

## **INDIA:**

### **Tens of thousands newly displaced in north-eastern and central states**

A profile of the internal displacement situation

9 February, 2006

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Through its work, the Centre contributes to improving national and international capacities to protect and assist the millions of people around the globe who have been displaced within their own country as a result of conflicts or human rights violations.

At the request of the United Nations, the Geneva-based Centre runs an online database providing comprehensive information and analysis on internal displacement in some 50 countries.

Based on its monitoring and data collection activities, the Centre advocates for durable solutions to the plight of the internally displaced in line with international standards.

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre also carries out training activities to enhance the capacity of local actors to respond to the needs of internally displaced people. In its work, the Centre cooperates with and provides support to local and national civil society initiatives.

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## OVERVIEW

### **India: tens of thousands newly displaced in north-eastern and central states**

*The number of people known to be internally displaced by conflict in India exceeds 600,000. Insurgency and retaliatory operations by security forces are a major factor of displacement. Civilians have fled fighting and have sometimes been directly targeted by militant groups in Kashmir, the North-East and in several states of central India. A majority of the internally displaced people (IDPs) have not been able to return for several years, either due to protracted conflicts or unresolved issues related to land and property. One example is India's largest group of internally displaced, the Kashmiri Pandits who have been fleeing the Kashmir Valley since 1989 due to persecution, killings and massacres. Thousands more have languished in relief camps in Assam since the early 1990s, while an undetermined number remain displaced after the communal violence that erupted in Gujarat in 2002.*

*During 2005 several tens of thousands more people were reported displaced in north-eastern and central parts of India. Worst affected were Assam and Manipur states in the North-East due to ethnic fighting and government security operations. Fighting between leftist extremist groups – commonly called Naxalites – and government security forces is also reported to have led to displacement in several of the central Indian states.*

*The national response to people fleeing conflict is often ad-hoc and largely insufficient. A first important step to improve assistance to internally displaced would be to conduct surveys in conflict-affected areas in order to document the magnitude of the problem as well as the needs of the displaced.*

### **Jammu and Kashmir: thousands await return**

India's largest situation of internal displacement stems from the conflict in the north-western state of Jammu and Kashmir between militants seeking either independence or accession to Pakistan, and Indian security forces and police. The status of Kashmir has been in dispute since the creation of an independent India and Pakistan in 1947, and the two countries have twice gone to war over the issue. Although security has improved with the ceasefire concluded in November 2003, militant Islamist groups have continued to launch attacks against local authorities and civilians to sabotage the peace process. Since 1989, the insurgency in Indian-administered Kashmir has claimed at least 67,000 lives (COE-DMHA, 2 February 2006).

More than 90 per cent of the Hindu population in the Kashmir Valley, the Kashmiri Pandits, remain internally displaced as a result of this armed conflict. Estimates of the number of displaced vary. The government estimates that 250,000 fled the Valley during the 1990s, while Pandit groups believe at least 350,000 people were displaced. Today, around 100,000 live in the capital New Delhi and some 240,000 in the city of Jammu (ORF 2003). Elections in Jammu and Kashmir in November 2002 led to the creation of a new coalition government and raised expectations for an end to the displacement of the Kashmiri Pandits. However, an ambitious return plan including cash assistance, interest-free loans and the building of 500 apartments in the Anantnag district where some of the displaced Pandits would be able to stay until they have repaired their own houses, has still not been implemented (The Tribune, 14 September 2005; Indian Express, 19 September 2005). Protection of the remaining Pandit population has been far from adequate, leading to further displacement during 2004 when 160 of the estimated 700 Pandit families remaining in the Kashmir Valley fled an upsurge of violence and killings (AI, 2 December 2003;

COE-DMHA, 5 April 2004; Central Chronicle, 4 January 2005). Despite threats from separatist militant groups against any attempt to return the Kashmiri Pandits, the state government of Jammu and Kashmir for its part maintains that it is moving forward with return plans and that 1,600 families have signalled in writing that they want to return to the valley (Reuters, 22 July 2005; The Tribune, 14 September 2005).

Another long-lasting situation of internal displacement exists along the Line of Control separating Indian- and Pakistani-controlled Kashmir. Since the end of the 1990s, clashes between Indian and Pakistani forces and attacks by separatist militant groups led to several waves of displacement from villages along the Line of Control. The ceasefire has substantially improved the security situation, but more than 12,000 (some say 30,000) people, are still displaced on the Indian side because their villages have not been rehabilitated or their fields are mined. Administrative delays have also hindered their return. While the state government applied for support from the federal government almost four years ago, a relief package was not approved until August 2005 (Daily Excelsior, 10 August 2005). Only 20 per cent of the funds had been disbursed as of January 2006. Returnees have also faced difficulties as they were reportedly not provided with cash assistance to repair the houses as promised. The earthquake that struck Kashmir in October 2005 has delayed the rehabilitation further (J & K Government, DIPR, 6 January 2006; Chakma, in the Tribune, 1 January 2006).

### **The North-East: new displacement in Assam, Tripura and Manipur**

The eight states in the geographically isolated and economically underdeveloped North-East are home to 200 of the 430 tribal groups in India. Between 30 and 40 rebel groups are currently active in the region. An influx of migrants from the neighbouring countries of Bangladesh, Nepal and Burma (Myanmar) has caused a massive population increase and subsequent competition for resources and jobs (Nath, January 2005). This has also spurred ethnic conflicts over land and fighting for political autonomy or secession. During the past decades, the North-East has been the scene of repeated ethnically-motivated conflicts in which the fight for a perceived homeland has sometimes resulted in ethnic cleansing. At least 50,000 people have been killed in such conflicts in the North-East since India's independence in 1947 (COE-DMHA, 2 April 2004). Violence has broken out in the states of Assam, Manipur, Nagaland, Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh, involving at least ten different ethnic groups (Bodos, Nagas, Kukis, Karbis, Dimasas, Paites, Mizos, Reangs, Bengalis and Chakmas). The largest forced displacement movements have occurred in the states of Assam, Manipur and Tripura (Bhaumik, p.22-24).

In Assam, ethnic clashes over territorial issues, insurgency against the Indian government for separate homelands and communal violence among the Assamese against "foreigners", mostly immigrants from Bangladesh, have led to widespread displacement. During 2005, thousands of Muslims of Bengali origin were driven out by angry mobs, accused of being illegal migrants from Bangladesh (BBC, 9 December 2005). Major waves of displacement have also occurred due to violence against seasonal workers, mainly from Bengal. In November 2003, communal violence displaced at least 18,000 people who fled to about 40 camps in and outside Assam (The Hindu, 2 December 2003; Frontline, 6 December 2003).

At least 10,000 people have been killed in separatist violence in Assam over the past 25 years (COE-DMHA, 19 April 2005). The largest displacement situation in the state stems from the fighting between Bodos and Santhals which erupted in the early 1990s and displaced an estimated 250,000 persons. As of December 2005, around 110,000 people remained in relief camps in Assam's Kokrajhar and Gossaigaon sub-divisions – a decrease of 40,000 people since 2003. However, the displaced have not been able to return to their former villages as they remain occupied, mainly by Bodo communities. Tribal leaders say they were forced out of the relief

camps because the state authorities decided to stop all humanitarian assistance. Today, they are landless and destitute (BBC, 9 December 2005).

The Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills districts of Assam have been the main scenes of ethnic violence in recent years. Thousands of civilians have been displaced mainly due to fighting between Karbi, Kuki and Dimasa insurgent groups. In October 2005, there were clashes between the rival Karbi and Dimasa tribes which continued until the end of the year. Up to 50,000 people from both tribes were displaced and took shelter mainly in public buildings situated in safer areas (COE-DMHA, 28 December 2005; MSF, January 2006).

The Indian government has successfully come to an agreement with several major rebel groups being active in Assam such as the Bodoland Liberation Tigers and the National Democratic Front of Bodoland. The creation of an Autonomous Territorial Council for the Bodos for example, led to a major improvement of the security situation in western Assam (BBC, 9 December 2005). But at the same time, other long-lasting conflicts have re-emerged and threaten to destabilise Assam further. The outlawed United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) launched a series of bombings in January 2006, at a time when it was supposed to be holding exploratory peace talks with New Delhi (SAIR, 23 January 2006).

In Manipur, counter-insurgency operations by the Indian army against local militia groups hiding along the border with Burma (Myanmar), as well as ethnic clashes, have resulted in the displacement of at least 6,000 people from the Hmar and Paite ethnic groups. Like IDPs elsewhere in the North-East, they are also reported to live in deplorable conditions, lacking food, medicines, warm clothes and other essential commodities (WebIndia 123, January 2006; Sangai Express, 21 January 2006).

Another major conflict in the North-East has been the Naga people's 50-year-long struggle for a homeland. In April 2001, a decision by the Indian government to extend a five-year-old ceasefire to all Naga areas in the North-East was met with violent protests in Manipur, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. The ceasefire was seen as a step towards the establishment of a greater Naga state which could infringe on the territory of the neighbouring states. Some 50,000 Nagas, fearing revenge attacks, fled the Imphal valley in Manipur to Naga-dominated districts in Manipur and Nagaland (NPMHR, 5 January 2002; AHRC, 1 October 2003). According to the Naga International Support Centre, most of those internally displaced by this incident and previous conflict have returned to their homes. The riots forced the Indian government to reverse their decision, and limit the ceasefire to Nagaland only. However, the parties have not succeeded in negotiating a peace agreement, and the NCSN has threatened to break the ceasefire unless the Indian government meets their demands (COE-DMHA, 30 January 2006; BBC, 31 January 2006). The situation is destabilised further by feuding between two competing factions of NCSN. Both are involved in the formal peace process but have not stopped bloodshed and violence against each other. During the last months of 2005, the two factions clashed at least five times over territorial disagreements (SAIR, 26 December 2005). Indian and Burmese security forces have also launched a campaign against Naga militant camps on both sides of the border. There have been some reports about small-scale displacement of civilians fleeing the security operation, but no total figure is available (Sangai Express, 6 June, 30 October 2005).

In northern Tripura, it is estimated that more than 100,000 people are internally displaced due to ethnic fighting and attacks by insurgent groups. The main pattern of displacement is attacks on villages inhabited by people of Bengali origin. Considered foreigners by the local tribal population, they have increasingly become the target of local armed groups (Deccan Herald, 22 May 2005; 20 March 2004; Rediff.Com, 21 May 2003). Some 31,000 Bru (also called Reang) from Mizoram remain displaced after fleeing ethnic fighting with the Mizos in 1997. Despite recommendations from the National Human Rights Commission, the state government of Mizoram has refused to take back the displaced because they maintain that only half of them are citizens of the state. Although a memorandum of understanding was signed between the main

Bru rebel group and the Mizoram government in April 2005 and the Indian government has endorsed a rehabilitation package for Bru IDPs, repatriation has yet to begin. The Mizoram government has only agreed to permit the return of some 270 people, consisting of former militant cadres and their families, while no timetable has been given for the repatriation of the large majority of the displaced. In the meantime, the Bru IDPs live in grim conditions in the camps where they face severe food shortages as well as a lack of medical and education facilities (ACHR, 11 January 2006).

Another situation of displacement in Tripura has developed due to the building of a fence along the border with Bangladesh. Indian authorities are currently constructing a barbed-wire fence along “sensitive” stretches of the border. The fence now covers one third of the border, and the remaining stretch will be finished by 2007. More than 10,000 families, or 70,000 people, are reported to have been evicted from their land in Tripura alone. The Indian government has rejected all claims for compensation to the evicted families, saying it is up to the state government to provide assistance to the displaced (The Telegraph, 13 March 2005; Deccan Herald, 4 December 2005; Kumar, 8 April 2005). It is not known to what extent the construction of the fence has created displacement in the other states bordering Bangladesh. However, there has been anecdotal information about people fleeing security operations launched by Indian border forces against insurgent groups believed to be hiding on the Bangladeshi side of the border. This has in some cases also led to skirmishes between Indian and Bangladeshi border guard forces (The Telegraph, 27 February 2005; Kumar, 8 April 2005).

Other populations at risk of displacement in the North-East are the Chakmas in Arunachal Pradesh who are regularly threatened with expulsion, in particular by an influential Arunachal student organisation, which maintains that the Chakmas should be resettled elsewhere (IPCS, 19 September 2003). Migrants from Nepal living in north-eastern India are also a particularly vulnerable group and have been targeted and displaced in Assam, Manipur and Meghalaya. It is unknown how many remain displaced today (Nath, January 2005).

Although conflicts regularly displace people in the North-East, no official estimate exists. Most information is found in local newspapers, while objective research in terms of assessing the magnitude of conflict-induced displacement in the region has yet to be carried out by either governmental or non-governmental agencies (IPCS, Routray, 17 January 2004).

