

**BANGLADESH**

**A Joint Submission  
to the United Nations Committee on the  
Elimination of Discrimination against Women**

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**Submitted by:**

Kapaeeng Foundation, Bangladesh Indigenous Women's Network, Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Forum, Adivasi Nari Parishad, Achik Michik Society

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2.	<i>Bangladesh Indigenous Women's Network</i> Contact: Falguni Tripura	House # 23/25, Salma Garden Apartment, Road # 4, P C Culture Housing, Block # B, Mohammadpur, Dhaka-1207 Tel: +88-02-8190801, E-mail: biwn.bd@gmail.com	2011	Capacity building, lobby and campaign, advocacy, empowerment, legal aid, human rights, research
3.	<i>Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Forum</i> Contact: Sanjeeb Drong, General Secretary	House # 62, Probal Housing, Ring Road, Mohammadpur, Dhaka-1207 Tel: +88-02-8122881, E-mail: adivasiforum@gmail.com	13 July 2001	Human rights, lobby and campaign, advocacy, capacity and awareness building, dialogue with government, civil society, media, national and international stakeholders
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5.	<i>Achik Michik Society</i> Contact: Sulekha Mrong	Pirgacha, Modhupur, Tangail Phone: 01719217281, 01734190829 Email: ams_sulekha_mrong@gmail.com	24 April 2004	Human rights, documentation, women empowerment, community development, education and awareness building.

## **A Joint Submission to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women**

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1. This particular submission aims at providing an account of the state of indigenous women and girls in Bangladesh targeting the review of Bangladesh by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee) in its 65<sup>th</sup> session to be held in November 2016. The report provides an opportunity to review the progress of Bangladesh in the recent years, especially since Bangladesh's last review in 2011 in regards to policy and practice, in fulfilling its responsibility towards establishing the rights of indigenous women and girls as enshrined under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). However, the issues and concerns raised here are not exhaustive – this submission particularly focuses on the issues of constitutional recognition, policies and legislations, violence, education, health, participation in the public and political life and employment.

### **Indigenous women in Bangladesh: an overview**

2. Over 54 indigenous peoples have domiciled in different parts of Bangladesh since time immemorial. They are located in the Chittagong Hill Tract (CHT) and in the northwest (Rajshahi-Dinajpur), central north (Mymensingh-Tangail), northeast (Greater Sylhet), south and southeast (Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Barisal) of the plains of Bangladesh. According to the 2011 census, the indigenous population of Bangladesh is approximately 1,587,000 which represents around 1.08% of the total population of Bangladesh<sup>1</sup>. However, indigenous peoples in the plains claim that their population is estimated at about 2.0 million.<sup>2</sup> Indigenous women make up approximately half the population of indigenous peoples. Disaggregated official data concerning demographic distribution of indigenous women and girls belonging to different indigenous groups is unclear and unavailable.

3. The lives of indigenous peoples are defined by struggle and survival irrespective of their geographic location or ethnic identity – their stories of deprivation and discrimination are similar across the country. Discrimination and routine violations of human rights enshrined in the CEDAW and other treaties ratified by Bangladesh have been inseparable parts of indigenous peoples over the years. Land grabbing, militarization, extractive industries, 'development' interventions in the name of eco-parks, national parks, reserved forests, tourism centres and even the establishment of bases of security forces on their ancestral lands have pushed the survival of indigenous peoples to an alarming state.

4. A complex interplay of ethnic inequality, enduring discrimination, lack of education, little access to land and lack of employment has resulted in increased poverty amongst these indigenous ethnic groups. One of the major problems for all indigenous communities is land grabbing by influential people from the mainstream population. Policies to protect the land of ethnic people have not been adequate. Moreover, landless extreme poor indigenous ethnic communities are less able to find jobs, making their situation even more perilous.<sup>3</sup>

