

Land Dispossession, Climate Change, and its Impact on the Indigenous Peoples of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) in Bangladesh: A Decolonizing Perspective

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Abstract: The paper thoroughly examines the historical and contemporary challenges faced by the Indigenous people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) in Bangladesh. The paper addresses the impact of land dispossession on the Indigenous communities in the CHT region. It examines the relationship between land ownership, climate change, and the well-being of Indigenous peoples. Additionally, the paper delves into the historical background of land ownership in the CHT, the introduction of colonial policies, and the subsequent displacement of Indigenous communities. The study emphasizes the importance of approaching these issues from a decolonizing perspective and highlights the need to recognize and address the historical land rights of Indigenous peoples. A comprehensive review of the literature, historical events, and the respondents' reflections shows that land disputes lead to displacement and exacerbate the climate crisis. The paper sheds light on the challenges Indigenous communities face and advocates for the fair and just resolution of land disputes that have occurred through dispossession, reserved forests, the Kaptai Dam, and other similar issues.

Keywords: Land Dispossession, Climate Change, Indigenous People, Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh, Decolonizing Perspective.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The policy of genocide against Indigenous peoples and the theft of their land characterize the history of Indigenous peoples (Dunbar-Ortiz, R. 2014). According to anthropologist Patrick Wolfe, land is essential for life, or at the very least, it is necessary for life to exist (Kaplan, 2003). Land plays a significant role in Indigenous peoples' knowledge gathering and fosters their well-being. The Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) have undergone substantial infrastructural development, changes in land use, and a decline in forest cover and biodiversity over the past few decades, all of which have adversely affected the overall environmental conditions. These changes correlate with weather vulnerabilities and other detrimental aspects of the climate crisis (Huda, S. et al. 2020). The land crisis is unquestionably the foremost concern in the CHT, alongside several other emerging issues. It is imperative to approach this issue with a decolonizing

perspective, which is the primary focus of our research. For millennia, the inhabitants of the CHT region have consistently practiced communal ownership and adhered to customary laws and regulations governing land management. They would acquire ownership of their property through socially acknowledged methods of speech and transfer it through verbal consent, informing the Raja and remitting an annual tax to him.

The British introduced the concept of terra nullius in the CHT and declared that the lands there were exclusively owned by the government, thereby dismissing the claims of three local Rajas. Subsequently, 1,356 square miles—approximately 25 percent of the entire 5,146 square miles of the CHT—were officially designated as 'reserved forests' (R.D. Roy, 2002). The Kaptai barrage flooded around 54,000 acres of cultivable land and displaced 100,000 people, who were not provided with any compensation or means of

recovery. The Bangladesh government has deployed military troops in the CHT region in response to the uprising led by the Shanti Bahini, an armed faction of the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS). Between 1979 and 1984, around 400,000 Bengali inhabitants were displaced and moved to the CHT. Consequently, many Indigenous individuals allegedly suffered the deprivation of their ancestral territory and were compelled to move against their will. Of the entire population, 90,000 households were forced to leave their homes within the country, while 10,000 families were repatriated from India following the signing of the Peace Accord (The Daily Star, December 2, 2014).

In 1997, the militant organization Shanti Bahini capitulated, leading to the conclusion of a significant Peace Accord between the government of Bangladesh and the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS). The Hill District Local Government Council Act of 1989 underwent modifications in 1998 following the Accord, resulting in a system of restricted self-governance for its citizens. The Peace Accord established the Regional Council, a governmental body with authority and a distinct role in overseeing and coordinating the Hill District Councils.

The CHT Land Dispute Resolution Commission Act of 2001 established a Land Commission to resolve land disputes and determine land ownership for individuals who have been deprived of their land. The absence of legal recognition of historical customary regulations has resulted in individuals, who have inherited property from their ancestors for a significant period, being unable to seek legal remedies due to the lack of official documentation of ownership. Despite submitting multiple complaints, no resolution has been achieved to address these problems. The government's amended Act in 2016 failed to establish the necessary regulations for response.

Traditionally, many Indigenous inhabitants did not see the need to maintain official property ownership documents, as they relied on oral traditions for transferring ownership. Consequently, all lands owned without legal documents are designated as khas land. The government now possesses the authority to acquire control of these regions by forcibly displacing the inhabitants at any time (Mohsin, A., 2003).