### **“Naxalite” violence causes displacement in central India**

In central India, leftist extremist groups, commonly referred to as Maoists or Naxalites, have significantly increased insurgent activities during the past few years, including in the states of Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh (COE-DMHA, 14 April 2005). Violence has been especially on the increase in Andhra Pradesh and Orissa (ACHR, 21 September 2005; Frontline, 15 July 2005).

Discrimination against the tribal population, displacement by large development projects and government failure to ensure food security have been the main reasons for the rapid spread of the Naxalite movement, according to an independent study released in June 2005 (referred to in SAAG, 13 June, 2005). Estimates of the extent of the Naxalite groups differ widely. The last available government report states that 76 districts in nine states were affected by leftist rebels (MHA-GOI, 2004-2005, p. 43), while the June 2005 study says Naxalite groups had extended their influence to 155 districts in 15 states, affecting close to 300 million people across 7,000 towns and villages as of February 2005. Furthermore, such groups were reported to control almost 20 percent of India’s forests over an area two-and-a half times the size of Bangladesh (The Telegraph, 26 November 2006; COE-DMHA, 6 February 2006; SAAG, 13 June 2005; Frontline, 15 July 2005).

The government's response to the insurgency has been criticised of being ad-hoc and piecemeal (SAAG, 13 June 2005). In addition to federal police and paramilitary troops, some states are also believed to use private armies in their hunt for insurgent groups and sympathisers. In Jharkhand state, for example, it is known that the state government has sponsored village "defence" groups for this purpose (Stratfor, 16 January 2006). In Chhattisgarh, a popular movement against Naxalite violence has gained momentum. While the movement, called Salva Jodum, is gaining support among the local population, state authorities have been accused of using the campaign to justify a brutal search for supporters of Naxalite groups (PUCL, 2 December 2005; Frontline 21 October 2005).

No estimate of the number of people displaced as a result of the insurgency in central India is available, but anecdotal information suggests that thousands of villagers have been displaced either as a result of government mobilisation against the insurgent groups or because they flee Naxalite violence. In Chhattisgarh, approximately 15,000 people from 420 villages have fled to temporary camps. People have left behind their cattle and most of their household goods. Displacement is reportedly continuing while more police and para-military stations are being set up. Another article says 7,000–10,000 people fled to camps protected by the police to avoid Naxalite retaliation because they had joined the Salva Jodum movement. In Orissa, local tribes have reportedly been forcibly displaced by the state authorities because they were suspected of sympathising with the Naxalites (PUCL, 16 November 2005; Stratfor, December 15).

### **Internal displacement in Gujarat**

More than 2,000 people were killed and as many as 100,000 Indian Muslims were forcibly displaced from their homes in a major outbreak of communal violence in Gujarat in February 2002. The state's Muslim population was targeted in retaliation for an attack by a Muslim mob on a train carrying Hindu militants returning from the destruction of a celebrated mosque at Ayodhya. Women and girls were particularly targeted in the reprisal attacks; hundreds were raped, maimed and killed during the riots. The state government organised relief camps, where the internally displaced reportedly lacked the most basic necessities such as food, medical supplies and sanitation (HRW, April 2002). Despite strong international concern, the Indian government refused to solicit or accept international assistance. By October 2002, virtually all the camps had been closed, forcing many to return to their neighbourhoods where their security was continually threatened. In rural areas, incidents of killing and looting continued until April 2003. Many were forced to flee to relief camps again, where they remained generally unassisted (AI January 2005, 7.6.a). Both the state authorities and officials of the formerly governing Bharatiya Janata Party, have been accused of planning and instigating the violence against the Muslim population. Furthermore, the failure of the police to intervene and stop the violence is believed to have been decreed at the highest level (AI, January 2005, 7.5 b). Reports by Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International conclude that both the Indian government and the state government of Gujarat have failed to provide sufficient protection, assistance and compensation to the displaced. Since the riots, there have been several clashes between Hindus and Muslims, but rarely lasting more than two days. The state government is still being accused of complicity in the on-going violence against the Muslim community in Gujarat. According to a local organization, an estimated 61,000 people are still internally displaced and in dire need of assistance and rehabilitation (Communalism Combat, June 2005; IJJ, December 2003, p.51; AI, January 2005, 7.6.c, HRW, September 2004, p.28).

## **Humanitarian conditions**

A large number of the displaced from the Kashmir Valley have been housed by relatives or in relief camps in Jammu or Delhi. Hindu schools for the displaced children have been constructed and medical care provided, although the displaced population says it is not enough to cover their needs. The remaining displaced population from villages along the Line of Control continue to live in tents, some of them in poor conditions. The camps lack drinking water and health care facilities. In some camps, children have to attend outdoor schools (Bhair/Dayala, May 2003; Jamwal, December 2004).

In Gujarat, there are reports of immense trauma among children and women who witnessed atrocities or were victims of the 2002 riots (IIJ, December 2003, pp.64, 67; HRW, July 2003). Also, the displaced Muslim population faces acute poverty as their livelihoods were largely destroyed during the riots. Continued discrimination has left most of them unemployed, with female-headed households being particularly vulnerable (AI, January 2005, 7.6.c; IIJ, December 2003).

The relief camps for internally displaced in the North-East are reportedly in a deplorable condition. Camps for the newly displaced in Assam and Manipur are said to lack adequate shelter, food, health care, education and protection (Chakma, in the Telegraph, 1 January 2006; Indo-Asian News Service, 9 December 2005). This pattern has been confirmed by earlier reports which have documented that displaced throughout the North-East face severe hardship. Many of the displaced live in public buildings and makeshift shelters, with little health care and no access to formal education (SAHRDC, March 2001). In Assam, acute food shortages and lack of health care have been reported in camps housing Santhal internally displaced (The Hindu, 16 March 2004; Times of India, 8 January 2004). In Tripura, children in a relief camp for displaced in Chhawmanu were reported to have died due to the consumption of poisonous berries and contaminated water (The Telegraph, 17 January 2004). The state government says it has no money to provide relief to the displaced population. The Bru displaced in Tripura do not have adequate food rations and suffer from lack of drinking water, sanitation and health-care (The Assam Tribune, 6 December 2003). Furthermore, thousands of those displaced by local insurgent groups in the state are reported to have received no relief at all, and are camping alongside roads in makeshift houses seven years after having been displaced (Deccan Herald, 22 May 2005).

## **National and international response**

The Government of India has repeatedly expressed reservations in international fora about the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, which it sees as infringing national sovereignty. India has no national IDP policy targeting conflict-induced IDPs, and the responsibility for IDP assistance and protection is frequently delegated to the state governments. Furthermore, although it is well documented that Indian military, paramilitary and police forces have engaged in serious human rights abuses in conflict zones, there have been no attempts at transparent investigations or prosecutions of those responsible (HRW 2006).

Although the Indian government provides support to conflict-affected populations, such assistance is mostly ad hoc and does not correspond to the needs of the displaced. State governments are assigned the main responsibility to assist and rehabilitate the displaced, but practices vary significantly from state to state (Nath, January 2005, p.68). Overall, the government's response to displaced Kashmiri Pandits has been more generous than the response to displaced elsewhere in the country (Chakma, in the Telegraph, 1 January 2006). The federal government has granted assistance to relief camps in Indian-controlled Kashmir, Assam and Tripura, but on a lower scale than to Kashmiri Pandits (GOI, Notes on demands for grants 2005-2006). The New Delhi-based Asian Centre for Human Rights (ACHR) has on several

occasions appealed to the Indian National Human Rights Commission to address the situation of the internally displaced in the North-East. The Commission reportedly agreed to visit relief camps in the violence-affected areas of Assam in November 2005 (ACHR, 25 November 2005).

While access to affected populations in the conflict zones frequently has been denied, international NGOs have assisted IDPs in Assam and, occasionally, in Kashmir. Médecins Sans Frontières works with Santhal displaced in Assam and started programmes in the Karbi Anglong area when violence erupted there in October 2005.

The Indian government has been accused of failing to adhere to standards laid out in the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and to international human rights standards in its response to displacement in Kashmir and Gujarat (AI, January 2005; HRW July 2003, p.38; ORF September 2003). In Gujarat, human rights organisations blame local authorities as well as the state government for failing to address the needs of the displaced altogether, despite promises made by the government with regard to rehabilitation (IIJ, December 2003; HRW, July 2003).

The international community has largely failed to address issues of internal displacement in India. In the case of Gujarat, Amnesty International accused the UN and other international aid agencies of failing to put sufficient pressure on the state to provide relief to thousands of internally displaced victims, many of them women and children. Governments around the world by and large ignored the humanitarian crisis in Gujarat, providing no relief to the thousands of displaced persons in the state (AI, January 2005, 7.6.a).

The lack of credible information on numbers and subsistence needs of the displaced in India leaves thousands of people unassisted and unaccounted for. There is thus an urgent need for national authorities to conduct surveys in conflict-affected areas to document the number of internally displaced and their specific needs. A more coherent response to situations where people flee conflicts would also include the creation of a national institutional focal point on internal displacement and a national legal framework upholding the rights of internally displaced.

### **Displacement due to development projects and natural disasters**

Available reports indicate that more than 21 million people are internally displaced due to development projects in India. Although they only make up eight percent of the total population, more than 50 per cent of the displaced are tribal peoples – in India also known as Scheduled Tribes or Adivasis (HRW, January 2006). While the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre focuses on conflict-induced displacement, a brief background note and links to further information on development-induced displacement is included in the background section of the profile (link included in list of sources).

Floods and other natural disasters also displace millions every year. The Indian Ocean tsunami, which hit southern India in December 2004, devastated the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and a 2,260 km stretch of the mainland coastline in Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry. An estimated 2.7 million people were affected by the disaster and some 650,000 were displaced (World Bank, 3 May 2005; IFRC, 23 March 2005). Indian-controlled Kashmir was also badly affected by the South Asia earthquake in October 2005, which made thousands of people homeless.

# CAUSES AND BACKGROUND

## General

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### Four categories of internal displacement in India

- I Political causes, including secessionist movements
- II Identity-based autonomy movements
- III Localized violence
- IV Environmental and development-induced displacement

#### " I Political causes, including secessionist movements

i) Since independence, north-east India has witnessed two major armed conflicts – the Naga movement primarily led by the National Socialist Council of Nagaland, and the Assam movement led by the All Assam Students Union and now largely taken over by the extremist United Liberation Front of Assam. The violence and retaliatory responses from the government and other forces opposed to the secessionists continue to generate a steady flow of displaced people.

ii) In Kashmir's 'war' between state forces and militants, the killing of Kashmiri Pandits by fundamentalist secessionist groups, the widespread anarchy created by political instability and the continuous violation of fundamental human rights by both the state and militant groups, have led to large scale displacement, mainly of Kashmiri Pandits (estimated at 250,000), to Jammu and cities like Delhi. Despite the election and restoration of a popular government in 1996, those displaced have not been able to return due to the continuing reality of sporadic massacres in Kashmir. Although conditions are miserable, the displaced find that camps offer better employment opportunities, education and security.

#### II Identity-based autonomy movements

Identity-based autonomy movements, such as in Bodoland, Punjab, Gorkhaland and Ladakh, have also led to violence and displacement. This has happened in Punjab and more recently in the Bodo Autonomous Council area of western Assam. 'Cleansing' of non-Bodo communities by the Bodos, through plunder, arson, massacre and persecution, has forced a large number of non-Bodos to flee. They now live in camps.

#### III Localized violence

Internal displacement has also arisen from caste disputes (as in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh), religious fundamentalism (as in urban riots in Bombay, Coimbatore, Bhagalpur and Aligarh) and aggressive denial of residency and employment rights to non-indigenous groups by supporters of the 'son-of-the soil policy' (as in Meghalaya by the Khasi students and in Arunachal Pradesh against the Chakmas).

#### IV Environmental and development-induced displacement

In order to achieve rapid economic growth, India has invested in industrial projects, dams, roads, mines, power plants and new cities which have been made possible only through massive acquisition of land and subsequent displacement of people. According to the figures provided by the Indian Social Institute, the 21.3 million development-induced IDPs include those displaced by dams (16.4 million), mines (2.55 million), industrial development (1.25 million) and wild life sanctuaries and national parks (0.6 million).

