them a globalization of development and explosion of institutions, organizations, and forms of knowledge all concerned with development."
[10] Gardner and Lewis, *Anthropology, Development and Post-modern Challenges*, 1.
[11] Escobar, *Encountering Development*.
[12] Hart, Market and State after the Cold War: the informal economy reconsidered, 215

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Gardner and Lewis, 1996; Rahnema and Bawtree, 1997; Marcussen and Arnfred, 1998, Mills, 1999; Fairhead, 2000) which attack the 'development discourse' in one way or another, with the aim of 'deconstructing' it. They tend to produce a caricature of the developmentalists configuration, which they present as 'narrative' of western hegemony bent on denying or destroying popular practice and knowledge. Sardan (2005)[13] stated with reference to Grillo (1997: 20) that

"there is tendency, illustrated for example, by Hobart, Escobar and to lesser degree Ferguson, to see development as a monolithic enterprise, heavily controlled from the top, convinced of the superiority of its own wisdom and impervious to local knowledge, or indeed commonsense experience, a single gaze or voice with is all powerful and beyond influence."

In an ethnographic journey on Khumi[14], Uddin (2013) cited various ethnographic work on development discourse such as: Willson study on Zambia, Mamdani's work on Gulf, Barnett's study on Sudan, Long's wok on Peru, Tennekoon and Woost's work in Sri Lanka, Ferguson on Lesotho, Li's work in Indonesia has shown that how globally accepted model of development can be challenged by the local discourse of development. It paves another way of understanding of 'development' with local interpretation which is conceptualized from the social and cultural point of view amid everyday experiences of ordinary people's lives (Uddin, 2013). In his ethnographic experiences on Khumi, Uddin depicted how the Pahari people follow the growth model of development or modernization theory of development for uplifting their living standard gained with materialistic transformational forms behavior in day by day experiences contacts with Bengalis. The influence of the external force of modernization set the ideal standard of better living condition of Pahari people which is delineated by Uddin in his term *nebu-heina.*[15]

The Problem of defining development in a non-Eurocentric fashion, and the problems of how to engage in a dialogue of equals with 'others' in a world saturated with Western hegemony have only begun to impose themselves on the concerns of Western social science. These problems are nowhere posed more sharply than when we consider the predicament of indigenous people. They are not only non-literate but their cosmologies are cast in metaphors that the west consigns to the realm of myth, superstation and irrationality (Tucker, 1999:19). They exist at the periphery of the periphery. They have been consigned to the margins not only of society but also of both social science and the development discourse. Concerned with major issues such as economic growth, industrialization, the state, political conflict, social class and social movement, social theory – in

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[13] Sardan, *Anthropology and Development: Understanding contemporary Social Change, pp.5.*
[14] A Pahari ethnic minority group living in the CHT.
[15] Nebu-heina is a Khumi phrase which nearly means 'better life' or a life better then what they currently lead but does not essentially denote urban life

particular its developmental variety– did not consider such 'marginal' groups as indigenous people as being worthy of attention (Stavenhagen, 1985: 6). In CHT the 'Peace'[16] accord has drawn the attention of various international agencies (Development corporations, Local or International NGOs, UNDP, UNICEF) that appeared in the Hill with their constructed conception about the Pahari people for changing their living condition by initiating top down development project. Their initiated project has grown the cultural difference between inter ethnic and among intra ethnic people in the Hill. The donor agencies retain their influences and control across the hill by picking their local agent from the Hill people.

Culture, Identity and Development: Pahari-Bengali Discourse

The CHT represents the region of ethnic diversity; ethnic dynamics of upland-lowland relations[17] (Uddin, 2010). Research undertaken on the CHT (Bernot, 1964; Bessaignet, 1958; Brauns and Loffeler, 1990; Lewin, 1869, 2004[1870]; Uddin, 2008b) reviles that they are distinct from Bengalis in terms of socio-cultural organizations, politico-economic settings and ethnic background. The ethnic coexistence and cooperation between Pahari-Bengali has been established for centuries in the hill. But, after the independence of Bangladesh, these reciprocal and socio-economic interactions have turned into a political relation. However, due to the intrusion of the British (1860), Pakistan (1947) Bangladesh (1971) the Pahari People have gradually being marginalized in the context of social, economic and political positioning of the state (Uddin, 2010:284). This has created the cultural 'other' and arisen ethnic difference that triggered the ethnic tension. In this regard Said (1978) observes that to achieve national identity people have to fight against imperialist dominance. But newly independent countries again fall into the trap of imperialism by means of army parliament, special education system, and political parties etc. The elite class is profited by this system.

