

**BOOK REVIEW****Parbattya Chattagram: Shanti Prokriya O Paribesh  
Paristhiti Mullayan****Major General ( Rtd) Syed Mohammad Ibrahim**

Since independence, Chittagong Hill Tracts issue has been a major problem for subsequent Bangladesh Governments. In 1976, tribal guerrillas led by Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) started insurgency demanding autonomy to Chittagong Hill Tracts. To counter insurgency, Bangladesh Army was deployed in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Subsequent years saw death and destruction in the Hill Tracts. In 1997, a Peace Accord was signed between Govt. of Bangladesh and the PCJSS promising administrative autonomy to the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Since then implementation of the peace accord has become a controversial issue between the government and the PCJSS.

Major General (Rtd.) Syed Mohammad Ibrahim in his book "Parbattya Chattagram: Shanti Prokriya o Paribesh Paristhiti Mullayan" discussed Chittagong Hill Tracts issue in detail. General (Rtd.) Ibrahim has an advantage in discussing Chittagong Hill Tracts affairs. He was an active player in the Chittagong Hill Tracts drama in the eighties. He was brigade commander in Rangamati and Khagrachhari Army Brigades from 1987 to 1989. Recognizing his role in Chittagong Hill Tracts affairs, "Far Eastern Economic Review" printed his full length Picture on its cover in 23 March 1989 issue. He was very actively involved in counter-insurgency operation in Chittagong Hill Tracts and tried his best to destroy the ongoing insurgency with both military and non-military

means. In his book, he has discussed background of the insurgency in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, its development, counter-insurgency measures undertaken by Bangladesh Government, peace process and latest situation in Chittagong Hill Tracts.

The book is divided into 24 chapters. General (Rtd). Ibrahim started his book with a brief discussion about geography and ethnic composition of Chittagong Hill Tracts. He then analysed the background of the Hill people's revolt. He faithfully tried to depict the situation prevailing in the Chittagong Hill Tracts at that time and the factors that contributed to the rebellion of the Hill People.

The author described the formation of PCJSS and Shanti Bahini and the relationship of PCJSS and Shanti Bahini with India. He described operational plan of Shanti Bahini and its notable operations. He then discussed some important operations of Bangladesh security forces and tried to counter the allegations of oppression made against security forces and Bangalees. However, in the process he admitted that some oppression indeed occurred. Thereafter, he described the reaction of successive Bangladesh Governments to the situation in the Chittagong Hill Tracts since 1972. He described his instructions to the security forces of Rangamati region when he was brigade and regional commander at Rangamati. He also mentioned that number of security forces deployed in Chittagong in 1991 was only 22,632.

General (Rtd). Ibrahim narrated the peace initiatives undertaken by successive Bangladesh Governments since 1977. These peace initiatives ultimately led to the signing of

Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord between Bangladesh Govt. and PCJSS on 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 1997. In the concluding chapter, the author discussed evaluation of the peace accord by politicians and newspapers. He also made his own evaluation of the peace accord and its implementation. He emphasized the need to implement the peace accord.

The book is well written. Its main weakness is that the issues discussed in the chapters sometimes overlap and there is some repetition. After reading the book, one may feel that the author could not rise above his personal bias because he was personally involved in the conflict. The strength of the book is its clarity, lucidity and the first hand information it gives to the readers. It is rich in both primary and secondary sources. It is well documented and it gives an excellent insight into the fast changing Chittagong Hill Tracts situation. The book will be useful to researchers, students, policy makers and administrators interested in Chittagong Hill Tracts.

**Kazi Md. Shamsul Alam**

Director, Bangladesh Public  
Administration training Centre, Savar, Dhaka