(Lama, August 2000, p.24-25)

### **Internal displacement in Kashmir**

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#### **Since 1989, conflict between the central government and separatist militants made Kashmiri Pandits flee the valley (1989-2002)**

- Jammu and Kashmir is the only majority Muslim state in the Indian union
- Territorial dispute over Kashmir between India and Pakistan has led to two wars since independence in 1947
- State elections in 1987 created strong protests among the Muslim population due to allegations of fraud
- Since 1989, opposition has led to armed insurgency, increasing militarisation of the state and widespread abuses of human rights which has led to displacement of the Kashmiri Pandit population

"Jammu and Kashmir is the only majority Muslim state in the Indian union, and that distinction has made the Indian government all the more determined to hold on to the territory as integral to the country's multi-cultural identity. Yet politics in Kashmir have remained highly turbulent, and there was significant opposition to Indian rule among Kashmiri Muslims even before independence. Since 1989, this opposition has led to an armed insurgency, the increasing militarisation of the state, widespread abuses of human rights and an estimated 30,000-100,000 deaths." (ICG 21 Nov. 2002, p. 2)

"Kashmir has been at the heart of a territorial dispute between India and Pakistan since the two nations gained their independence in 1947. Both claim Kashmir. In 1948 the then-ruler of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, Maharaja Hari Singh, who was holding out for independence, acceded to India on condition that the state retain autonomy in all matters except defense, currency and foreign affairs. The accession was provoked by the invasion of Pakistani raiders and an uprising of villagers in the western part of the state. Fighting between India and Pakistan ended with U.N. intervention; since 1948 the cease-fire line has been monitored by the U.N. Military Observer Group on India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP). The far northern and western areas of the state are under Pakistan's control; the Kashmir valley, Jammu, and Ladakh are under India's control. U.N. resolutions calling for a plebiscite to determine the final status of the territory have been rejected by India, which claims that because Kashmiris have voted in national elections in India, there is no need for a plebiscite. Pakistan maintains that a plebiscite should be held. Several of the militant groups in Kashmir have also called for a plebiscite but argue that an independent Kashmir should be an option. On July 2, 1972, India and Pakistan signed the Simla Accord, under which both countries agreed to respect the cease-fire line, known as the Line of Control, and to resolve differences over Kashmir "by peaceful means" through negotiation. The Simla Accord left the "final settlement" of the Kashmir question to be resolved at an unspecified

future date. Since then, the Simla Accord has been the touchstone of all bilateral discussions of the Kashmir issue, even though the accord itself left the issue unresolved.

[...]

it was not until 1986 that discontent within the state found wider popular support. In that year the state's ruling National Conference (NC) party, widely accused of corruption, struck a deal with India's Congress Party administration that many in Kashmir saw as a betrayal of Kashmir's autonomy. A new party, the Muslim United Front (MUF), attracted the support of a broad range of Kashmiris, including pro-independence activists, disenchanted Kashmiri youth and the pro-Pakistan Jama'at-i Islami, an Islamic political organization, and appeared poised to do well in state elections in 1987. Blatant rigging assured a National Conference victory, which was followed by the arrests of hundreds of MUF leaders and supporters. In the aftermath, young MUF supporters swelled the ranks of a growing number of militant groups who increasingly crossed over to Pakistan for arms and training. The major militant organizations were divided between those advocating an independent Kashmir and those supporting accession to Pakistan. In the late 1980s, the groups began assassinating NC leaders and engaging in other acts of violence. Some groups also targeted Hindu families, and a slow exodus of Hindus from the valley began.

After the elections, militants of the JKLF and other groups stepped up their attacks on the government, detonating bombs at government buildings, buses, and the houses of present and former state officials, and enforcing a state-wide boycott of the November 1989 national parliamentary elections. One month later, JKLF militants abducted the daughter of Home Minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, then freed her when the government gave in to demands for the release of five detained militants. That event, together with a surge in popular protest against the state and central governments, led the central government to launch a massive crackdown on the militants.

On January 19, 1990, the central government imposed direct rule on the state. From the outset, the Indian government's campaign against the militants was marked by widespread human rights violations, including the shooting of unarmed demonstrators, civilian massacres, and summary executions of detainees. Militant groups stepped up their attacks, murdering and threatening Hindu residents, carrying out kidnappings and assassinations of government officials, civil servants, and suspected informers, and engaging in sabotage and bombings. With the encouragement and assistance of the government, some 100,000 Hindu Kashmiris, known as "Pandits," fled the valley." (HRW 1999, *Behind the Conflict*)

"In reality, the conflict, in terms of population, takes place in [...] constricted space, with Kashmir's population concentrated in the Vale of Kashmir (i.e. Kashmir Valley), and Jammu's in the valley of that same name. Census data by decade reveals explosive population growth since independence, with the population essentially increasing by a third in each of the last two census-decades (i.e. 1981-1991 and 1991-2001). Indeed, given the 1951 census figure of 3.25 million, the present count of 10,069,917 makes for a 310 per cent increase in 50 years – with the greatest growth in the Kashmir Valley.[...]

Jammu is dominated by Hindus (62 per cent), but three of its six districts have Muslim majorities (Poonch, Rajouri, and Doda; the other three districts, which have very large Hindu majorities, are Jammu, Kathua, and Udhampur). Kashmir's six districts (Kupwara, Baramulla, Srinagar, Budgam, Pulwama, and Anantnag) all have Muslim majorities in excess of 90 per cent. Hindus, in fact, were reported to be less than 2 per cent in all districts of the division except Srinagar, where their numbers were placed at 6-8 per cent.

Since the State as a whole (certainly Kashmir Division) remains tied to the employment patterns generated by agriculture, all sources have noted post-independence employment problems, especially the high dependency ratio (i.e. the number of persons supported by the working population).

[...]

At least two decades ago, then, issues of livelihood for the young had been identified as a looming State problem, with all factors exacerbated in Kashmir by Islamic cultural traits (such as discrimination against women and preference for male offspring). Already, in 1981, more than half the State population was less than 19 years of age, with a literacy rate well below the national norm (and even lower among Muslims and especially Muslim women). Significantly, the lowest level of agricultural employment in the State was in Srinagar District (16.7 per cent), which was tied to small shop-keeping and thus dependent upon external forces for generation of employment capacity.

As this heavily Muslim district was also an area of explosive population growth, the ability of the economy to absorb youth steadily declined [...] Population density was considerably higher in Kashmir than elsewhere in the State, 251/km<sup>2</sup> as early as 1991 versus 135/km<sup>2</sup> in Jammu (and just 2/km<sup>2</sup> in Ladakh).

The upshot is a statistical case can be made that there was a demographic tidal wave of unabsorbed youthful males appearing in the late 1980s, especially in Kashmir, just as political issues discussed above called into question the legitimacy of the existing order. Yet the resulting insurgency, despite its widespread violence in both the Jammu and Kashmir Divisions, is in its origins and driving force more a Kashmir than a Jammu problem. Indeed, the increasingly Islamic nature of the insurgents and their support from Pakistan has served to enflame latent separatist sentiment on the part of Jammu. One now sees strong forces demanding independent consideration of Jammu in factors ranging from political to linguistic; and local defence forces (to be considered below) in Jammu, at least, are dominated by Hindus.[...]

[...]

Indeed, the internal war in J&K, when scaled, does not begin to approach the levels of criminal violence present in those U.S. metropolitan areas best known for their murder rates. The 'death count' in Jammu & Kashmir for 2003 stood at 836 civilians, 1,447 militants, and 380 security personnel.<sup>35</sup> If this violence is aggregated (2,663), which is unorthodox but certainly presents the worst possible statistical picture, it scales out at 24.5:100,000 population.<sup>36</sup> This would place J&K between Memphis (24.7:100,000) and Chicago (22.2:100,000), in the 2002 murder rankings when examining American cities with populations greater than 500,000, well off the pace established by the likes of Washington, DC (45.8:100,000) or Detroit (42.0:100,000).[...]

Thus the issue, as concerns Indians, is not 'body count' alone but the totality of the dislocation. The perversion of daily life caused by the insurgency and the Government's response; the deployment to the State of substantial numbers of security forces; the inability of economic activity to respond to demographic shifts due to the all-encompassing and pervasive effect of the conflict; the looming danger of escalation to inter-state war, with the possibility that nuclear weapons will be used; these and other facets are what make the Kashmir conflict so ominous for the population and for the country.[...]" (Marks, 2005, Faultlines no.16 )

### **Displacement in Jammu & Kashmir due to military tensions and armed clashes between India and Pakistan (1999-2003)**

- The displacement of border villagers has been a common phenomenon since 1947 due to shelling and military build up along the Line of Control (LoC) and in the border areas
- The displaced belong to different communities, Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs
- In 1999, fighting in the Kargil area displaced some 60,000-100,000 people
- After December 2001, over 100,000 people were forced to flee from the LoC and international border after Indian-Pakistani tension ran high following a terrorist attack on the Indian parliament
- In April/May 2002, there were again serious war fears, displacing people once more

"In the mid-nineties, thousands of families belonging to all communities — Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs — living in Rajouri and Poonch districts migrated to other areas. Similar migration took place from Doda district. Their movement increased after Operation Parakram. As security in the remote hamlets decreased people sought shelter here. Estimates place the number at close to 30,000." (The Hindu, 15 April 2003)

"In May 1999, conflict broke out [again] between India and Pakistan over Kashmir. The conflict centered around the Kargil area, high in the Himalayan Mountains, halfway between the major Indian towns of Srinagar and Leh and just south of the Line of Control between Pakistan-held Kashmir and Indian-held Kashmir.

The conflict began when India launched air strikes along the Line of Control (the unofficial border between Indian-held Kashmir and Pakistani-held Kashmir), claiming that infiltrators from Pakistan had crossed the Line and occupied Indian territory. It ended in July, when, following international mediation, the infiltrators withdrew.

In India, the conflict displaced an estimated 60,000 to 100,000 people, mostly Kashmiri Muslims. The largest towns in the area, Kargil and Dras, were left completely deserted. Most of the displaced fled heavy Pakistani shelling of their villages." (USCR 2000, p.166)

"The spring and summer 1999 incursion of Pakistan-backed armed forces into territory on the Indian side of the line of control around Kargil in the state of Jammu and Kashmir and the Indian military campaign to repel the intrusion forced as many 50,000 residents of Jammu and Kashmir from their homes, a number of whom took refuge on the Pakistani side of the line of control. Many had their homes destroyed. Since that conflict, artillery shelling of the region by Pakistan has kept many of the internally displaced persons from returning and driven others from their homes. On October 12, Jammu and Kashmir home minister Mustaq Ahmad Lone told the State Assembly that 43,510 persons remained displaced [...]" (U.S. DOS February 2001, Section 2)

"In the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States, the security situation in Kashmir worsened because of new clashes between Indian and Pakistani armed forces, as well as renewed attacks by Muslim separatists. At the end of December 2001, some 60,000 to 100,000 Kashmiris fled their homes." (USCR 2003-India)

"The 13 December [2001] attack on the Indian parliament, alleged to be the work of the Islamic group, LET backed by the Pakistani military and security services triggered off the largest military build-up since the 1971 war between the two nuclear rivals India and Pakistan. This happened firstly on the dividing Line of Control (LOC) in Kashmir and then on their international borders.

Both countries have amassed their armed forces, with over half million Indian soldiers on the Indo-Pakistani borders which has now become the biggest 'mine zone' border in the world.

According to media reports, over 100,000 people have been forced to migrate from the LOC alone. In the three districts [...] including Jammu, Poonch and Rajouri, over 36,000 thousand school children after their holidays found their schools housing refugee families [...]" (CWI, January 2002)

"The current tension between India and Pakistan and the military build-up along the international border and the Line of Control has caused the inhabitants of several dozen villages close to the border to leave their homes and seek refuge in safer areas. While most of the displaced people are staying temporarily with friends and relatives, several thousand of them are having to camp in buildings such as schools, a commercial centre and a disused factory." (ICRC, 1 February 2002)

***Jammu has received the majority of the Hindu Pandits displaced from the Kashmir Valley and residents in border villages have been forced to flee on several occasions :***

"Jammu District lies on South East of Jammu and Kashmir State. It is separated from Pakistan by International border and Line of Control (LoC) While LoC is in the Akhnoor Tehsil(Block), International border is in Samba, Ranbir Singh Pura and Bishnah Tehsil. Jammu District covers 3097 sq. km. with 10 towns, 1054 villages with 15,71,911 souls as per 2001 census.

[...]

The displacement of border villagers has been a common phenomenon since 1947. It was considered a temporary situation during either war or large scale military exercises by Government."

[...]

The displacement in Jammu District has occurred in three phases [...]

First, in Akhnoor Sector since June 99 during Kargil war.

Secondly, in Samba and Akhnoor Sector since December 2001 (Deployment of forces at border from December 18, 2001, after terrorists attack on Indian Parliament).