Predominantly, CHT perceive the notion of 'backward', underdeveloped and the hill peoples are less intelligent, they are leveled as child of nature and such exotic. This kind of notion of cultural differences between plain land and Hill whereas Bangladeshi have leveled the hill people as "tribe". To understand this process of differentiation and exclusion of '*pahari*' people in the CHT, there can be mentioned the Foucault's (1972) term 'discipline' to refer to a type of power that it exercised by means of disciplines such as schools, universities, the mass media that present mechanisms of domination as normal, natural and even desirable, what Foucault terms 'normalization'. Following the Foucault's term 'discourse' and phrasing it with development that

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[16] The accord was actually signed as *Parbotto Chukti* (Hill Accord) but unfortunately known as Peace Accord.

[17] Upland-lowland relations refer to relationship between ethnic minorities living in hill areas with a distinctive cultural and ethnic background and majorities who regulate state institutions. Upland denotes the ethnic minority whereas lowland indicates the state or ethnic majority.

constitutes objects through the production of truth and power knowledge will be discussed. It is not only happened in colonial period, but also observed in newly independent country. After the inception of the country, the dominant class of the state plays the role to rule like a neo-colonizer. During the postcolonial period, especially after the independence of the country, the imperialist discourse remains specified. Marginalized people suffer from the dominant discourse policy. The hegemony of the state policy has been occupied by newly aroused dominant group. Under this process cultural identity of the marginal or oppressed groups remain unidentified, unfamiliar and unrecognized in the name of law and order.

Dewan (1990) argued that ethnicity and racial difference have ideological character to determine class when contradictory interest between the Bengali and '*Pahari*' becomes evident. In his research, Dewan shows that the role of the state has been ignored. Following the Marxist theory, he gave more concentration to class and ethnic construction in CHT. Dewan emphasized the importance of ideology that determines class. The political and economic aspects of state over the ethnic communities of the CHT, did never analyze in respect of cultural discourse systematically.

As the indigenous people of the CHT have become painfully aware, 'development' for them has meant dislocation, disruption and destruction. When the Kaptai dam[18] was built in the 1960s, this type of 'development' projects was readily endorsed by most postcolonial states and donor agencies throughout the world. It is not necessary here to go into the details of the lasting impact that the Kaptai dam has had on the economic life and political development of the indigenous people of the CHT. It is enough to note that for the large number of people who still carry the memories of dislocation and deprivation brought about by the dam, any development project initiated by the state is something to be viewed with suspicion, and if possible, resisted (Tripura, 2000).

The negligence of the state to recognize the identity of Pahari people and their political and economic marginalization led them to form the JSS and claimed Jumma Nationalism for all Pahari People in March 1972. Thus the seeds of Jumma nationalism – an identity that the JSS now claims for Pahari people – were shown (Mohsin 1997:58). Consequently, a tension between the state and the JSS rose through unprecedented militancy and an opportunity for accommodation and co-existence was lost that led the Pahari people to go for an armed struggle besides political movement. In addition, considering the economic and infrastructural development of the region, the government felt to call in the armed forces as a security force in

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[18] Kaptai dam is the only hydropower source in Bangladesh, with an installed capacity of 230 MW; about 5% of the electricity consumed in the country is produced there. When the dam was built in 1962, some 100 000 people were displaced and few of them received adequate compensation.

"Aid of Civil Power" in1976 that has created the situation of CHT worst and the confrontation between security forces and *Shanti Bahini*[19] has turn the situation into insurgency (Shelley 1992:133). But the resettlement of hundred thousand landless Bengalis, who later became branded as settler Bengalis, into the CHT during 1979-81 with rehabilitation program by the government, the land became the crux of further conflict.

Uddin (2012) stated that the entire process of conflict management and peace building did not include the spontaneous engagement of mass Pahari people beyond some political elites from among the Chakma, Marma and Tripura. Consequently, other Pahari people gradually realized that peace accord has not brought about peace for them but brought power, position and wealth for a few leaders of Chakma, Marma and Tripura. This is indeed partly true but not true as in our recent field observation we found that portrayed a changeable scenario of the [re]engagement of mass Pahari people which is the gradual outcome of signing the Peace Accord. Pahari locals deemed that although most of the demands of the peace accord have not been implemented yet, they are now not only able to take part in socio-economic, political and educational circumference, but they also feel free in the movement of their everyday life.