5. In the sorry state of deprivation, discrimination and vulnerability of indigenous peoples, women and girls are the most vulnerable section. As has often been observed, the vast majority of indigenous women face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination due to

their gender, ethnicity, language, religion, class and geographic location. Hence, they face multiple forms of violence and discrimination to the full enjoyment of their human rights living in Bangladesh, often to a high extent as compared to their 'mainstream' counterparts.<sup>4</sup>

### **Constitutional recognition of indigenous peoples**

6. It is commendable that the Constitution (Articles 27 and 28) guarantees equality of all citizens and prohibit discrimination on the grounds of religion, sex, caste, race and place of birth; and stipulates measures of 'affirmative actions' in favour of the 'backward section' of the citizens. However, the supreme law of the country does not recognise indigenous peoples in the country as 'indigenous'. In the 15<sup>th</sup> amendment of the Constitution, passed in the parliament on 30 June 2011, the government ignored the demand of indigenous peoples for recognition of their fundamental rights including recognition of their identity as 'indigenous peoples'. The 15<sup>th</sup> Constitution [Article 23(A)] basically recognises *the culture* of indigenous peoples stating that "the State shall take steps to protect and develop the unique local culture and tradition of the tribes, minor races, ethnic sects and communities". At the same time, it ignores their right to land and self-determination and participation in political and decision making processes. Further, the 15<sup>th</sup> Constitution [6(2)] states: "the People of Bangladesh shall be known as Bangalees as a nation" ignoring the distinct identities of indigenous peoples. It is mentionable that neither the terminologies "tribes, minor races, ethnic sects and communities" have been accepted by indigenous peoples, nor have they agreed with the State-imposed identity as 'Bangalee'.

### **Laws and policies**

7. Aside from the CEDAW, Bangladesh ratified the International Labour Organization Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Population 107 (ILO C107) in 1972. However, Bangladesh has not properly implemented the provisions of this convention yet in order for bringing a positive change in the situation of indigenous peoples including indigenous women on the ground. Concerning indigenous peoples, the 7th Five Year Plan of the Government of Bangladesh pledges, "Legal protection ensured by 1) implementing the UN Declaration on the Rights of Ethnic groups Peoples 2007 and ratify the ILO Convention No. 169, 2) formulating a land policy to deal with land disputes involving ethnic communities and finally 3) ensuring the participation of local governments in the management of natural resources."<sup>5</sup> But, ILO Convention No. 169 has not been ratified as yet. Even, no material steps for implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) from the end of the Government has been noticed so far.

8. As far as the domestic laws and policies are concerned, the Government of Bangladesh has made mixed progresses in the recent years. The National Women Development Policy of Bangladesh 2011 succinctly contains some provisions on indigenous women and categorizes indigenous peoples as "backward and small ethnic groups". However, the policy does not mention anything regarding multiple forms of discrimination, routine infringement of the human rights and access to justice of indigenous women and the need for special attention and care. Indigenous women were not consulted when the policy was being formulated. Indigenous women are in need of separate provisions/chapters in the policy considering the distinct issues they face due to their multifaceted identity. Besides, the new National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) has an emphasis on indigenous (the document mentions 'ethnic minorities'); it mentions: "The NSSS benefits will be non-discriminatory and will be available to all poor and vulnerable people who satisfy the income criteria and other selection

criteria relating to life-cycle or disability... irrespective of religion, ethnicity, profession and location”<sup>6</sup>. The implementation of the NSSS would be a considerable step forward for indigenous women and girls and other vulnerable sections of the country.

9. Bangladesh has made a significant progress in formulating a number of laws that are pertinent to indigenous women and girls in the country. The laws include Dowry Prohibition Act 1980, Women and Children Repression Act 2000 (Amendment 2003), Acid Control Act 2002, Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act 2010, Cruelty to Women and Children Act 2012, Pornography Control Act 2012, Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act 2012, Children Act 2013 and Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2014. While it is commendable that the State has come forward to address different issues facing women and girls in the country, their proper and impartial enforcement has always remained very limited. Furthermore, none of these laws mention a word about indigenous women and girls, let alone having specific provisions concerning their issues. Hence, specific problems faced by indigenous women either have to be addressed in the national laws and policies or by formulating separate laws and policies for indigenous peoples including indigenous women.