Thirdly, in R.S.Pura and Bishnah Sector since May 25, 2002 after Kaluchak (Army Camp, Jammu) massacre on May 14, 2002)[...]. "(Bhay/ Dayal, May 2003, pp. 4,6)

**A ceasefire has raised hopes for a durable solution for internally displaced from the border areas (March 2004)**

- India accepted Pakistan's offer of a ceasefire along the LoC, but said it could become durable only if Pakistan stopped allowing extremists into Indian-administered Kashmir
- Several confidence-building measures between India and Pakistan have been implemented
- A vast demining operation has been launched to remove one million mines laid following the buildup of troops after the December 2001 attack on the Indian Parliament

"The two countries had earlier ordered troops to halt firing along the de facto border, or Line of Control (LoC)

[...]

India accepted Pakistan's offer of a ceasefire along the LoC and said it would extend it to the disputed Siachen glacier area - the world's highest battlefield.

However, the Indian foreign ministry said the ceasefire could become durable only if Pakistan stopped allowing extremists into Indian-administered Kashmir.

Pakistan has always denied arming the 14-year-old uprising against Indian rule in Kashmir, saying it only lends diplomatic backing to an indigenous insurgency.

Spokesmen for the largest separatist groups have said they are not bound by the ceasefire and will continue their guerrilla war.

Hours before the start of the ceasefire, a clash near Jammu in Indian-administered Kashmir left two soldiers and two militants dead, police said.

The first night of the ceasefire was welcomed by villagers living along the LoC, who have long lived in fear of falling artillery shells.

Villagers stayed up late and left lights burning in their houses, while children played in exposed outdoor areas for the first time in years.

Other peace proposals put forward by Mr Jamali [...] include:

- Accepting an Indian offer to set up a bus service linking Indian and Pakistani-administered parts of Kashmir

- Setting up a train service linking the two countries through the Thar desert
- Holding talks so that Indian and Pakistani prisons can release long-serving prisoners from each other's countries
- Agreeing to India's proposal for a ferry service between the ports of Bombay (Mumbai) and Karachi
- Allowing people aged over 65 to cross the border crossing at Wagah on foot
- Setting up another bus service between the Pakistani city of Lahore and Delhi." (BBC World, 26 November 2003)

"As part of continuing confidence-building measures between India and Pakistan, border officials of the highest level of both countries have begun 3-day talks in Lahore, Pakistan to discuss solutions to border disputes between the two countries. The resumption of border talks, which have not taken place since May 2001, were agreed upon between India and Pakistan during landmark talks last month. Inspector-General JS Gill led the delegation of the Indian Border Security Force (BSF), while Major-General Javed Zia led the delegation for the Pakistani Rangers. The two sides are expected to discuss illegal trafficking in arms and drugs, among other border issues. The border official meetings will be held twice a year before the summer and winter seasons, following the previous schedule before the talks were suspended in 2001. In addition, Indian and Pakistani officials are due to discuss the re-opening of bus routes between the two countries on April 8-9, instead of this coming Monday (March 29). No reasons were given for the delay. Meanwhile, the Indian army says that it has "almost completed" clearing mines from thousands of acres of land along the Pakistani border. According to an Indian senior army official quoted in The Kashmir Times, operations to remove the nearly 1.05 million mines laid following the buildup of troops after the December 2001 attack on the Indian Parliament, were "100 percent complete" in the northern Indian state of Rajasthan. He added that the operations were "96 percent complete" in Kashmir and "98 percent complete" in Punjab state. The mining operation, which has taken more than a year, is one of the Indian army's largest and most dangerous peacetime operations. NGOs have said that the 2001 mining operation was one of the largest in the world, however, numbers cannot be independently verified." (COE-DMHA, 26 March 2004)

See also: [\*Uncertainty regarding number of displaced families having returned to their villages along the international border and Line of Control \(March 2005\)\*](#) under the return section

## **Internal displacement in the North-East**

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### **Short presentation of the eight north-eastern states**

- The North-East comprises Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram, Tripura and Sikkim
- North-East India is a geographically and politically isolated area with critical strategic significance for India
- The region is characterised by extraordinary ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic diversity, with more than 160 scheduled tribes (listed in the Indian constitution) belonging to five different ethnic groups, and a large and diverse non-tribal population
- The actual number of ethnic groups comprehends over 400 distinct tribal and sub-tribal groupings

"Arunachal Pradesh is an area of 33,000 square kilometers, that is almost entirely mountainous. The total population of 864,558 is almost completely tribal.

Assam, with a population of about 22 million, is the biggest state in the North East. Its native population includes the Assamese who are mostly Hindus with a few Muslims; the Plains Tribes such as the Bodos, Mishings, Kacharis, Rabhas, Lalungs and Deorias; the Hill Tribes such as the Karbis, the Dimasas and the Kukis. In addition, the Tea Garden Laborers belonging to groups such as the Santhals, Mundas and Oraons, who were brought from Central India to work in the tea plantations in the 19th century and early part of the 20th century, are beginning to get integrated into the mainstream. Finally, there are a large number of recent immigrants, mostly from Bangladesh and rest of India.

Manipur, one of the smallest states in India, has a population of about 1.8 million. There have been waves of migration of Aryans, Mongolians, and even Dravidians to Manipur over the centuries. The Meiteis, usually referred to as Manipuris constitute more than 50% of the population. The Meiteis are Vaishnavite Hindus. The Manipuri Muslims or the Pangans constitute 17% of the total population of Manipur. Nagas and Kukis also live in Manipur. The Kukis are a group of Zo or Chin people who migrated from the Chin Hills of Myanmar.

Meghalaya has a total population of 17,74,778 (1991 census). 85.53% are indigenous people. The main tribes of Meghalaya are the Hynniew Trep, a conglomerate of the Khasis and the Jaintias or Jaintias, and the Achiaks or the Garos.

The Nagas, with a total population of about 3 million, inhabit the hilly Patkai range running roughly parallel to the Brahmaputra Valley. This 1,00,000 square kilometer region is bound by the Hukwang Valley in Myanmar in the northeast, the plains of the Brahmaputra in the northwest, Cachar in Assam in the southwest and Chindwin in Myanmar in the east. About 40% of the Nagas live in Myanmar and the rest in India. The Nagas, who are demographically Mongolian, are divided into about forty tribes such as Angami, Sema, Lotha, Ao, Tangkhul, Chasesang, Konyak, Zeliangrong, Rengma, and Mao. Each tribe and sub-tribe speaks a different language. In Nagaland, the Assamese-based Nagamese is commonly spoken as the lingua franca.

Mizoram has a diverse population of communities such as the Lushais, Chakmas, Ralte, Paite, Baite, Pawi Dhilen, Lakher, Hmar and Piang. Most tribes are Christian (84%). Riangs and Chakmas are Buddhists (8%). There are some Hindus and Muslims. The main languages of Mizoram are Mizo, Hmar, Chakma, Lai, Mara and Ralte.

Tripura has a land area of 10,466 square miles and shares 80% of its border with Bangladesh. This geographical location has led to a situation where the native Tripuris who were 95% of the population in 1931 have been reduced to a mere 31% in the 1991. This demographic sea-change has been caused by migration of hundreds of thousands of Bangladeshis. The indigenous population is composed of 19 tribes that are collectively called Boroks. The language they use is called Kok Borok." (The Assam Homepage, 2003)

"These States cover a combined area of over 255,088 sq. km. (7.7 per cent of the country's territory) and, according to the 2001 Census of India, a population of 38,495,089 persons (3.74 per cent of national population). The region is characterised by extraordinary ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic diversity, with more than 160 Scheduled Tribes [...] belonging to five different ethnic groups, and a large and diverse non-tribal population as well. The 'scheduled tribes' only refer to the tribes listed in the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution, and do not reflect the actual complexity of the ethnic mosaic of the region, which comprehends over 400 distinct tribal and sub-tribal groupings.

Contrary to widespread perception, however, the tribal population of the region constitutes only about 30 per cent of the total population, though the distribution is skewed. While the 'non-tribals' dominate Assam and Tripura, over 60 per cent of the population of Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland is drawn from the Scheduled Tribes.

[...]

The Northeast region has critical strategic significance and, as is often remarked, remains tenuously connected with the rest of India through a narrow corridor, the 'chicken's neck' or 'Shiliguri Corridor', in North Bengal, with an approximate width of 33 kilometres on the eastern side and 21 kilometres on the western side.[...] This constitutes barely one per cent of the boundaries of the region, while the remaining over 99 per cent of its borders are international – with China to the North; Bangladesh to the South West; Bhutan to the North West; and Myanmar to the East." (Sahni, Faultlines, Volume 12, pp. 1-2)

"The state of Sikkim has recently been formally bracketed under 'Northeast' after it has been included into the North Eastern Council (NEC), the region's apex funding and development agency. The other seven states of the Northeast are: Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Tripura." (Hussain, November 2004, p. 1, footnote)

### **General background to internal displacement in North-East India (November 2004)**

- The North-East has witnessed at least seven major cases of strife-induced internal displacement in fifty years
- Every state in the region is currently affected by insurgent and terrorist violence and ethnic strife is a major cause for large scale displacement
- Self-determination rather than religious, cultural or economic factors has been a major factor in the ethnic conflicts in the North-East
- The unequal tribal /non-tribal and inter-tribal power relations have also played a major role in most of the conflicts
- Since ethnic rebel groups are often not equipped to engage each other militarily, much of the violence has been directed against civilians
- Non-Bodo communities and Bengali settlers are among the targeted communities

"What the Northeast of India is witness to are essentially ethno-national movements by [ethnic] groups to further their sub-national aspirations, often triggered by the fear of losing their distinct identity.

[...]

Four of the northeastern states, Assam, Manipur, Nagaland and Tripura, witness scales of conflict that can be categorized as low intensity wars, defined as conflicts in which fatalities are over 100 but less than 1000 per annum. Between 1992 and 2002, there have been 12,175 fatalities due to insurgency and other armed conflicts in the Northeast[...]" (Hussain, November 2004, pp.5, 15-16)

"India's Northeast is the location of the earliest and longest lasting insurgency in the country, in Nagaland, where separatist violence commenced in 1952, as well as of a multiplicity of more recent conflicts that have proliferated, especially since the late 1970s. Every State in the region is currently affected by insurgent and terrorist violence,[...] and four of these – Assam, Manipur, Nagaland and Tripura – witness scales of conflict that can be categorised as low intensity wars, defined as conflicts in which fatalities are over 100 but less than 1000 per annum.

[...]

In addition, the Tirap and Changlang districts of Arunachal Pradesh witness the spillover effect of insurgencies from the neighbouring States, particularly Nagaland, Assam and Manipur.

[...]

Mizoram has remained largely free from terrorist violence since the political resolution of the insurgency in this State in 1986, [...] but the activities of the Bru National Liberation Front (BNLF) have given cause for concern, and have inflicted some civilian and security force (SF) casualties.

Illegal migration of Bangladeshi nationals into India and the use of Bangladeshi and Bhutanese territory by insurgents operating in India's North East are a grave security concern for the region.

[...]

Internal conflicts in India's Northeast are overwhelmingly conceptualised within the framework of unique ethnic identities that are threatened by, and in confrontation with, the nationalist state, which is often seen as a representative of an inchoate cultural 'mainstream'. While some of the conflicts in the region certainly fit into this general framework of interpretation, few, if any, are completely explained by it; others, moreover, are entirely unrelated to this reductionist scheme of 'freedom struggles' by ethnic minorities against the 'homogenising state'. Indeed, even where militant groups direct their rhetoric and their violence against the symbols of the state, the underlying motives and ideologies are more correctly interpreted in terms of conflicting tribal identities and histories of internecine warfare based entirely on tribal, sub-tribal, or tribal-outsider rivalries and corresponding competition over limited resources, especially land. It is, consequently, appropriate to analyse and assess conflicts in the Northeast in terms of three basic 'faultlines':

-Tribal groups vs. the state

-Tribal vs. tribal (Internecine)

-Tribal vs. non-tribal

In any single conflict, moreover, more than one of these elements would tend to overlap, giving rise to complications both of analysis and of resolution. The multiplicity of tribal and sub-tribal groupings in each of the States in the region, and continuous re-alignments between some of these, create further difficulties.

Within such a context, mobilisation of populations along issues relating to exclusionary and conflicting tribal identities has become a basic feature, both of electoral politics and of more extreme movements, across the Northeast region." (Sahni, Faultlines 2003, Volume 12, pp. 1-2, 4)

"The states have often used displacement issues to score political points against each other. The Centre has not been far behind.

[...]