Fantasy of Development: Perplexing development practice in the CHT

To understand the paradox of development in the CHT, we need to pay attention to the ways in which the state legitimatized its intervention. CHT is a landscape, a repository of environmental service and an economic resource base for Bengali settlers. These are some of the ideal representations, symbolic constructions, through which the politics of rhetoric and managerial practices are justified. Such a representation is clearly observed in the activities of the structured organization of the state, Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board (CHTDB). Their dominance represents the power of the state. This paper explains the cultural discourse of the state by examining the development programs under taken by the state and donor agencies in the name of the well being of ethnic minorities.

The 'Peace'[20] Accord has welcomed the 'international community' with the numerous rehabilitation programs in the name of development. Gerharz (2002) focused his attention upon the tendency of the development agencies immediate after the Accord has signed. The main argument of Gerharz is that 'development for sustainable peace' taken by numerous international donor agencies attempt to deal with CHT case as discourse on crises preventions and peace building process through the Accord (2002:144). Most the agencies have considered the

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[19] An armed wings of PCJSS.
[20] This is not actually an accord for peace but for bilateral acquisition. There is not a single clause in the accord that it support it is a peace accord.

'development' as a tool for mitigating conflict and the crisis prevention in the post-accord situation. But the policies did not restrain the local perception of the inhabitants who were being interacted among them in their daily exchange in every aspects of life. In most of the cases that we observed in the field, the development programmers have created some mediators or beneficiary groups who have played a controversial role into the interactive relations among the inhabitants. Observation shows that in terms of getting benefits of that project, there is a binary perception between Bengali and Pahari adivshi people. Study reveals that the local NGOs were not accepted cordially by local people in the hill. Many in the hill have criticized national or local NGOs and the fact that national NGOs tended to duplicate schemes for the plains in the CHT, although it was not appropriate to the needs of the CHT population (2002: 149). The most complaint of all concerned the micro-credit scheme. Eva showed that, locally people sarcastically labelled the strategy "micro-colonialism (2002:153)." But this kind of generalization is not appropriate always and everywhere in the hill to understand the real situation of the peaceful co-existence and relational dependency in the hill. The fields reflections in this case, due to ethnic conflict and their continuous deprivation of struggle for recognition the CHT people are suspicious of everything that comes from the plains. The situation has to be considered into the everyday interactions between inter-ethnic and among intra-ethnic relations in the hill and which also claim to pay attention to the process of demarcation and highly contrasted ethnic polarization into the hill after the accord. In this regard the statement of Gerharz (2002) will be considered that

"The NGOs are perceived as representatives of the plain-land Bangladeshis, who are accused of attempting to exploit the indigenous people. On the one hand the CHT people suspect the plain-land Bangladeshis of seeking financial dominance, taking advantage of the minority in order to bring the capital back to the plains. This needs to be seen in the context of the economic exploitation of earlier times, namely the industrialization efforts by the Pakistani Government and their continuance after Bangladesh's independence, which did no benefit CHT people at all, although the resources exploited as theirs. On the other hand the national NGOs are accused to exaggerating cultural dominance. The model applied by NGOs reflects the majority culture, which is perceived as being different from the Hill people's cultures. Due to ethnic conflict and their struggle for recognition the CHT people are suspicious of "everything that comes from the plains". Development approaches and strategies are criticized in particular, since earlier efforts to "develop" the Hills have been pursued by the governmental institutions without paying much attention to the needs and opinion of the CHT people (2002:153)."

Most of the existing problem of CHT is caused by ethnic conflict between '*Pahari*' and Bengali (Kabir: 1998, Ahmed: 1998, Hossein: 1999, Masud, Rahman and Alam: 1997). Such an impression, which is widely circulated, mainly strengthens the ideology of the dominant class.

The rehabilitation programs of landless Bengali through various development activities overshadow the actual role of the state. The state extends militarization process in the hill areas in the name of security. In the disguise of ethnic conflict, the economical, ideological and legal power of the dominant class of the state has been made invisible.

Development in the CHT: Reality vs. Retrospect

The historical events through the emergence of a nation state boundary between groups being constructed and ethnic polarization take place. By the process of action and reaction, majority group and the state authority involved in the process of exploitation and [re]negotiation. After the independence of Bangladesh, the basic apprehension of multi-ethnic and the spirit of secularism could not transmit into the aperture of the society. As a result it transform by following political transition and replaced by a more religiously define one. The CHT is a land of multi religion and felt more alienated by Islamization of Bangladeshi politics after the independence of Bangladesh through the rehabilitation program of destitute Bengali resettlement into the hill. It intensified ethnic polarization and arise every ethnic dispute that shape the relation between Pahari-Bengali as a discourse.