According to the administration, 48 out of the 72 provisions of the Peace Accord have been met. However, the unresolved problem of land remains a significant concern. The administration reported improvements in education, healthcare, and transportation infrastructure, especially in isolated mountainous regions. Nevertheless, they have not yet reclaimed their ancestral territory, which breaches their legally protected entitlement. Given these conditions, CHT has been experiencing significant malfunction in their life and livelihood patterns, land use alterations, and loss of forests and biodiversity. These factors have affected the overall environmental conditions, necessitating immediate attention and action (Chakma, M. K. 2020).

This research is crucial for filling these gaps and gaining a comprehensive understanding of the situation.

Ensuring culturally sensitive mental health care is crucial in Indigenous communities (Dobson & Brazzoni, 2016; Redvers et al., 2019). Reestablishing a connection with cultural identity and engaging in Indigenous pedagogy, as suggested by Simpson (2014) and Stewart (2008), is crucial for enhancing the well-being of Indigenous Communities.

This study aims to investigate the impact of climate change on the land-based livelihood patterns established by the Indigenous peoples of the CHT and its contribution to their loss of land through various forms of land dispossession. It demonstrates the correlation between land dispossession and climate change and how this has affected the way of life of the Indigenous Peoples in the CHT. Data collection and analysis are conducted from a decolonial research viewpoint. We established our positionality and outlined the theoretical framework for this study's objective. As well as we elaborated on the research methodology and expounded on how the research was carried out. In addition, we have included the data analysis and findings. Consequently, we organized the findings into five themes. Utilizing the research findings, we endeavored to address the difficulties and propose answers and recommendations as stated by CHT Indigenous educators, community leaders, academics, and community members. Ultimately, we reviewed the learning reflections and engaged in a conversation about how to enhance them.

➤ *Historical Context of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT)*

Before British colonialism, the Chakma monarchy in India existed as a sovereign monarchy, free from any external intervention, until 1787, when a treaty was concluded with the British. In 1900, the British implemented the CHT Regulation to safeguard Indigenous populations from external influences and establish the status of "excluded area." However, following the partition, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan maintained the CHT status but revoked the ordinance and implemented significant alterations. The goal of the CHT Accord 1997 was to transform Bangladesh into a democratic institution that aligns with global advancement. It involved creating a specialized administrative framework, including the establishment of the Ministry of CHT Affairs, the Regional Council, and three Hill District Councils, to recognize and protect the rights of Indigenous Communities. However, the failure to implement the Accord and opposition to it by civil politics have worsened the issues in the country. (Hutchinson, 1978 & V. Schendel et al., 2000, Hechter, M. 1975).

The CHT administration under the National Government comprises the Ministry of CHT Affairs (MoCHTA), Divisional Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners, Superintendent of Police, and Executive Officers known as Nirbahi Officers. Nevertheless, the absence of regulations on implementing existing laws results in disorder and bewilderment within the governing system. The CHT governance system is characterized by military domination, which contributes to an administration that can be described as a cocktail (A. Mohsin, 2003; Halim, 2002). The CHT Accord of 1997 is the sole means to achieve lasting peace in the region. The administrative structure is

established with the Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs (MoCHTA), the Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council, and three Hill District Councils. Nevertheless, the legislation governing these councils has not been entirely effective due to conflicts between the government and regional councils (Roy, R.D., 2003).

Bangladesh's Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council (CHTRC) is a unique political and administrative body comprising 22 members, who are substantially indigenous individuals, representing two-thirds of the total membership. The primary responsibilities of this organization include overseeing and coordinating development projects, maintaining law and order, managing general administrative tasks, promoting development, supervising the CHT Development Board, ensuring traditional and social justice, and granting licenses for heavy industries. The CHT Regional Council (CHTRC) must be notified in advance and consulted when the government plans to enact legislation or implement any programs related to the CHT (A. Mohsin, 2003).