The Northeast has witnessed at least seven major cases of strife-induced internal displacement in the fifty years of the Indian Republic. They are as follows: (a) the displacement of Bengalis from Assam (particularly Bodo areas) and Meghalaya; (b) the displacement of Bengalis from Tripura; (c) the displacement of 'tea tribes' in western Assam; (d) the displacement of Reangs from Mizoram; (e) the displacement of Nagas, Kukis and Paites in Manipur; (f) the displacement of Chakmas from Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram. Except in Manipur, the displacement has spilled over to the other states – and at least twice to neighboring countries. [I]n most of the six cases listed above, the government has been rarely successful in its efforts to either restore law and order or ethnic harmony or maintain adequate levels of relief supplies and ensure rehabilitation. It has failed to stem the tide of Bengali displacement in Tripura, it has failed to control the Bodo insurrectionary activities that led to large scale displacement of non-Bodo populations in western Assam, it has failed, despite several interventions by the Home Ministry, to ensure the return of the Reang refugees from Tripura to Mizoram, it has failed to prevent the ethnic relocation of populations in Manipur in the wake of the bloody feuds and it has failed to grant citizenship to the Chakmas and the Hajongs and thus guarantee them a safe future in Arunachal Pradesh."

[..]The northeast Indian states have seen five types of displacement [...one of which is the] displacement caused by ethnic or religious strife, belatedly marked by systematic ethnic cleansing.

[...]

Since the 1980s, ethnic cleansing has become much more systematic in the Northeast and that has been the major cause of large scale internal displacement." (Bhaumik, February 2000, pp.21, 22-24,26)

### **Assam: general causes for displacement (January 2006)**

- Since the early 1960s, Assam has lost much territory to new states emerging from within its borders
- In the early 1980s, resentment among the Assamese against "foreigners", mostly immigrants from Bangladesh, led to widespread violence
- The number of militant insurgent groups, representing different ethnic groups, increased sharply during the latter half of the 1990s
- After 1993, the Bodos have systematically targetted the non-Bodo communities in the four districts they see as forming the core of their separate homeland
- The Karbi insurgent group, UPDS, is also accused of actively pursue ethnic cleansing of areas they see as belonging to Karbis

"Since the early 1960s, Assam has lost much territory to new states emerging from within its borders. In 1963 the Naga Hills district became the 16th state of the Indian Union under the name of Nagaland. Part of Tuensang, a former territory of the North East Frontier Agency, was also added to Nagaland. In 1970, in response to the demands of the tribal people of the Meghalaya Plateau, the United Khasi and Jaintia Hills and the Garo districts were formed into an autonomous state within Assam; in 1972 it became the separate state of Meghalaya. Also in 1972 Arunachal Pradesh (the North East Frontier Agency) and Mizoram (from the Mizo Hills in the south) were separated from Assam as union territories; both became states in 1986.

Despite the separation of these ethnic-based states, communal tensions and violence have remained a problem in Assam. In the early 1980s, resentment among the Assamese against "foreigners", mostly immigrants from Bangladesh, led to widespread violence and considerable loss of life. Subsequently, disaffected Bodo tribesmen agitated for an autonomous state. The militant United Liberation Front of Assam waged a guerrilla campaign for the outright secession of Assam from India until agreeing to end their rebellion in 1992." (Britannicaindia 2001)

"In a culturally diverse society like Assam, ethnic identity has grown as a crucial force often resulting in violent conflict. Autonomous demands of often different ethnic groups – Bodos, Karbis, Dimasas, Koch-Rajbanshis, Rabha-Hasongs, Tiwas, Missings – had caused serious concern to the authorities at the state as well as the center." (Sumona Das, December 2004)

"Tens of thousands of Bengalis, Hindus and Muslims, were displaced all over Assam in violence unleashed during the 1960s and 1970s, particularly during six years of agitation led by students and youth groups upset by migration from neighbouring Bangladesh.

Thousands died in the riots during the agitation between 1979 and 1985 - almost 2,000 in the village of Nellie alone.

Delhi signed an accord with the All Assam Students Union in 1985 to bring the agitation to an end.

However, ethnic conflicts erupted elsewhere in the state - mostly in areas settled by indigenous tribes people like the Bodos." (BBC, 9 December 2005)

***The number of militant insurgent groups increased sharply during the latter half of the 1990s:***

"The latter half of the 1990s saw the mushrooming of militant organisations along tribal, religious and cultural fissures. The culture of violence propagated by the ULFA and the Bodo outfits seems to have set a pattern for a number of copycat insurgent groups. Currently, there are as many as 34 insurgent groups listed in the State, though the ULFA is the main player. Among other terrorist outfits, the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB), Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT), United People's Democratic Solidarity (UPDS), Dima Halim Daoga (DHD), and Muslim United Liberation Tigers of Assam (MULTA) are prominent. The NDFB operates in the Bodo-areas of the State and the UPDS dominates the Karbi-Anglong and North Cachar districts. Most of the other groups listed are currently dormant.

[...]

Since its initiation, [...], both the NDFB and the BLTF have condemned the Bodo Accord, and have, since the mid-1990s, been engaged in a campaign of violence directed against other ethnic groups within 'Bodo areas'." (Sahni, Faultlines 2003, vol.12, pp.4-5,7)

***The Karbi insurgent group, UPDS, is accused of actively pursue ethnic cleansing of areas they see as belonging to Karbis:***

"Since its origin in 1999, with the avowed objective of establishing a land for the Karbis, the UPDS [*the United Peoples' Democratic Solidarity*- a Karbi militant group] has pursued a systematic campaign of cleansing the area of non-Karbhis. As a result, the Kukis, like the Bodos, Nepalis and the Hindi-speaking people in the district, become natural targets. Over the last two years, the UPDS has targeted the ginger-producing Kukis in the Singhasan Hill range for systematic extortion.

[...]

The UPDS action against the Kukis has brought the KRA, primarily a Manipur-based outfit, into the scene opening up another and most violent front of conflict. The group, with a declared objective of protecting the interest of the Kukis, is seen to be a serious challenge to the militancy of the UPDS, which till recently enjoyed a local monopoly over violence. Both these groups have clashed repeatedly, and have not only targeted each others' armed cadres, but also civilians, conveniently projected as the rival's sympathizers. The result is that the district has come to witness significant internal displacements, mostly into Nagaland and Manipur. More importantly, the rising violence has pushed the KNA's autonomy demand into the background." (SATP 29 March 2004)

***The NDFB is currently in peace negotiations with the federal government. ULFA has rejected invitations to talks:***

"The tribal separatist National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB), based in northeastern Assam state, [...] will extend a six-month ceasefire with the Indian government by another six months. The NDFB had declared a unilateral ceasefire with the government last October following a string of rebel attacks which killed about 80 people and injured 217 others in a spate of bombings and shootings mostly in Assam as well as in neighboring Nagaland state. The NDFB and the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), another major tribal separatist group, both claimed responsibility. While the NDFB reportedly declared a ceasefire with the Assam government shortly after the attacks, the ULFA refused. New Delhi still has yet to formally reciprocate the ceasefire, although the Assam state government has said that it has scaled back its counterinsurgency operations against the NDFB.

[...]

Observers say that if New Delhi successfully makes a peace agreement with the NDFB, it might put pressure on the ULFA to follow suit. The two groups are Assam's largest and most influential tribal separatist groups. The 1,500-strong NDFB say they are fighting for a homeland for the tribal

Bodos, most of whom are now either Hindu or Christians, and account for about 10 percent of Assam's 26 million people. Bodos are mostly in the western and northern parts of the state. At least 10,000 people have been killed in separatist violence in Assam over the past 25 years." (COE-DMHA, 19 April 2005)

***Despite peacetalks, eruption of extremist violence in the northeastern region is still common:***

"There is a spurt in extremist violence in the region. Since 1991 more than 3,000 civilians, 2,000 militants and 769 security personnel have been killed in Assam alone in insurgent attacks and counter-insurgency operations. During the same period, more than 12,000 militants surrendered. However, recruitment by militant groups continues in Assam and other militancy-affected northeastern States." (Frontline, Peace at Premium, 5 November 2004)

**Assam: clashes between Karbis and Dimasas displace over 40,000 (January 2006)**

- Up to 50,000 civilians from the Karbi and Dimasa tribes were displaced during fall 2005 due to ethnic feuding
- Despite a massive operation launched by the Indian army, violence continued in the region throughout December 2005

"In late September 2005, three people from one tribe in the Karbi Anglong region of Assam were apparently killed by members of another local tribe. This provoked a spiral of violence, including retribution and general violence. A month later, 30 men, women, and children traveling on a bus in the area were attacked with machetes and killed. Houses and whole villages have been burned. People from both tribes have been brutally murdered and burned out of their houses. Why this is happening now is difficult to say. These two tribes have lived side by side from time immemorial, as they say here. It may be territorial. It may be that different tribes are struggling for recognition and autonomy and their efforts at self determination are turning to arms. It may be political manipulation. For the people affected, the end result is the same.

[...]

People on both sides became terrified and started to flee to places of safety. In total, about 45,000 people were suddenly on the move." (MSF, January 2006)

***Despite a massive operation launched by the Indian army, violence continued in the region throughout December 2005:***

"Fresh violence broke out in Karbi Anglong district in India's northeastern Assam state today (December 28, Wednesday), as about 40 tribal militants attacked an ethnic Dimasa village, injuring two people and setting 11 houses on fire. The attack caused 80 residents of the village to flee. Police conducting a search operation after the attack, were reportedly fired on by militants in an encounter, which resulted in the killing of an ethnic Karbi militant. The attacks are the latest in a series of violent incidents between the Dimasa Halam Daoga (DHD) and Karbi United Peoples' Democratic Solidarity (UPDS) tribal militant groups in the district, that has claimed the lives of over 120 people and resulted in the burning down of over 1,000 homes since September. Up to 50,000 people have also been displaced in attacks that have included massacres of villagers by militants. The violence prompted the deployment of the Indian Army in the district in the state in early December, after the Assam state government decided to give control to the military." (COE-DMHA, 28 December 2005)

See also: [\*Assam, Turf War in a time of Truce\*](#),  
South Asia Intelligence Review (SAIR), 17 October 2005

Lessons not Learnt by Assam: Ethnic cleansing and internal displacement in Karbi-Anglong and NC Hills (ACHR), 7 November 2005

### **Assam: Muslims of Bengali origin evicted by nationalist groups (June 2005)**

- Large numbers of Muslims of Bengali origin fled Assam during spring 2005 due to threats and evictions
- Muslim leaders say thousands have been forced out, while local authorities say only 600-700 people were evicted

"The people who say they are the latest victims of religious hatred are large numbers of Muslims of Bengali origin who say that they have been driven away from some districts in India's north-eastern state of Assam during the last two months.

As Assamese regional groups renew their drive against those they believe are "illegal infiltrators" from neighbouring Bangladesh, these Muslims, whose ancestors settled in Assam several decades ago, are becoming easy targets.

"The illegal migrants from Bangladesh are a major threat to our identity. We will become foreigners in our own land unless we keep these people out of Assam," says Sarbananda Sonowal, top leader of the regional party, Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) .

[...]

In Howli and Bijni, small towns in western Assam's Barpeta district, I met more than 200 Muslims who have been evicted from Northern Assam districts like Dibrugarh, Tinsukia and Golaghat. I met scores more in the chars (river islands) of Goalpara district bordering Bangladesh.

[...]

The Assam administration says only about 600 to 700 Muslims may have been evicted from northern Assam districts.

[...]

Many Muslim leaders of the Congress are angry at the "indifference of the state government".

They say the number of those evicted are in thousands rather than hundreds, forced out of northern Assam in trucks.

They are compelled to travel in pitch dark to avoid police attention - and the gaze of the Assamese youth activists.

As I prepared to leave Bijni, one arrived with nearly 50 Muslims, all evicted from Dibrugarh.

Assamese groups say all those they have evicted are illegal Bangladesh migrants.

Muslims constitute nearly 30% of Assam's population which makes it the state with the second highest Muslim population after Kashmir." (BBC, 16 June 2005)

**Assam: during November 2003, violence against Hindi-speaking people forced thousands to flee the state**

- Thousands of Hindi-speaking people, predominantly from Bihar, fled Assam after days of violence in November 2003 in which at least 50 people were killed and hundreds of homes torched
- The violence was triggered by a conflict over the allocation of jobs between Assamese and Hindi-speaking groups
- The outlawed United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA), fighting for an independent Assam nation, ordered Biharis to leave Assam or be killed
- Violence took place both in urban and rural areas
- More than 17,000 people fled Assam and were sheltered in relief camps - an unknown number remained internally displaced within Assam
- There is no information on the number of people who have returned as of May 2004

"Thousands of migrants rushed to leave India's northeast state of Assam on Friday after days of violence in which at least 34 people have died and hundreds of homes torched.

Most of the dead are settlers from neighbouring Bihar state in a conflict triggered by competition for jobs in Assam.