10. Even though the successive governments in Bangladesh have undertaken a number of initiatives to address gender disparity and women’s empowerment, there have been no specific development plan, policy mechanism and legislative measure to integrate indigenous women into mainstream development paradigm on the basis of their distinctive concerns and needs that mostly are different from mainstream Bengali women by nature. The Constitutional non-recognition of indigenous peoples and the absence of gender disaggregated data on indigenous peoples tend to indicate state’s unwillingness to recognize indigenous people’s existence and mainstreaming them into the sustainable development process.

### **Violence and culture of impunity**

11. In the State report submitted by the Government of Bangladesh in the second cycle of Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in April 2013, it was mentioned that the Government gives priority to ensuring protection of women against violence.<sup>7</sup> It is praiseworthy that Government has enacted laws and undertaken initiatives to combat violence against women. However, over the past few years, apparently, the most appalling issue facing indigenous women and girls in Bangladesh is the alarming rate of violence against them and the impunity enjoyed by the perpetrators. Due to the absence or weak enforcement of existing legal and non-legal measures by the State, indigenous women and girls continue to encounter different forms of violence. According to Kapaeeng Foundation’s statistics, from January 2007 to September 2016, there have been at least 466 reported incidents of violence against indigenous women and girls in Bangladesh.<sup>8</sup>

12. In comparison to 50 indigenous women and girls who were victims of rape, attempted rape and gang rape as reported by Kapaeeng Foundation, there were 615 victims of mainstream Bengali women and girls reported by Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK) in 2014. It is worth mentioning that 7.52% of the victims/survivors in 2014 were from indigenous communities, who are merely 1.8% of country’s total population, while the remaining 92.48% victims were from the Bengali community, who are the majority in the country with 98.2% of the total population.<sup>9</sup> From the statistical data given earlier, it is clear that the propensity of committing sexual and physical violence against indigenous women is higher than the violence faced by mainstream Bengali women. While indigenous women have a

possibility to fall victim by the men from own community, they face a high rate of violence and discrimination from the men from outside of the community. Over past three years (2013-2015), on an average above 90% of the alleged perpetrators of violence were from non-indigenous background.<sup>10</sup> Such incidents occur massively due to ethnic and cultural differences. Violence against indigenous women and girls is one of the weapons used widely to evict them from their ancestral lands. Hegemonic chauvinism to dominate over and subdue minorities also acts as an inducement to exploit indigenous women sexually and physically.<sup>11</sup>

13. Government came up with some institutional measures in order to address the violence against women and girls, including some measures in the indigenous inhabited regions of the country. Despite the limited development measures by the government, one of the positive measures is the establishment of three separate courts in three hill districts in the CHT to deal the cases of women and children under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act 2000 (amended in 2003). However, this initiative failed to ensure justice for indigenous women and protect them from the risk of becoming continuous victims by perpetrators. Another positive measure is setting up of a Victim Support Centre in Rangamati to provide rehabilitation support to women victims with the assistance of UNDP-CHTDF program. However, victim support centre at the district level to support the victim of violence survivors is not enough to address the need of poor indigenous women and children. Moreover, victim indigenous women and girls feel uncomfortable to take opportunity of Victim Support Centre due to lack of indigenous cultural sensitivity and the absence of indigenous female staff in the Centre.

14. In regards to the alarming trend of violence experienced by indigenous women and girls, impunity enjoyed by the perpetrators plays a crucial role. A study report commissioned by the CHT Commission reveals that not a single conviction had taken place out of 215 cases occurred in the CHT documented by them.<sup>12</sup> The report claims that “impunity has been the single most crucial factor contributing to increasing incidents of sexual and gender-based violence in the CHT”.<sup>13</sup> The other reasons behind the appalling state of violence against indigenous women and girls include communal oppression, non-implementation of the CHT Accord, prolonged and non-cooperative formal legal system and land grabbing.