This situation concentrated the ethnic difference that results in confrontation between hill and plain. Therefore, state and hill confront to each other which inevitable welcome the intervention of the outsider. Gerharz (2000) argued that intervention of the outsider (international development agencies) in this regard needs to be recognized as a key underlying factor in the post-conflict era. Because, such development actions always implies tackling the various local actors in such a way that development process can be set in motion and conflict diminishes at the same time (2000:149). These bilateral development institutions perceived and initiate their programs in the pretext of supporting "Local Capacity for peace"[21] appeared in the form of civil society actors, which in the Bangladesh context are predominantly NGOs.

The conversation with an adivasi named Abraham Tripura (45) (chairman of a humanitarian foundation), stated that 'the development of infrastructural programs (educational program, job facilities, health issues, transportation facilities) from national and international agencies have created the opportunity of building capacity for batter life. But at the middle of the conversation come to know how he picked by a missionary agency who raised him in a charge and now give charged to run a humanitarian foundation. Now, he don't worry about his identity and claims as indigenous people. He opined that 'before accord the dependency of Pahari and Bengalis was a unitary exchange, at present, the mode of dependency has turned into a multifarious, shared and

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[21] Gerharz, "Dilemmas in Planning Crisis Prevention: NGOs in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh." *Journal of Social Studies, pp.* 149.

interactive which is the indication of "peace". But, the politics of implementation of peace accord confined us in a national and global mould from where can neither comes out or go back to our claims which was given pledge to the hill by Government in the accord'. In the continuum of our conversation, Abraham Tripura depicted a story of his life that we consider as a case in this context. He started that

"When I was 12, reputed violence and bloodshed between military and shanty bahini has grown intense panic stricken into the CHT. A missionary padri[i] gave an offer to my mom for taking me with him to educate me in his missionary school in Dhaka. Considering the situation, my mom has cordially accepted the offer. When I was a college student, I have to do some missionary duties concerning the 'Father' and gave me a scholarship to bear my educational and other expenses. In the course of my growth in the Dhaka city, I observed intolerable miseries of my community in the hill. I was completed my graduation from the Jahangirnagar University in 1998. Now I have given the managerial post for directing an educational NGO funded by international agencies where many Pahari educated youths are working under my supervision. This is a kind of development project that can improve our livings and as well as we are involving in a socio-economic interactions. Though these kinds of interactions is positive in a sense that made possible for building sustainable inter-connectedness between the dwellers but this kind economic dependency made them aside from their claiming rights according to accord."

Khoka Babu[22] narrated that some local NGOs in the CHT are taking opportunity of earning profit from the international agencies without proper implementation of children's related educational project. They show fake endorsement of children for education to the donor agency and the GOB. In this case, we have tried to get information about the development programs, related to the 'Primary Education' which mainly works for ensuring children's participation in the primary education funded by the UNDP and UNICEF. In most of the projects are unsuccessful because of corruption, lack of efficiency and experiences and overall fund stanching tendency of the owners. From the analysis of the local setting, practical problems have been discussed that the examples have been chosen according to the experiences during field work. The evidential aspect that raises question about the donor's attitude is whether neutral or partial, an issue which is discussed in the context of post-conflict intervention quite often. The German-Bangladeshi government negotiations provide certain premises, such as the equal treatment of all ethnic groups. From this, the question of project-area selection and counterpart selection derives. In order to ensure an equal treatment of all ethnic groups, the donor agency needs to challenge the gap between the spatial scatteredness of the different ethnic groups and

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[22] A Pahari (Hill) teacher and local representative.

practical logistic considerations. The governmental and regional institutions are ethnically segregated and in a continuous struggle for competence and responsibility. Additionally development cooperation provides resources, for which the local actors compete. Therefore, a project needs to include a broad variety of actors, in order to ensure the claim for neutrality. Activities considered by the project, such as basic health care and income-generation, raise the question of how to avoid controversial issues. An infrastructure project implemented by Asian Development Bank is highly significant too. Because, local people fear that the improvement of infrastructure will benefit predominantly the Bengali traders, rather than the indigenous people, since the Bengalis dominate trading structures