Thousands of settlers, some leaving behind their possessions, crowded railway stations across the state to catch trains headed for Bihar.

"We want to leave this place at the earliest. Our lives are at risk," said Raghu Narayan, a Bihari labourer, waiting at Guwahati's railway station with his wife and three children.

"Most of them (Biharis) are travelling without tickets as they fled leaving behind whatever they had in their houses and they have no money," said Ashim Dey, a railway ticket collector.

Peace has returned slowly to the state after troops were deployed to quell an orgy of killing, looting and arson that began on Monday.

"The situation has fast returned to normal though some minor incidents of assaults have taken place in interior areas," K.D. Tripathi, Assam's interior commissioner, told Reuters.

The outlawed United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA), fighting for an independent Assam nation, on Wednesday ordered Biharis to leave or be killed. The group has been blamed for most of the killings this week.

Army soldiers patrolled the riot-torn areas, set up check-points and raided possible hideouts of attackers.

[...]

More than 700 people suspected of involvement in rioting have been arrested from across the state, police said.

The violence was triggered by attacks on Assamese train travellers in Bihar last week after reports of assaults on Bihari students who came to Assam to do tests for railway jobs. Assamese students feared Biharis would snatch the prized jobs. (Reuters Alert-Net, 21 November 2003)

"More than 17,000 people have fled their homes in north-east India's Assam state to escape attacks on Hindi-speaking settlers by Assamese mobs and rebels.

The refugees, mostly migrant workers from the nearby state of Bihar, are being housed in makeshift camps.

Violence erupted between Assamese and Bihari groups a fortnight ago because of a row over the allocation of jobs.

Over 50 people have died in the clashes, despite a government decision to send troops to calm the situation

[...]

Assam's home secretary, BN Mazumder, [...] warned that attacks on the Hindi-speakers had not stopped.

But he said the state government was making provisions for the fleeing settlers, and would make sure troops had calmed the unrest before they were allowed to return.

[...]

It is unclear how many Hindi-speakers of Bihari origin remain in Assam after the recent violence.

An organisation representing the Hindi-speakers, the Purbottar Hindibhasi Sammelan, said that at least 10,000 of their community had already fled Assam state.

[...]

Over a week ago, train passengers arriving in Bihar state from Assam became the target of attacks by mobs.

The Bihar mobs were angry that youths in Assam had physically prevented candidates from Bihar from taking recruitment interviews for jobs at the state-run Indian Railways." (BBC World, 26 November 2003)

"The victims of these so-called Assamese-Bihari clashes are almost entirely the so-called Biharis, more correctly Hindi-speaking people from many parts of India, including, perhaps predominantly, Bihar, whose ancestors had settled down in the State or the region generations ago. The backlash began in Guwahati but spread soon to areas in Upper Assam, with the major toll being in Tinsukia district. Two weeks after the first outbreak, the officially admitted death toll was 56. The victims, who included women and children, were hacked to death, as in the case of a whole family in Tinsukia, or stabbed or shot. The violence was not confined to "remote" areas; hundreds of houses, homesteads and settlements in Guwahati, including in the capital complex Dispur and the Guwahati University campus, were burnt. Livestock too was destroyed.

[...]

Many of the survivors have abandoned their homes and taken shelter in refugee camps. Given the spread of the Hindi-speaking people all over the State, including villages and small towns (the 1991 Census in Assam enumerated 10,35,474 persons as Hindi-speaking, although the figures do not tell how many of these are second or third generation settlers, bilingual in Hindi and Assamese, and in varying degrees of acculturation into Assamese society), no official figures of those internally displaced and those who have fled the State were given. Even the number of persons in the relief camps is constantly changing. Leaving aside the uncounted numbers of those internally displaced, about 20,000 persons, perhaps more, are believed to have fled the State." (Frontline 6 December 2003)

### **Assam: internally displaced in the Bodo-Santhal conflict (December 2005)**

- In May 1996, more than 250,000 persons were displaced as a result of Bodo large-scale attacks on ethnic Santhals
- In 1997, the majority returned home, but were forced to flee after renewed fighting during 1998
- While thousands returned to their homes, retaliation from Santhals and other non-Bodo communities has, in turn, resulted in significant displacement of the Bodo population from areas where they are a minority
- The situation in the district have improved considerably in the past couple of years and many people have begun returning home
- More than 100,000 Santhals remain displaced
- An unknown number of Bodos are also living in three relief camps
- One relief camp houses displaced from the Rabhas ethnic group

"The Bodos resented Assamese domination and the loss of land to settlers ranging from Bengali Hindus and Muslims to Santhal and Oraon tribesmen who were brought from central India as cheap labour for Assam's tea estates in the 19th and 20th centuries.

As armed Bodo groups pressed for a separate state, the settlers became targets of attacks. Hundreds were killed by Bodo rebels and nearly a quarter million people fled into makeshift camps to save their lives. " (BBC, 9 December 2005)

"In May 1996 and September 1998 Kokrajhar district (lower Assam), consisting of two subdivisions - Kokrajhar and Gossaigaon - witnessed violent ethnic conflict between the majority Bodos and the minority migrant Santhal community. (Although the conflict affected other districts such as Dhubri and Bongaigaon, Kokrajhar was the worst affected.) Hundreds were reportedly killed, thousands of homes destroyed, and many people of both communities displaced. The Assam State government brought in military forces to quell the rioting, and over 250,000 people took refuge in 68 relief camps." (ACT- LWSI, 20 February 2004)

"....[A]fter 1993, the Bodos have systematically targetted the non-Bodo communities in the four districts they see as forming the core of their separate homeland. Having got the structure for a future homeland, but one which is still heavily populated by non-Bodos, the Bodo militants have resorted to systematic attacks on non-Bodo communities to further their strategy of ethnic cleansing.

[...]

The Bengalis, Hindus and Muslims who control prime agricultural land (that they cleared and worked in) and the retail businesses, are also the prime targets of ethnic cleansing in the Bodo-areas of Assam." (Bhaumik March 2000, pp. 22,24)

***The number of militant insurgent groups increased sharply during the latter half of the 1990s, which among other resulted in significant displacement of the Bodo population:***

"The latter half of the 1990s saw the mushrooming of militant organisations along tribal, religious and cultural fissures. The culture of violence propagated by the ULFA and the Bodo outfits seems to have set a pattern for a number of copycat insurgent groups. Currently, there are as many as 34 insurgent groups listed in the State, though the ULFA is the main player. Among other terrorist outfits, the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB), Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT), United People's Democratic Solidarity (UPDS), Dima Halim Daoga (DHD), and Muslim United Liberation Tigers of Assam (MULTA) are prominent. The NDFB operates in the Bodo-areas of the State and the UPDS dominates the Karbi-Anglong and North Cachar districts. Most of the other groups listed are currently dormant.

[...]

Since its initiation, [...], both the NDFB and the BLTF have condemned the Bodo Accord, and have, since the mid-1990s, been engaged in a campaign of violence directed against other ethnic groups within 'Bodo areas'. Large-scale attacks were carried out against Santhal tribals in May 1996, displacing tens of thousands of people. A second wave of attacks in May 1998 resulted in further distress migration. The Santhals and other non-Bodo communities have also begun to arm themselves and fight back. This has, in turn, resulted in significant displacement of the Bodo population from areas where they are a minority." (Sahni, Faultlines 2003, vol.12, pp.4-5,7)

"In 1997, the majority of the refugees returned to their original villages and homesteads, with government provided rehabilitation grants. However, 23,000 families, designated "encroachers" (illegally occupying homestead lands), were unable to return. In addition, there were about 3,000 families who – despite having received rehabilitation grants – were unable to return to their original homes, living in small huts made of bamboo and plastic sheeting, close their to their original villages or on relief camp sites.

However violence erupted in 1998 on two occasions, causing people to once again flee to the safety of the camps." (LWS-I, Appeal 2003)

"[...] But when Delhi signed an autonomy agreement with the Bodoland Liberation Tigers (BLT) last year [2004] and opened dialogue with the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) this year [2005] , the guns fell silent. With the creation of a Autonomous Territorial Council for the Bodos, the Assam government claims peace has returned to western Assam." (BBC, 9 December 2005)

***More than 110,000 people from the Santhal-Bodo conflict still remain in relief camps:***

"Assam officials say only about half of the quarter million displaced people were still left in makeshift relief camps. Assam government records, now available with the BBC, indicates only 33362 displaced people were left in the camps Kokrajhar district and 74123 were left in the camps in Gosaigaon district." (BBC, 9 December 2005)

"According to officials, 19 camps house Santhals, 3 house Bodos and one houses the Rabhas ethnic group." (COE-DMHA, 14 January 2004)

**Tripura: displacement due to construction of fence along the border with Bangladesh (September 2005)**

- The building of a fence along the border of Bangladesh has created several controversies between the two countries - sometimes leading to exchange of fire between the border forces
- The fence has led to the eviction of an unknown number of people, around 70,000 people in Tripura only

"A number of issues have plagued the bilateral relationship between India and Bangladesh in recent times. But India has been seriously concerned about two issues. First is use of Bangladeshi territory by the insurgent groups who are operating in northeastern India for anti-India activities. India is also concerned about illegal immigration which has reached serious proportions in recent years. India sought Bangladesh cooperation to sort these issues, but its requests fell on deaf ears. What is worse, steps taken by India to check cross border terrorism and illegal immigration have been resented by Bangladesh. Its result has been regular skirmishes between the border guards of two countries.

India shares its largest border with Bangladesh which is also extremely porous. The border runs through jungles, hills, villages, paddy and jute fields, making it easy to cross. There is also a small riverine portion. Five Indian states border Bangladesh, including four in India's troubled northeast where dozens of militant groups are fighting for full statehood, more autonomy or independence. Dhaka denies the presence of rebel camps, calling the allegations baseless, but the issue remains a thorny one in ties between India and Bangladesh. This border also faces problems like illegal immigration, smuggling, arms trafficking, drug trafficking and trafficking of women and children. To deal with some of this problem India had suggested joint patrolling of the border to which Bangladesh did not agree. However, Bangladesh agreed for coordinated patrolling, but that was not sufficient to solve problem of this magnitude.

As a result, India has been forced to take its own steps. To check problems like illegal immigration and arms trafficking, India decided to erect barbed fences. It had seen its positive impact on the north western frontiers. It wants to replicate the same experience on its eastern

border too. So far, it has managed to fence over a third of the 4,894 kilometers (3,034 mile) long border with Bangladesh.

[...]

Since February this year, tension has increased manifold on Indo-Bangladesh as BDR has tried to stop the fencing work on a number of occasions. India had to temporarily stop erecting fences near Anwarpur and Kashinagar border in Akhaura sub-district of Bangladesh due to resistance by the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and villagers on February 16 and February 17. BDR, joined by local people, attempted to stop BSF on February 23 to raise barbed wire fence at Khernal in Kasba sub-district. Tension also mounted on Chuadanga border as BDR alleged that BSF was pushing in people in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) declared a red alert on February 26, in about 100km frontier areas in Kushatia. BDR troops were seen patrolling and taking position in Mujibnagar, Dariapur, Bajitpur, Sholomari, Tetulbaria, Kazipur, Buripota and other frontier areas supposedly to resist the BSF's bid to push in Bengali-speaking Indian nationals into Bangladesh.

A serious dispute arose between Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and Border Security Force (BSF) of India on March 4 on fencing work on Kasibari border at Ramgarh of Khagrachhari district. Indian and Bangladeshi border guards exchanged fire for over three hours. BDR also enforced a red alert on Bangladesh frontiers while locals fled their houses fearing escalation of firing between the border forces. Besides, tension is also prevailing at Singimari of Lalmonirhat, Chakpara of Chapainawabganj and at Chuadanga border over fencing. BDR has also planned to resist if India tries to send back illegal immigrants.

To diffuse the situation in Ramgarh of Khagrachhari Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and Border Security Force (BSF) held a meeting at Subrum in India on March 5. But that meeting remained inconclusive and both sides blamed each other for the situation. However, it was agreed that the issue of fencing would figure again during the deputy director general level meeting between BDR and BSF to be held in Agartala of India on March 14, followed by a director general level meeting in Dhaka on April 14.

After a few days' lull, Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and Border Security Force (BSF) exchanged several thousands bullets in two skirmishes over construction of fences along the border at Singimari in Lalmonirhat and Ramgarh in Khagrachhari on March 9. Both sides agreed to a ceasefire after telephonic conversation between Rangpur BDR sector commander Col Lutfar Rahman and acting Kuchbihar BSF sector commander PK Tripathy. A flag meeting was also held between BDR and BSF on March 10 on the zero line in Singrimari border during which both sides agreed to resolve the problem as per international border rules.

