



## ASIA INDIGENOUS PEOPLES PACT FOUNDATION

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### **AIPP Strongly Condemns the Brutal Violence Against Indigenous Peoples in Khagrachari**

7 October 2025

Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) strongly condemns the recent brutal violence against Indigenous Peoples in Khagrachari Hill District of Bangladesh, which involved the killing of at least three Indigenous individuals, injuries to dozens more, the burning of at least 26 houses and 54 shops belonging to Indigenous Peoples, and the gang rape of an Indigenous schoolgirl prior to the clashes.

We demand an immediate, independent, and impartial investigation into these grave human rights violations. All perpetrators involved in the killings, sexual violence, and related attacks must be held fully accountable and face exemplary punishment under the law.

It has been reported that communal tensions in Khagrachari have been rising since September 23, following the alleged gang rape of a Marma Indigenous schoolgirl in the Singinila area of Khagrachari Hill District. The gang-rape incident allegedly occurred that evening, when three Bengali settlers attacked the eighth-grade Indigenous student as she was returning from private tuition. One suspect was arrested the following day.

The Indigenous Jumma people have been organizing protests since September 24, demanding the arrest of all perpetrators involved in the gang rape. They held a blockade program in Khagrachari on September 25, followed by a mass gathering and protest rallies on September 26, and a road blockade and protest rally in Khagrachari town on September 27. These actions were aimed at pressing for the arrest of the two remaining suspects and justice for the victim. The rally saw a large turnout and was reportedly peaceful in the morning. However, in the afternoon, Bengali settlers allegedly attacked Indigenous localities, triggering clashes between the two groups. It has also been reported that law enforcement personnel were seen supporting or standing behind the Bengali attackers during the assault, raising serious concerns about their role and the lack of protection for the Indigenous community.

The situation escalated dramatically on September 28, when a protest action—including a district-wide blockade (hartal)—tragically culminated in deadly clashes in the Guimara sub-district of Khagrachari Hill District. The violence reportedly resulted in the deaths of at least three Indigenous



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individuals and left dozens more injured. Widespread property destruction also occurred, particularly in the Ramesu Bazar area of Guimara, where approximately 100 shops, houses, and vehicles—most belonging to Indigenous people—were reportedly looted and set on fire.

This incident underscores the extreme volatility in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), where acts of sexual violence often serve as flashpoints for deeper, unresolved ethnic and land-related conflicts. Also, over the years in the CHT the ‘culture of impunity’ to the perpetrators involved in sexual violence cases is a matter of grave concern.

AIPP strongly condemns all forms of brutal violence, including violence against women and girls, that took place in the Khagrachari Hill District between 23–28 September.

We call on the Interim Government of Bangladesh to take immediate and effective action, including:

- Conducting impartial investigations into all incidents; and taking urgent administrative and political measures to stop communal and violent attacks against Indigenous Peoples in the Chittagong Hill Tracts;
- Arresting all perpetrators involved in the gang-rape, violent attacks, killings, and destruction of property, and bringing them to justice;
- Investigating the involvement of military personnel in the violent attacks and ensuring accountability for any role in the killings and violence;
- Providing adequate medical care to the injured and fair compensation or financial support to the families who were killed and affected by the destruction of homes and properties due to the violence and arson attacks;
- Declaring a clear roadmap with a fixed timeline for the speedy, full, and proper implementation of the 1997 Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord;
- Ratifying ILO Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (1989) and endorsing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).