15. Land is the centre in the most cases relating to violence against indigenous women and girls. The land grabbers used the heinous tactics to sexually and physically harassment in order to terrorize the community to unsettle them, and afterwards take the opportunities to occupy indigenous peoples. Recently, rapid expansion of tourism in CHT allegedly by military forces and government authorities is contributing to sexual harassment, insecurity and sufferings for the indigenous women and girls.<sup>14</sup> In this regard, proper enforcement of the CHT Land Dispute Resolution Commission Act 2001 is very important. In August 2016, government amended this act as per long demands of CHT people. It is hoped that this amendment of the Land Commission Act paves the way for proper resolution of land disputes and restitution of dispossessed land to the indigenous peoples. However, formation of an independent land commission for indigenous peoples of plain land which is an election commitment of current government remains unaddressed yet.

16. The gaps of access to justice identified for indigenous women and girls are lack of awareness, complicated (humiliating) criminal justice system, corrupt administration, inadequate legal aid and support for the victims, lack of follow-up of the cases and lack of systematic documentation of cases of violence.<sup>15</sup> The government did not take any initiative to collect disaggregated data on the situation of disadvantaged groups of women facing

multiple forms of discrimination and even refrained from adoption of proactive measures, including temporary special measures, to eliminate such discrimination and protect them from violence and abuse, as CEDAW Committee recommended in 2011 (Paragraph 38).<sup>16</sup>

## **Education**

17. Mother-tongue based multilingual education is of paramount importance for development of indigenous women and girls. The ILO Convention No. 107 and 169, and UNDRIP have recognised the right to education of indigenous children, including girl children in their respective mother languages. The General Comments (No. 11) issued by the Child Rights Committee (CRC) urged the States to put special attention on the education of indigenous children in their own language. While reviewing the child rights situation of Bangladesh at its 2028th and 2029th meetings held on 15 and 16 September 2015 in Geneva, the CRC expressed its concern regarding the discrimination faced by indigenous children in education in their mother tongue (Concluding Observations, para 72, CRC/C/BDG/5). Different studies also prove that children learn better is in their mother tongue. The 7th Five Year Plan pledges for "formulating a National Language Policy to protect the culture of these communities".<sup>17</sup>

18. It is commendable that the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education of Bangladesh has undertaken a historic initiative to introduce mother tongue based multilingual education for indigenous children at the pre-primary level. Government has completed developing of textbooks in five languages, namely Chakma, Kakbarak, Mandi, Marma and Sadri in the first phase and and promised to publish and distribute the books in 2017.<sup>18</sup> Having said that, the Government is yet to settle a number issues that are associated with introduction of multi-lingual education. The issues include: hiring and training adequate number of qualified teachers with necessary language skills, taking preparation for the next stages of education of the children following completion of pre-primary education in respective mother tongues, specific roadmap for the following phases of development, printing and distribution of books and making arrangements for setting up schools and other infra-structural facilities for indigenous children living in the far-flung areas. Remarkably, the Government has to settle these issues keeping the issue of intersectionality of indigenous boy and girl children in mind.

## **Health**

19. The 7th Five Year Plan says, in regard to health services in hard to reach areas, "tribal health services require a different approach. The tribal lifestyle, particularly of those residing in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), is shaped by the rugged terrain, hilly environment, scattered population, frequent shift of homesteads, *Jum* cultivation that requires residing in temporary residence for cultivation period, inadequacy of communications, multiplicity of ethnicities and languages used, post-conflict environment etc. Health service delivery needs to take these relevant factors in account. ... In this regard, the Government will implement measures to institute district-specific and tribal-friendly health services."<sup>19</sup> It also mentions "...Tribal-friendly health services will be ensured through appropriate initiatives for tribal population residing in plain lands."<sup>20</sup> If implemented, the 7<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan would bring about positive changes in the health services for indigenous peoples, including women and girls.