India also tried to discuss this issue at the political level. The Indian High Commission in Dhaka requested the government to instruct Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) not to resist Border Security Force (BSF) of India from constructing barbed wire fences at some places within 150 yards of the no man's land. The request was made in a letter sent to the foreign ministry on March 14. It also said that fencing work by the BSF has been underway since 1989 and greater part of the fence is located at or beyond 150 yards from the zero-line on the Indian side. However, in specific areas mainly due to the existence of villages, or as necessitated by terrain conditions the fence had to be built within 150 yards. India has formally conveyed details of villages, houses and population within 150 yards of the zero-line to Bangladesh." (Kumar, 8 April 2005)

"Tripura has a large number of people displaced because of increasing land alienation, insurgency and fencing of Indo-Bangladesh border. " (ACHR, Human Rights Report 2005 - Tripura)

"The Centre has deputed a team of three officials to determine the amount of funds required to compensate over 10,000 families displaced by the erection of a barbed wire fence along Tripura's 856-km-long border with Bangladesh." (The Telegraph, 13 March 2005)

#### **Tripura: internal displacement due to conflict between tribals and non-tribals (July 2004)**

- In Tripura, there has been serious ethnic conflict between the tribals and the non-tribal Bengalis since the 1980s
- In response to the Bengalis' rapid attainment of majority status in the state, tribal militant groups have sought to establish autonomous areas by attacking Bengali communities
- More than 4000 people have died in Tripura since the ethnic riots of 1980, the same number have been kidnapped and more than 100,000 Bengali settlers have been internally displaced according to BBC
- In June 2004, the state government estimated that more than 20,000 persons were displaced from rural areas due to extremist violence
- No information has been found regarding the situation of the internally displaced Bengalis, but anecdotal information suggests that they remain non-assisted. Some choose to go to Bangladesh
- While some of the main insurgent groups have started peace negotiations with the government, other insurgent groups signal that they will continue to fight

"Tripura, is a tiny hilly State of 10,486 sq.km in the North East of India. It is bounded by Bangladesh in the North, West and the South having 930 k.m of the international boundary and the States of Assam and Mizoram in the East. The Bengalees and the greater Tripura tribal community comprising of as many 19 tribes constitute the major bulk of the population. The Tripuris are the numerically largest tribe followed by the Reangs. The other tribes in the state are Halam, Jamatiya, Bhil, Bhutia, Chaimal, Chakma, Garoo, Khasia, Kuki, Lepcha, Lushai, Mog, Munda, Noatia, Orang, Santhal and Uchais. The State since 1980 has witnessed serious ethnic conflict between the tribals and the non-tribal Bengalees. This had resulted in the internal displacement of thousands of Bengalees as well as tribals from time to time.

[...]

The internal displacements in the State have been due to (i) the clashes between the tribals and the non-tribals (ii) the attacks by the tribals and the Bengalee insurgent groups in isolated villages (iii) the fleeing of the villagers fearing retaliation from the other community. The pattern of insurgent attacks since 1993 shows that the tribal insurgent groups not only attacked the non-tribals but also resorted to the burning of their houses. The tribals living near the villages which were attacked by the insurgents often had to leave their villages fearing retaliation from the non-tribals.

[...]

The tribals in the State had resented the influx of the Bengalees from the erstwhile East Pakistan. But the Government as a matter of policy settled them in the State and had provided rehabilitation assistance. The influx of large number of Bengalees over a long period of time brought about demographic changes in the State whereby the tribals got marginalized. The percentage of tribal population in 1951 was 36.85% when the major influx of Bengalees after partition of India in 1947 had already taken place. The percentage of tribal population came down further to 30.94% in

1991 as influx of Bengalees continued in the later years. The census figures of 1931 and 1941 show that the State was a tribal majority State." In 1931, the tribal population was 203,327 as against the non-tribal population of 179,123. In 1941 the tribal population was 256,991 as against the non-tribal population of 256,091."770 Bhattacharya S.R, op.cit, 39 0 As early as 1954 Sardar Patel the then Union Home Minister had said that no more Bengali displaced persons should be brought in the State. But the influx of displaced Bengalees continued which gradually changed the demographic composition of the State reducing the status of the tribals to that of minority.

[...]

The Central and the State Governments ignored the tribal protests. The tribal organizations like Seng-krak and others strongly protested against the influx of the displaced persons. The other tribal insurgent groups the ATTF and the NLFT demanded a separate State for the tribals.

[...]

The decision of the State Government to create the ADC [autonomous council] in 1982 did not meet the aspirations of the tribals. The Council has emerged as an another tier of administration. Because of the administrative hurdles and the constraints of resources it has not played any meaningful role in addressing the grievances of the tribals.

[...]

The general resentment of the tribals afforded an excellent opportunity to the insurgent groups to establish themselves. They successfully exploited a series of tribal concerns to mobilize the tribals. Initially they raised the issue of restoration of land alienated by tribals, expulsion of foreigners etc. In the initial years they did not enjoy the support of the tribals but gradually by show of strength and terrorization they succeeded in bringing a substantial number of the tribals under their control.

The domination of the insurgent groups increased as they committed one daring act after the other. In course of time they acquired more sophisticated arms. They also established contact with other insurgent groups in the North-East. They could get shelter in their areas whenever the security forces pursued them. Moreover taking advantage of the terrain they could cross over to Bangladesh. The situation got further complicated with the multiplicity of the insurgent groups.

[...]

The insurgents targeted particularly the non-tribals in rural areas killing them indiscriminately including women and children and burning their houses. The government failed to provide security to non-tribals living in scattered villages. The Bengalee insurgent groups also resorted to the acts of violence against the tribals." (Saha, pp. 8-10)

***In June 2004, the state government estimated that more than 20,000 persons were displaced from rural areas due to extremist violence:***

"The terror in the hills has forced several thousand villagers leave their dwellings in search of safer homes. Deserted and run down houses are common all along the Agartala-Udaipur highway near Bagma, about 30 kilometres south of Agartala. Similarly, several families have moved closer to urban centres from the remote villages.

Early last month, Bengali inhabitants displaced from Takarjala, Jampuijala, Kendraicherra, Prabhapur and Jugalkishore Nagar in West Tripura district due to extremist-related violence, approached the Government for rehabilitation in cluster villages with adequate security. Farmers, small traders and agricultural labourers form a major chunk of these displaced people.

The Revenue Minister, Keshab Majumdar, said in the Assembly session last month that 20,494 persons were displaced from seven sub-divisions largely due to extremist activities. Bishalgarh sub-division in West Tripura district bore the brunt of it with a little over 13,000 persons leaving their habitats.

Official figures indicate that 4,340 families have been affected in Longtarai sub-division, 1,196 in Kanchanpur sub-division, 504 in Gandacherra sub-division and 509 in Sadar sub-division.

The State Government has been providing a relief of eight rupees for a person every day, but not exceeding Rs. 45 for a family.

Loss of habitat, and hence, the source of livelihood, has pushed most of these predominantly agrarian families to poverty. Many have virtually turned wanderers taking houses on rent wherever they can or living with relatives. Those who prefer to stay back are left to buy peace from extremist groups by paying "taxes".

Though most of the State is under the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, the militant groups operate at will. More than 300 personnel of the Central Reserve Police Force, Border Security Force, Assam Rifles and local police have died in ambushes. The militants have also kidnapped over 2,500 persons; many are still untraced even after payment of hefty ransoms. Last month, a group of NLFT militants swooped down on a convoy of public transport vehicles on the Assam-Agartala Highway and kidnapped 25 traders who are yet to be traced." (The Hindu, 25 July 2004)

***No information has been found regarding the situation of the internally displaced non-tribals, but anecdotal information suggests that many are not assisted. Some choose to go to Bangladesh:***

"With political parties and the civil administration showing no inclination to rehabilitate them, some victims of terrorist attacks do not want to stay on in India

After suffering six months of depression at refugee camp in Sadar North of West Tripura, Mangal Sarkar, an trader and resident of Simna village, Agartala finally left the country.

Even after about a year the poor villagers could not forget the brutal scene of carnage on the ill-fated night of May 6, 2003. Militants of the outlawed All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF) killed 21 innocent non-tribals including three minors and six women in Simna Kalibari village and set fire to all the houses.

All 33 families of the remote hamlet (39 kilometres from the town) including that of Mangal's, were evacuated from the area and took shelter in nearby government institutions as each and every house was burnt down. Despite government commitment the villagers could not be absorbed in public service. No rehabilitation and help was extended for their survival. (Deccan Herald, 20 March 2004)

***Exodus of non-tribals was reported in local media during the first months of 2003:***

"Alarmed by the sudden spurt in violence, the Tripura government has [...] been pressurising the Centre to take up with the Bangladesh government the issue of camps run by these outfits [*National Liberation Front of Tripura and All Tripura Tiger Force*] inside that country.

Meanwhile, the latest killings [*of 40 people by National Liberation Front of Tripura and All Tripura Tiger Force*] have sparked off an exodus of non-tribal Bengalis from the interiors of the state. The latest round of violence is seen as part of efforts at ethnic cleansing undertaken by the militant outfits since 1993, when the second and bloodier phase of Tripura's insurgency began.

Analysts in the state mark the first phase of exodus with the killings of non-tribals by the erstwhile Tripura National Volunteers. TNV militants surrendered en masse in 1988.

The next phase of killings of non-tribals was launched by NLFT and ATTF in 1993 and led to the exodus of more than 200,000 non-tribals from interior areas of the state in all three districts.

The worst affected were villages in Bishalgarh and Sadar subdivisions where many non-tribals had been resettled on government land under the rehabilitation scheme for erstwhile refugees from the then East Pakistan. Similar exodus took place from interior areas of Khowai, Kamalpur, Longtarai valley, Kanchanpur, Gandacherra and Udaipur subdivisions." (Rediff.Com, 12 May 2003)

***As of May 2004, BBC reported that more than 100,000 Bengali settlers have been internally displaced in Tripura:***

"More than 4000 people have died in Tripura since [ethnic riots of 1980], the same number have been kidnapped and more than 100,000 Bengali settlers have been internally displaced in Tripura due to the rebel violence." (BBC News, 6 May 2004)

***Hopes for a more peaceful future have been raised with a ceasefire between the federal government and the National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT). However, other insurgent groups signal that they will continue to fight:***

"In what is seen as a further break-up of the state's once strongest rebel group, the National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT), the group's former general secretary, Mantu Koloi, said more surrenders were expected from the NLFT ranks.

Another faction of the NLFT, led by Nayanbashi Jamatia, opened negotiations with Delhi in April and declared a ceasefire, but guerrillas of that faction are yet to surrender.

This leaves only a small number of fighters with the NLFT chairman Biswamohan Debbarma, who, the surrendered rebels say, is in a small camp in the remote Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh.

[...]

Mantu Koloi appealed to both the NLFT chairman, Biswamohan Debbarma, and the All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF) chief Ranjit Debbarma to come forward for talks with the Indian government and resolve the crisis in Tripura.

But both the rebel leaders have refused to talk and have said they will fight on." (BBC 6 May 2004)

### **Tripura: internally displaced Reangs from Mizoram (March 2005)**

- Ethnic conflict between the major tribal group Mizo and the minority Reang has resulted in the flight of 15,000 to 50,000 (U.S. State Department says 41,000) Reangs since 1997
- The violence started when a political party of the Reangs demanded an Autonomous District Council for the Reangs within Mizoram
- The Reangs are living in camps in the neighbouring state of Tripura
- 12 rounds of peace talks between the Government of Mizoram and the insurgents have now led to the signing of an agreement which includes the repatriation and rehabilitation of the displaced Reangs

"The Reangs, second largest tribal group of Mizoram, had long been demanding setting up of an Autonomous District Council (ADC) based on 6th schedule of the Constitution in Reang-dominated areas of Southern Mizoram. The demand had been raised under the banner of a new party called Reang Democratic Party (RDP). Long-accustomed to treating Reangs as 'bonded labourers and slaves', the majority Mizo tribesmen have looked upon the Reang demand with deep hostility." (Deccan Herald, 17 August 2003)

"The exodus of Reangs to the adjoining Cachar in Assam and north Tripura started in October 1997 following generalized violence against their community. The controversy started when the Bru National Union, a political party of Reangs formed in the early 90s, in a general assembly meeting in September 1997 passed a resolution demanding an Autonomous District Council for the Reangs within Mizoram. There was a strong reaction from Mizo Student Federation(MZP) who said that "if the Reangs wanted to divide or disintegrate Mizoram further, it would be better

that they go away. The resolution demanding Autonomous District Council could not be accepted by MZP. If the Reangs go ahead with their plan, the MZP was ready to fight against such a demand. Mizoram is the only land Mizos have and it could not be lost to foreigners or other communities." The Reangs who crossed over to Tripura spoke of "a fear psychosis following the killing in October, 1997 of 10 Reangs, allegedly by the MZP. The flow was not stopped, suggesting tension and lack of security. MZP went on the rampage after the murder of a Mizo forest warden allegedly by the Bru National Liberation Front.