The Hill District Councils were founded in 1989 and subsequently rebranded as the Bandarban Hill District Council, the Rangamati Hill District Council, and the Khagrachari Hill District Council. The elected bodies comprise 34 members representing a diverse range of ethnic communities, including ten members from non-Indigenous backgrounds and three seats reserved specifically for women. The government has enacted legislation to augment the membership of the interim councils, but this action is deemed ineffective in terms of policy (S. Chakma et al., eds., 2001).

The CHT region has traditional institutions that address various concerns, such as customary land usage, social equity, and cultural practices. At the local level, the administrative structure includes Circle Chieftainship, Headmanship, and Karbariship. In 1997, the CHT Accord, the Hill District Council Acts of 1998, and the CHT Regional Council Act of 1998 introduced provisions to merge the traditional Raja-Headman-Karbari administration system with democratic institutions, thereby enhancing their effectiveness and significance. This integration has allowed the traditional system to participate in the development sector.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

This study employed a decolonial research framework, a revolutionary and essential technique for conducting research. The objective is to acknowledge and address the enduring consequences of colonialism in academia and other domains. (Datta, 2018; Wilkens & Datchoua-Tirvaudey, 2022), And Dennis (2003). This paradigm acknowledges the profound impact of colonialism on the historical landscape and its influence on research methods, perspectives, and epistemological approaches. (Datta, 2020; Rodríguez & Inturias, 2022). Decolonial research critically examines and challenges prevailing narratives and structures that have historically marginalized Indigenous and other

underrepresented communities (Wilkens & Datchoua-Tirvaudey, 2022; Menton et al., 2020). The statement recognizes that traditional research methodologies often perpetuate imbalances of power, demean individuals, and exploit Indigenous knowledge and communities. Hence, the decolonial research paradigm places Indigenous viewpoints, knowledge systems, and worldviews at the forefront while also engaging in a critical examination of how colonialism has influenced the research process (Wilson, 2008).

The decolonial research paradigm emphasizes the creation of inclusive and equitable collaborations with Indigenous communities and other marginalized populations. This strategy highly prioritizes the self-determination and sovereignty of these communities, giving them the power to decide their research priorities and methods. Moreover, it emphasizes the importance of researchers' deliberate efforts to minimize harm and adhere to ethical research practices, while acknowledging their own positions and biases. (Smith, 2012). The decolonial research framework advocates for a knowledge generation strategy that is inclusive, equitable, and free from colonial influences. It highlights the importance of honoring the diverse perspectives and experiences of Indigenous and marginalized groups. This framework functions as a catalyst, compelling a comprehensive evaluation and overhaul of the research environment. We engaged in comprehensive individual and collective discussions with diverse Indigenous community members in the CHT, exploring their perspectives on climate change and its impact on forced migration. During our study of decolonization, we actively participated in attentive listening and employed Indigenous storytelling methods rooted in the principles of decolonial research.

The primary data for this study were gathered in two separate periods: the initial period lasted from August to November 2022, while the subsequent period occurred from March to April 2024, involving approximately twelve personnel. We thoroughly analyzed stories from ethnic groups within the Indigenous community that relocated to the CHT. Among them were displaced people and local authorities, including Headmen, Karbaries, Community Leaders, and scholars. This entailed cooperating with community leaders and researchers while respecting and upholding traditional Indigenous customs and rights. Deep listening has emerged as an essential approach for recognizing and appreciating the viewpoints of Indigenous Communities. Recognizing the fundamental connection between Indigenous stories and the people's land, language, and identity, our goal was to reestablish this connection through education that is deeply rooted in the natural environment (A. Kibria et al., 2024).

Our approach combined conventional institutional research processes with traditional Indigenous rituals and ceremonies. To comprehensively examine our research findings and experiences, we employed reflective writing in combination with our attentive listening and Indigenous storytelling methodologies. By retaining these records, we have granted autonomy and the capacity to think expansively, thereby enhancing the comprehensiveness and quality of our

research. We upheld a steadfast commitment to safeguarding the privacy and anonymity of participants and conducted our work with reverence and appreciation, according rigorously to ethical standards. This commitment was particularly crucial due to the vulnerable condition of the CHT Indigenous communities. Furthermore, ensuring that participants willingly and knowledgeably participated in ethical research standards was paramount to our approach. In addition to gaining ethical approval from the institution, we conducted a rigorous continuous consent process with community members.