20. So far, the health service situation is far from acceptable in most indigenous-inhabited regions of the country. There is no disaggregated data regarding indigenous women's health status in Bangladesh from the end of the government. It appears that indigenous women's

health is at risk particularly at the time of childbirth. Malnutrition, Anaemia and malaria are the common diseases in the hills where indigenous women live. UNDP also reported in 2009 that Six out of 10 households in CHT - irrespective of ethnicity - live below the national absolute poverty line where each member consumes less than 2,100 calories per day; the other four households live in extreme poverty (less than 1,800 calories per day)<sup>21</sup>. UNDP reported that peoples in the CHT have very limited, access to basic primary health services and the maternal mortality rate in the CHT was 2 or 3 times higher than the national average which is one of the highest in South Asia<sup>22</sup>.

21. In addition, there are allegations about misappropriation and corruption around the use of fund allocated for the health of indigenous peoples for past five years (2011-2016). An investigative report by leading Bangla daily of the country, *Prothom Alo*, revealed that only 13% of the allocated fund of “Tribal Health Programme” being run by the Essential Service Delivery (ESD) programme under the Department of Health was spent over past five years.<sup>23</sup> However, out of the allocated BDT 260 million (BDT 150 million for the CHT and BDT 110 million for the plains) no money was spent for indigenous peoples outside of the CHT.<sup>24</sup> The *Prothom Alo* report claimed that there is no clear indication in the documents of the ESD about on which sectors the allocated fund has been spent on, but it is apparent that a lion’s share of the fund has reportedly been spent towards foreign study tours, seminars and trainings attended by the officials of the programme.<sup>25</sup> In this report it was also mentioned that although the documents of ESD state that the fund was, in part, allocated to run 275 satellite clinics in the CHT were ran and a number of workshops and trainings were organised in the CHT, no clear and disaggregated information about them has been made available by the ESD.<sup>26</sup> The Government must come up with stern actions against such alleged mishaps.

### **Participation in political and public life**

22. In public and professional life and decision-making Indigenous women and girls lag behind men in general and their mainstream female counterparts. The participation is lacking in the judiciary as well as in civil service and administration, and elected positions in Parliament and local bodies. In almost every sphere of the political and public life of the country, the indigenous women are excluded from important decision-making roles and positions. For example, out of the 350 seats in the National Parliament, 50 are reserved for women to increase representation of women in the national policy-making process. None of these seats are reserved for indigenous women in Bangladesh. From more than 54 indigenous groups in Bangladesh no woman so far has been directly elected as member to the Parliament. Currently, no indigenous woman is holding any position in the Parliament in MP positions.

23. Although there are reserved seats for women in the local government bodies, such as, Union Parishad, Upazila Parishad and Paurasava, there are no reserved seats exclusively for the indigenous women. Consequently, while indigenous women in parts of the CHT get the scope to a certain extent to contest and be elected in the reserved seats because of their demographic concentration, indigenous women in the plains are virtually deprived from this opportunity as most of them are scattered all over the region and outnumbered. In 2014 Upazila Parishad Elections, 17 posts of vice chairmanship (reserved for women), out of 25 Upazila Parishads in the CHT were captured by the indigenous women candidates while only 3 posts in plain land were captured by indigenous women despite more than half of indigenous population live in plain regions. Similarly, although there is a concentration of indigenous population in the CHT, only three woman commissioners (one each in

Khagrachari, Bandarban and Baghaichari pourasava) out of 21 reserved seats for women (3 commissioner seats reserved for women in each pourasava (municipality) and there are 7 pourasavas in CHT) were able to win elections held in December 2015. No single commissioner from indigenous women from indigenous peoples of the plains was ever elected in the pourasavas. In fact, the scenario is true for most indigenous communities of the plains and the CHT irrespective of their gender because of demographic domination of majority Bangalee population. Against this backdrop, indigenous peoples organizations have been demanding reservation of seats exclusively for indigenous peoples including women particularly in the local government bodies in order for ensuring their meaningful participation and representation.<sup>27</sup>

24. According to the CHT Accord 1997 and the laws concerned, 3 out of 34 members in each Hill District Councils (HDCs) and 3 out of 22 members of CHT Regional Council (CHTRC) are reserved for women including indigenous women. The CHTRC has duly ensured the representation of 3 women members in its body. However, so far the HDCs have been very weak in enforcing the representation of women. Except for Rangamati Hill District Council, there is no woman representative in current interim bodies of three HDCs, while each council is composed of 15 members. As a result, representation of women including indigenous women is yet to be ensured in the HDCs.