On the other hand, over the last three decades the ecological balance of the CHT has been severely defiled. The disappearance of forests and trees is causing soil erosion and landslides. Although the degradation of the forest in the CHT is acknowledged, the underlying causes of this degradation are completely ignored by the national government. Attempts continue to be made to attribute blame for the destruction of the environment onto indigenous groups practicing traditional '*Jhum*' cultivation. Referring to '*Jhum*' cultivation, a Bangladesh government official has stated that '*Jhum*' means destruction of the forest.' There is a more evidence that the worsening ecological imbalance in the environment of CHT in last three decades is deeply rooted in so-called 'development' programs such as those for 'jungle clearing' and 'logging'. In this regards Loffler's report observes that the ecological imbalance has not resulted from '*Jhum*' cultivation: "My first idea that this deplorable state might be the result of '*Jhumming*' was soon thrown into doubt when I saw hill people slashing meager remnants of vegetation and burning the hillsides. In some cases at least this 'jungle clearing' as it is called, may be covered by the 'for work program' paid by USAID-imported food for work that has the inevitable effect of making barren and unsuitable for productive use the very hills on which, formally, the hill farmers produced all they needed for making a living..." (Loffler's Report: 1991 as quoted in Chakma & Hill: 1995).

Various development program, subsidized by foreign aid, and where the 'work' consists of 'jungle clearing' introduces a pattern, which will be repeated and reinforced in subsequent development. This kind project is legitimized by definitions of poverty and development which effectively devalue the subsistence practices of the target indigenous group, making its restructuring toward some western model of a technologically advanced market based economy seem laudable. In subsistence perspectives the nature of the work performed is recognizably connected with the outcome or benefit derived from that kinds of development projects. The project is subtly empowered by the legitimacy of a market economic paradigm which not only does not notice that such an input-output relationship may be nonsensical, but sees the move from a self-sufficient subsistence paradigm to a market economic paradigm as constituting

'development' or 'progress' (Nasreen and Togawa, 2002). On the other hand, the authority implemented the development process then introduces themselves agenda into the structure of the legitimized project.

CONCLUSION

Having highly ethnic diversity in the CHT, the nation-building process in Bangladesh was based on the construction of a common identity by applying a common language, culture and religion. Although, the people of the CHT are different in all these respects, the state did not take in contingence their socio-cultural distinctiveness for defining their rights and entitlement. Therefore, a counter movement for the preservation of these cultural values evolved, and conflict was maintained over more than 20 years. The bloody conflicts between hills vs. plain manifested by bipolarize belligerent wings that represent the two stakeholders of the confrontation. PCJSS claims the Jumma identity and regional autonomy for the hill and the state stood in the thorax of the hill in the name of security deploying number of garrison. The intense cruelty and the shock weave of inhumanity blown over the hill which intrinsically invited the outsider intervention to mitigate and came to treaty in 1997. The political actors within the CHT and in relation to the state are in continuous encounter. The major constellation of opposition is that between the government party Awami League and Hill People's JSS. The newly created institutions are struggling for recognition and capacities, their provisions are hampered by party related conflicts. The ethnicisation of the political parties and the institutions results in a struggle for power, which hampers the implementation of the Peace Accord extensively. Internal struggles among the Hill People's political parties have additional relevance. Segments which are opposed to the present Peace Accord create a sense of dividedness among the people and endanger peaceful development. The economic structure of the CHT is characterized by ethnic segregation. Changes in the patterns of land use initiated by the governmental development institutions in the region exacerbated the already existing land problem in the CHT. As a result of demographic features and traditional economic patterns, the economy is divided into Hill People who are producing for the national economy and Bengalis, who are trading the products.

Due to infrastructural deficits, the result is an unequal distribution of resources and same is true for the internal market structure. The local markets are dominated by Bengalis; the indigenous people participate primarily as consumers. Industrialization efforts as well as infrastructure development are also characterized by ethnic segregation. The civil society in the CHT, which is above all represented by NGOs, is divided into two dimensions. First, there are several active big national NGOs. But these are largely opposed by the political leaders of the CHT people. It is argued that the model applied by these national NGOs is not appropriate to the CHT for cultural reasons. Second, an active local NGO scene emerged after the Peace Accord. Although locally

widely backed and accepted, these local initiatives are usually ethnically segregated. Frequently they have been formed on the basis of ethnic communities and attempt to benefit predominantly their "grass-roots". Recently the government of Bangladesh has taken a project to build a Medical college and University in Rangamati district without any concern or involvement of the local people. The CHT people suspected that the initiative of building college or Universities is another dispensation of further Bengalization through the state intervention. Because, the existing level of local capacity and infrastructural capability cannot reach the goal of the development project. Therefore, the benefit of this development won't reach to the people for whom the project was initiated. Not only had that, for ensuring possible intervention over the hills, the state actors negotiated with the various non-state actors for creating local agents to mitigate the situation.

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