The approach employed in this study involved multiple iterations of listening to recorded narratives and specifically documenting the modifications experienced by individuals from the CHT Indigenous Community. Furthermore, engaging in self-reflection after actively listening during storytelling sessions and when reviewing the recorded materials significantly improved our learning experience. These personal reflections improved our understanding.

Engaging with recorded interview narratives provides a distinct perspective rather than relying solely on reading transcripts. The listener's emotions are intensely stimulated. The narratives shared by Indigenous folks often contained deep and emotionally impactful sentiments. Our choices affected the phrases and personal narratives we selected. We

chose statements that strongly resonated with us, leaving a lasting impression and serving as important material for study and recall. Additionally, we ensured that the participants' engagement was well-informed and voluntary, adhering to ethical study protocols.

III. FINDINGS

The Chittagong Hill Tracts encompass around nine percent of Bangladesh's land area. Its undulating terrain and dense vegetation characterize the southeastern part of Bangladesh. It borders India to the north and northeast and Myanmar to the east. The area is an extension of the Hindu Kush-Himalayan range and differs from the flat delta plains of Bangladesh. The Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) are inhabited by over 11 distinct indigenous communities, namely the Chakma, Marma, Tripura, Tanchangya, Murung, Lushai, Khumi, Chak, Khyang, Bawm, and Pankhua, collectively known as the "Jumma" people. To engage in a continuous process of attentive listening and reflective learning, we categorized our study findings into five subsections based on the challenges and solutions provided by the respondents. This text discusses the effects of the climate crisis on the displacement of land from the Indigenous population in the CHT region. It also explores the remedies proposed by community leaders and experts in the CHT region. Table 1 shows the findings:

Table 1 CHT Indigenous Community's Displacement & Climate Change Impact

Displacement & Climate Change Impact on CHT Indigenous Community				Community-led Solutions				
Reserved Forest	Kaptai Dam	Industrial lease	Mining for Gas Oil	Cancellation of non-residents' Leases	Adjudication by Land Commission	Forest Dispute Resolve	Activation of HDCs	Stopping Privatization and bribery

- Displacement and Dispossession through the 1980s Population Transfer Program: Since the government of Bangladesh implemented a population transfer program in 1979 to address increasing militancy in the area, approximately 400,000 Bengali-speaking individuals from various regions of Bangladesh were relocated to three Hill districts. Additionally, Rule 34(1) of the CHT Regulation, which pertains to land law, was amended to simplify the process of granting land to non-residents, among other changes. The resettlement process directly or indirectly led to the displacement of tens of thousands of Indigenous people. Some people sought refuge in neighboring India, while others found safety in the secluded mountain and woodland regions. Consequently, they were forced to start anew to sustain their way of life, which negatively impacted their spiritual and emotional well-being due to their living environment. Most importantly, according to a respondent, they had to change the wood-cutting profession, which affected the smooth environmental journey.
- Reserved Forest: According to a reply, the karbari said that in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, there are four distinct categories of forest: reserved forest, protected forest, sanctuary, and un-classed state forest. Additionally, he stated that the forest department oversees the

management of the first three categories, while the HDCs maintain the Unclassified Reserved Forest. The village's typical forest is a traditional method of forest management that is standard in several areas of the CHT region. Another participant mentioned that many individuals reside in protected forests, and most have been forced to leave their property due to either the construction of the Kaptai dam for the hydroelectricity initiative or political turmoil that was resolved by signing the peace agreement in 1997.

- Kaptai Dam: "The dam has become a symbol of the deliberate exclusion of the Jumma Peoples," stated a respondent, reminiscing about their childhood when the Karnaphuli River was their sole means of economic distribution. However, this dam displaced them from their natural habitat. She prevented them from engaging in their traditional livelihood, which caused the climate crisis, i.e., less plant production due to lack of land, which caused heat waves and other problems." he stated that the Karnafuli River was flooded in 1960 because of the construction of the Kaptai Dam, displacing his family and other residents from their ancestral property.
- Industrial Lease: A leader of the Parbtya Chattogram Jana Samhoty Somity (PCJSS) has highlighted a recent development that has displaced Indigenous people. This

development involves granting long-term land leases to influential non-resident individuals and companies from cities outside the CHT for commercial and industrial purposes. Most of these leases were given in the Bandarban district, with fewer in Khagrachari and Rangamati districts, particularly during the 1980s. The leader also emphasizes that the authorities pressured the local people to vacate or stay away from their leased land.