## **Employment**

25. Bangladesh government enacted several laws relating labour rights including Bangladesh Labour Act 2005, which promote equality of opportunity in employment and provides equal pay for work of equal value. However, these laws are silent if it is applied for indigenous peoples. For example, about 10,000 indigenous Tripura men and women from different localities including Chota Kumira, Bora Kumira, Sultani Mondir and Mohadevpur under Sitakundu and Mirasarai upazila of Chittagong district have been living in a slavery-like system for a long period of time. They are being forced to work in the paddy lands and orchards of their land lords over generations. They, particularly indigenous women, are ill-paid for their work. A day labourer gets as minimum as Tk. 140 (USD 1.75) a day. If anyone does not work, s/he has to pay fine or is forced to leave his homestead or is punished by the owner of the paddy lands and gardens.

26. This is also significantly relevant for indigenous urban migrants too. In different Ready Made Garments (RMG) factories in Dhaka, Chittagong, Comilla, Gazipur etc, the indigenous garment workers, mostly women are also working with poor salary.<sup>28</sup> The Garo young girls who migrated to cities for working in the beauty parlours, get poor salary and often face discrimination and harassment at work place. They work over time, even more than 12 hours per day and do not even have weekly holidays.

27. In the plains, particularly in Sylhet indigenous female workers are being subjected to wage discrimination. In spite of doing the same amount of work as male workers do, indigenous women are getting only half the amount of wages than their male counterparts. In addition, they are also discriminated in terms of receiving other rightful facilities as workers.<sup>29</sup> In the 165 tea gardens, the daily payment of the 85,000 registered and 15,000 unregistered indigenous labourers stood at BDT 55 (approx. USD 0.69) with concluding an agreement, which was BDT 48 (approx. USD 0.60) earlier. The span of the agreement has already expired on 31 August 2011. Since then the groups of tea labourers started to put several demands including wage increment immediately after expiration of the agreement,

where they demanded to fix the daily payment to minimum BDT 150 (approx. USD 1.88). The Article 140 (a) of the Labour Law has authorized the government to take proper step to declare new wage structure or to change or amend the existing wage structure consulting with owners and laborers. Hence, the government should come forward with actions in this regard.

28. Despite the Government's pledge by ratifying ILO Convention No. 107 to provide special training facilities for indigenous workers including indigenous women, whenever programmes of vocational training of general application do not meet their special needs, no such special training are undertaken by the government for indigenous women.

### **Recommendations**

29. In light of the above situation of indigenous women and girls in Bangladesh, we urge the CEDAW Committee to recommend followings to the Government of Bangladesh:

- a. Ensure constitutional recognition of the identity and fundamental rights of indigenous peoples of Bangladesh.
- b. Ensure gender disaggregated data for indigenous people in regards to different sectors including housing, sanitation, education, healthcare, employment and judgement.
- c. Ensure access to justice of indigenous women and girls and bring the perpetrators into justice, ensuring exemplary punishment for those who are involved with violence against indigenous women and girls. In this regard, form a special body to investigate the cases of violence against indigenous women and girls.
- d. Ensure indigenous women's proper representation and partnership in all aspects of the political and public life of the country, including making special arrangements to reserve quota in the Parliament and all local government bodies for indigenous women. Ensure the involvement and active participation in the formulation of laws, policies and institutional measures affecting the lives of indigenous women and girls.
- e. Take effective measures for immediate and full implementation of CHT Accord of 1997 to ensure lasting peace, security and development of people, including the indigenous women and girls, of the CHT.
- f. Form an independent land commission for indigenous peoples of the plains for settling the disputes of the land and thus to address the violence and harassment of indigenous women centring land-related disputes.
- g. Allocate adequate budget for Indigenous women and to ensure full and effective participation of Indigenous women in major decision-making processes in all development programmes.
- h. Take effective measures for implementation of provisions of the ILO Convention No. 107 and ratification of the ILO Convention No. 169.