- Mining for gas, oil, and drinking water crisis: Starting in 1980, numerous international corporations began operating in CHT to extract natural gas from the land, thereby allowing the government to obtain the mentioned money, as reported by a respondent. On the other hand, the freshwater crisis was an old phenomenon that increased due to the causes of land disposition.

➤ *The Respondents Give the Following Solutions:*

- Cancellation of non-residents' Leases: According to a respondent, the land dispossession resulting from the population transfer program may be revoked, improving the climate crisis.
- Adjudication by the Land Commission: If substantial land-related problems remain unresolved, achieving optimal, fair, and sustainable land use in the CHT will be infeasible. Hence, these issues must be resolved, the participants stated.
- Forest Dispute Resolve: A respondent suggested that the disagreement about reserved forests may be handled by collaborating with all relevant parties, namely the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, the Hill District Council, and the Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord. It is possible to de-reserve the more remote, reserved forests and allocate them for the settlement and permanent habitation of Indigenous peoples on their traditional territories.
- Land administration under Hill District Councils: Community members look forward to the responsible transfer of land administration to the Hill District Council, as mandated by the Accord. Under the new provisions, all CHT grants, settlements, transfers, or land acquisitions must obtain explicit agreement from the relevant HDC. Additionally, land administration will be added to the list of issues entrusted to the HDCs. The Hill District Council (HDC) comprises the headman, circle chief, and Deputy Commissioner of Districts.
- Privatization and Bribery: Another respondent emphasized that the communities residing in remote upland and highland areas have different reasons for wanting to be registered as landowners, and this registration has limited economic worth. Individuals engaged in traditional Swidden farming, hunting, and gathering activities have minimal concerns about being deprived of their land or resources. Consequently, they are hesitant to endure the challenges of working in a city office and offer officials bribes to acquire registration documents. The existing social and cultural circumstances and the concealed expenses associated with illicit rent-seeking can impede progress, exacerbate social turmoil, and obstruct the fulfilment of development requirements.

Implementing a comprehensive set of policies aimed at facilitating the issuance of land titles and safeguarding against the privatization of specific areas used for swidden agriculture, grazing, and fishing could help alleviate the challenges faced by landless communities, as suggested by a prominent leader.

IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The Chittagong Hill Tracts comprise small, rocky hills covered in dense forests with a limited amount of flat land. The central hill ranges of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) traverse the territory in a north-south orientation, accompanied by the rivers Karnaphuli, Chengi, Matamuhri, Sangu, and Feni, together with their corresponding tributaries and the narrow valleys that house the few flatlands and lowlands of the area, situated amidst them (Istiaq, M.1997). Many Indigenous ethnic groups reside in this region, but there has been significant migration from the plains of Bangladesh into the hills over the years. Since the colonial era, the area has experienced ongoing turmoil due to land conflicts. In the 1970s, armed rebellion against the Bangladesh government led to significant militarization and forced relocation of the populace (R.D. Roy, 2002, Debbarma P.K. 1993). The Peace Accord, signed on December 2nd, 1997, aimed to set conditions for restoring peace and securing the rights of Indigenous peoples to their land, culture, language, and religion. The Accord addressed the long-standing political turmoil and violence in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, resolving some of the most pressing land-related issues. These measures encompass settling land conflicts through a land commission and delegating land management responsibilities to the restructured and reinforced Hill District Councils (HDCs). The revocation of leases provided to those who were not inhabitants during the conflict era, the allocation of land to Indigenous or Tribal villages, and the enhancement of customary land rights. Nevertheless, the issue regarding land remains unresolved (Mohsin, 1998; Adnan, 2004) and is believed to be influenced by climate change, such as floods, droughts, and landslides. The study thoroughly examines the issue of land dispossession and the consequences of climate change on the livelihoods of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) region. The final observations of the study are as follows:

Territorial rights are crucial for Indigenous Peoples globally. They serve as the foundation for survival as distinct communities, preserving their cultural heritage and sustaining and advancing their economic systems (O. Kreimer, 2003). Nevertheless, over the past two centuries, we have identified three notable occurrences that have had a detrimental impact on the property rights of individuals residing in the CHT. In the 1870s, the first declaration was made, designating forest commons as conserved forests. In 1960, a hydroelectric dam was built at Kaptai, resulting in the submergence of the town of Rangamati and the displacement of approximately one-third of the region's population. Additionally, this development permanently flooded 54,000 acres of highly fertile paddy lands. The Jumma Peoples have been caught in a state of developmental contradiction. Basu (2015) described it as a phenomenon of progress in the context of

limited economic growth. For nearly six decades, hydropower has caused the displacement of people. However, government officials and developers have made little effort to remedy this issue. Indigenous peoples have been regularly barred from participation in dam construction and other extractive industries, and their concerns are blatantly disregarded during the planning process. This situation is highly distressing, as the lack of respect for those who care for the environment leads to biodiversity loss and further environmental harm (Ashrafuzzaman, 2014). According to several authors, the Indigenous people were forced to migrate to India and Myanmar due to the construction of the Kaptai Hydro-Electric Dam at Chittagong in 1962. This dam resulted in the displacement of thousands of hill people, leaving them without homes or land (Roy et al. 2000: 95-101, Shelley, M. R. 1992, Ishaq 1975:126, Bhaumik et al. 1997: 140-149, Raja Devasish Roy.,2004-2012, Mohasin, Amana., 1997, Van Schendel, W., Dewan, A.K., 2000, Mey, Wolfgang(ed.),1984, Adnan, Shapan.,2004, Bleie, Tone.,2005). The respondents gave the same answer as the references postulated. The population transfer program in the 1980s was the most significant occurrence, displacing an equal number of individuals (CHT Commission, 2000; Roy, 1998). It is necessary to acknowledge the cancellation of non-resident leases to fix the issue. The disagreement over the reserved forest can be addressed through the appropriate channels, and the privatization process can either be halted or carried out in a streamlined manner by adhering to the administrative framework of the HDCs. The end of organized hostilities in the CHT has accelerated the process of marketization and privatization in the region. As a result, more forest commons are being transformed into privately held homesteads, family-run orchards, and plantations (R.D. Roy, 2002; SAWTEE, 2002). Consequently, individuals who cannot acquire a private plot for any given reason are currently denied the opportunity to utilize the previous communal areas and lack access to a plot that belongs to them. Similarly, certain sections of the Karnaphuli reservoir near Rangamati have been granted to entrepreneurs who do not reside there. This has resulted in disputes with the local population, who previously utilized the area for fishing and navigating their canoes and boats. This trend could negatively impact the resource rights of economically disadvantaged individuals when they travel to and from the market. Equally significant is the observation that privately owned agricultural property is experiencing a higher frequency of sales. On one side, this assists local farmers in converting their assets into cash and obtaining the previously difficult-to-obtain funding for their agricultural and other business endeavors. On the flip side, the exterior of the coin depicts financially disadvantaged farmers being persuaded to sell their land at prices determined by a small number of cash buyers. However, the land commission will determine the specific adjudication procedure, including the inquiry process, the consideration of customary rights versus rights based on written titles, the burden of proof, and other relevant factors.

The study emphasized the importance of supporting the transfer of Indigenous land rights and recognizing traditional knowledge to maintain their connection to the land. It aims to

promote cooperation between the public and private sectors, NGOs, and academics to empower Indigenous communities and incorporate their knowledge into effective climate change solutions by addressing their rightful land rights with constitutional recognition. Our study on decolonization focused on the impacts of land dispossession, changing weather patterns, and health difficulties on people's livelihoods. The study emphasized the crucial need to recognize the rights of Indigenous groups and the significance of preserving and passing down traditional knowledge. Furthermore, it encourages collaboration between government entities, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, and the business sector to empower the Indigenous population of CHT and incorporate their traditional knowledge into strategies that are resilient to climate change. It paved the way for a more inclusive and sustainable future.

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