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## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, available at: <http://www.bbs.gov.bd>.
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- <sup>3</sup> Seventh Five Year Plan, FY2016-FY2020, Accelerating Growth, Empowering Citizens, General Economic Division (GED), Planning Commission, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, pp-703
- <sup>4</sup> Hana Shams Ahmed (2011) *Multiple forms of discrimination* (personal blog).
- <sup>5</sup> Seventh Five Year Plan, FY2016-FY2020, Accelerating Growth, Empowering Citizens, General Economic Division (GED), Planning Commission, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, pp-704
- <sup>6</sup> *National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) of Bangladesh*, July 2015, General Economic Division, Planning Commission, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh pp-XXII.
- <sup>7</sup> *National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21*, State report submitted by the Government of Bangladesh, A/HRC/WG.6/16/BGD/1, 7 January 2013.
- <sup>8</sup> Kapaeeng Foundation (2016) *Human Rights Report 2015 on Indigenous Peoples in Bangladesh* ed. Mong Shanoo Chowdhury and Pallab Chakma, Dhaka. Assistance has also been taken from the documentation team of Kapaeeng Foundation.
- <sup>9</sup> Kapaeeng Foundation (2015) *Human Rights Report 2014 on Indigenous Peoples in Bangladesh*, ed. Mong Shanoo Chowdhury and Pallab Chakma, Kapaeeng Foundation, Dhaka
- <sup>10</sup> Kapaeeng Foundation (2014) *Human Rights Report 2013 on Indigenous Peoples in Bangladesh*, ed. Dr. Dalem Chandra Barman and Mong Sing Neo, Dhaka; Kapaeeng Foundation (2015) *Human Rights Report 2014 on Indigenous Peoples in Bangladesh*; ed. Mong Shanoo Chowdhury and Pallab Chakma, Dhaka; Kapaeeng Foundation (2016) *Human Rights Report 2015 on Indigenous Peoples in Bangladesh*, ed. Mong Shanoo Chowdhury and Pallab Chakma, Dhaka
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>12</sup> Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission (2014) *Marginalization and Impunity: Violence against Women and Girls in the Chittagong Hill Tract*, Dhaka.
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>14</sup> Chakma, Mangal Kumar and Chakma, Sajib (20 August 2015) *Development and Tourism in Indigenous Territories: Partnership of Indigenous Peoples and Role of the Government*, keynote delivered in a seminar at CIRDAP Auditorium, Dhaka.
- <sup>15</sup> Bipasha Chakma (2013) *Research on Sexual violence against Indigenous women and their access to justice in CHT Bangladesh*, Kapaeeng Foundation
- <sup>16</sup> CEDAW/C/BGD/CO/7
- <sup>17</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>18</sup> The Daily Star (25 May 2016) *Govt. to print textbooks in 5 ethnic languages*, available at: <http://www.thedailystar.net/frontpage/govt-print-textbooks-5-ethnic-languages-1229056>.
- <sup>19</sup> Seventh Five Year Plan, FY2016-FY2020, Accelerating Growth, Empowering Citizens, General Economic Division (GED), Planning Commission, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, pp-562
- <sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, pp-569
- <sup>21</sup> <http://www.unpo.org/article/13437>
- <sup>22</sup> <http://www.chtdf.org/index.php/cht-issues/cht-situation>.
- <sup>23</sup> Daily Prothom Alo, available at: [www.prothom-alo.com](http://www.prothom-alo.com).
- <sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>27</sup> Mangal Kumar Chakma (2009) *The Status of Adivasi Hill Women in Light of the CHT Accord*, Bangladesh Nari Pragati Sangha, Dhaka
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