An armed militant group called the Bru National Army (BNA), believed to be the Militant Wing of the Bru National Union (BNU), was formed in 1994 to protect, develop and uplift the Reangs. According to the Bru leaders, their cultural practices were obstructed and they were forced to adopt Mizo names and Mizo languages as their medium of instruction instead of the native Kokbarak. The Bru leaders also alleged that the names of about 20,000 Reangs were deleted from the Electoral Rolls.

The Mizos have always lived in isolation and they have a very strong attachment to their homeland. Thus the moment any minority tribal groups talks of autonomy and demands creation of separate District Council for themselves. Mizos consider it as an attempt to fragment the Mizo State further and it becomes a very emotive issue. To counter such demands such minority tribal groups are branded as outsiders who have settled in Mizoram. And all sorts of attempts are made for de-legitimising their claims by deletion of names from the voters' list, questioning the census report, etc. Any minor incident can provoke a violent reaction from the majority tribal group. In the case of Reangs, killing of a forest warden allegedly by Bru National Army resulted in burning of hundreds of houses of Reangs in many villages and killings of many Reangs. The entire Reang community was considered as the enemy of the Mizo people. Consequently, panic gripped the Reang community and many of them were forced to flee their homes. The insurgent groups affiliated to the minority tribal groups take full advantage of such a situation and project that it is they who can protect the interest of the minority tribal groups. The Bru National Army, the insurgent outfit of the Reangs claims to protect the interests of the Reangs. The Reangs in the adjoining State of Tripura are the second largest tribal community in the State. The internally displaced Reangs from Mizoram took shelter in Tripura with the hope that they would get support from the Reang community of Tripura. Before proposing a possible course of solution, it is proposed to consider U.N. Guidelines on Internal Displacement in the context of internally displaced Reangs. Though the guidelines have not been adopted by any country, they may help the Reangs to make their demands to the State and the Central Governments. Moreover, these guidelines would make the State and the Central Governments aware of their responsibilities." (Saha 2000 pp 6-7,10)

"In Mizoram fearing persecution from the ethnic majority Mizos, 15,000 to 50,000 Reang tribals have fled their homes since 1997 and found shelter in north Tripura, border villages of Assam and the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh. In order to accelerate the repatriation process, the Tripura government discontinued food rations and medical services in some camps, causing at least 16 people to starve to death. At least 260 IDPs died as a result of inadequate shelter and unclean water, and around 1,400 reportedly became seriously ill. Additionally, displacement camps are susceptible to attacks and mismanagement, for which the National Human Rights Commission castigated the Mizoram government in a 1998 report." (SAHRDC March 2001)

***In January 2005, the Supreme Court issued notice to the involved state governments asking them why they have not taken steps to rehabilitate the Reangs:***

"The Supreme Court has issued show-cause notices the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Mizoram and Tripura governments asking them why they have not taken steps to rehabilitate the Reang community in Mizoram." (Rediff.com, 13 January 2005)

***Twelve rounds of peace talks have been held between BNLF and the Mizoram Government, and the parties were expected to hold final talks and sign a peace agreement on 6 April 2005. After a delay, an agreement was signed a few weeks later:***

"The stage is all set for the signing of a peace accord between the Mizoram government and the Bru National Liberation Front (BNLF), an underground outfit of minority settlers in the state. This comes in the wake of 12 round of talks which discussed the main issue of Bru (Reang) refugee repatriation from six camps in North Tripura.

According to official sources in Aizwal, the agreement is schedule to be signed on April 6 next and then the process of refugee repatriation would start following a certain action plan. After thorough discussion in a bi-party meeting in Aizwal in early March, BNLF has raised certain issues for clarification on the draft agreement that delayed the process for a week, sources added.

BNLF supremo Surjyamani Reang said the main issue from their side highlighted in the meeting was the accommodation of Bru refugees staying in Tripura camps at resettlement centres and provision of ration for an year.

He pointed out that the post of the secretary of the 'Special Development Project' as agreed upon for the socio-economic amelioration of the Brus 'has to be reserved from our community.'

[...]

The BNLF supremo wanted absorption of all the 195 cadres of his outfit in the Indian Army on the pattern of Bodo Liberation Tigers and ex-gratia for the families of those killed in encounters.

The Centre has agreed to grant Rs 80,000 each for the families of those who surrender. He also demanded reservation of 10 per cent jobs for the Brus in the central and the state establishments.

The Union government has also sanctioned a rehabilitation package of Rs 28.63 crore for the resettlement of the refugees. Surjyamani Reang said the Bru Liberation Front of Mizoram in nexus with an influential outfit of Tripura is putting heat on the BNLF to scuttle the peace process.

But he said that the BNLF is committed to peace. BNLF took arms in 1999 against the atrocities on minority Reangs. About 30,000 Reang tribes had left home in 1997 following atrocities by the Mizos and took shelter in North Tripura." (Deccan Herald, 31 March 2005)

### **Manipur: ethnic clashes and security operations displace at least 6,000 (January 2006)**

- Conflict between security forces and armed opposition groups has repeatedly displaced the civilian population
- An estimated 1,000 Hmars and Paites fled to neighbouring Mizoram while about 5,000 were displaced within Tipaimukh sub-division of Manipur in January 2006

"Over a thousand Hmars and Paites have fled to neighbouring Mizoram while about 5,000 have been displaced within Tipaimukh sub-division following alleged attack and threats by the members of the armed opposition group, United National Liberation Front of Manipur.

The conflict has reportedly started following the clash between the members of the UNLF and Hmar People's Conference (Democratic) on January 6. " (Web India 123.com, 23 January 2006)

***Civilians reportedly also fled fighting between government army forces and the UNLF:***

"The Manipur government would be helping the people displaced due to the battle between United National Liberation Front (UNLF) and army at Churachandpur and Jiribam in Manipur.

[...]

Manipur government officials said here today that about 700 to 1000 villagers of Parbung and Lungthulien, Tipaimukh have left their villages due to fighting and moved towards neighbouring Mizoram.

Officials said the villagers were scattered at Sakordai, Vaitin, Khopurah, Vervek and Parvachawn in Mizoram." (Web India 123.com, 22 January 2005)

***A human rights investigation team confirmed that displacement took place already during the beginning of January 2006:***

"The two member Manipur Human Rights Committee investigation team that visited numerous villages in the interior area of Jiribam sub-division has returned to the State capital.

The MHRC team was accompanied by representatives of various civil society and student organisations.

A media team also joined the investigation visit to assess ground reality.

During the probe conducted to ascertain veracity of reports of gross human rights violation by security force personnel while launching cordon and search operations covered Butankhal near Barak river, Lamtaikhunou, Harinagar and Loukoipung all located within 22/25 kms south of Jiribam police station. Recalling circumstances leading to the rights abuse, villagers said Indian Army based at Jakuradhor were engaged in a fierce gun-fight on October 25 at an isolated area located between Vihunveng and Bhutankhal leading to the villagers living under constant fear for the rest of the day.

As expected a large column of security force arrived and started to cordon off the said villages the next morning with the search operations intensifying on October 28 and security men not even sparing women and children from hard action, the villager charged.

[...]

Deflux of villagers is said to maximum the next morning.

Among the displaced persons about 40/50 are currently taking refuge at Jiribam community hall while many more crossed Barak River to stay on the Assam side.

While language problem is a major factor for the villagers feeling scared of Indian Army's presence the situation is getting complicated by each day as non-locals are now asking the sparsely populated Meitei settlements to vacate from the villages contending that they (non-locals) are the original settlers.

[...]

according to Jiribam AC legislator Th Debendra, who had already donated Rs 20,000 for assistance to displaced persons staying at the relief camp, operation in-charge Brig Gossain had assured of protecting civilian property and life.

Jiribam SDPO Ishworlal asserted that a police team visited villagers where operations were launched and informed of the ongoing operation being conducted under 44 sector under Brig Gossain's command." (Sangai Express, 2 January 2006)

***Counter-insurgent operations in the border area with Burma may lead to further displacement:***

"On the other hand, press source conveyed that the ongoing flush-out operation in the interior pockets of Churachandpur district which is located close to the international boundary have the backing and understanding of Myanmar army.

In case circumstantial compulsion necessitate assistance from the Myanmar military there will be no hesitation in launching joint operations to crack down on UG activities, said the source.

It further disclosed that strength of Central forces' presence in the State had been augmented following withdrawal of troops after cessation of hostility in Kargil.

Currently seven battalion of Indian Army, 22 Assam Rifles battalion, four BSF battalions and eight battalion of the CRPF are being deployed in different pockets of the State to deal with the insurgency problem, the source detailed." (Sangai Express, 21 January 2006)

***Displacement was reported also in June 2005:***

"With fear of outbreak of clashes between the security forces and armed underground cadres lurking, villagers of Keiphundai, Ekgyara Mile and Bangi Chingpao area situated along National Highway 53 in Tamenglong district have reportedly fled their homesteads for safer climes.

According to information received by the press, a combined team of 26 Assam Rifles, 12 Grenadiers, CRPF and 9 Para Field Regiment have already begun mass combing operation in these areas since June 4 following a tip off of presence of underground cadres.

[...]

Sources said that the combined security forces entered Keiphundai village last night and bombarded quite a number of houses.

The Keiphundai village Church has suffered substantial damage in the action.

[...]

Keiphundai operation came close on the heels of the villagers of Mapithel and Marao in Ukhrul district fled from their homesteads after they feared gun-battle between Assam Rifles and cadres of NSCN(IM) around the area." (The Sangai Express, 6 June 2005)

***Displacement reported in 2004:***

"The conflict between the security forces and the armed opposition groups led to internal displacement. Over 600 villagers of ten remote villages in and around Sajik Tampak area, near the Indo-Myanmar border, in Chandel district had to flee leaving behind all their belongings in the wake of a flush out operation launched by the security forces against the armed opposition groups in April 2004. [8] The villagers' movements were restricted and any goods brought from outside were thoroughly checked. Restriction was even imposed on the farmers to sow seeds for cultivation in their paddy fields. As a result some of the villagers reportedly suffered from starvation." (ACHR, Human Rights Report 2005, Manipur)

### **Manipur: internal displacement due to inter-ethnic strife between the Nagas and the Kukis (November 2004)**

- Over 1,000 individuals have been killed and as many as 130,000 persons have been displaced since inter-ethnic strife between the Nagas and the Kukis started in mid 1992
- The Indian Central Government and its agencies have allegedly aided, abetting and stocking the Naga-Kuki conflict
- Ethnically mixed villages, once common in Manipur, have virtually ceased to exist

"Nearly 90 per cent of the landmass of Manipur comprises its hill areas, and the remaining 10 per cent constitutes the Imphal Valley. The Valley is home to the Vaishnavite (Hindu) Meiteis, who comprise more than 50 per cent of the State's population, and the Muslim Meitei-Pangals. The hills are exclusively reserved for the 'tribals' – mainly Nagas and Kukis. The State has a peculiar land tenure system – the Manipur Land Revenue and Land Reform Act – under which the hill tribes are allowed to settle in the Valley, but no Meitei or Meitei-Pangal is allowed to buy land or settle in the hills. The Meiteis are, moreover, classified as non-tribals, and consequently denied benefits under various reverse discrimination provisions that create reservations in jobs and educational institutions for the tribals.

The insurgency in Manipur entered its 38th year in 2002. [...] Among the 35 insurgent groups in the State, as many as 18 are reported to be currently active. The primary conflict in the State involves various insurgent groups, constituted along tribal affiliations, fighting against the Government for sovereign or separate homelands. A multiplicity of secondary conflicts has arisen out of tensions between various ethnic and tribal subgroups, often as a result of changes in patterns of land tenure and distribution.

[...]

After peaking in 1997, insurgent violence has remained at an unstable plateau over the past three years [...]. As in other conflicts in the Northeast, however, the situation is not a matter of a simple opposition between the government and outlawed revolutionary groups arraigned against it. The various militant groups have been substantially criminalised and there is overwhelming evidence of a complex web of collusion between terrorist outfits and various political parties." (Sahni, Faultlines 2003, vol.12, pp. 9-11, 2003)

### ***The conflict has led to widespread killings and internal displacement of Kukis, Paites and Nagas:***

"Additional tribal tensions reinforce instability in the state. Kukis and Paites have clashed since 1997 and friction persists between the Nagas and Meiteis. Violence between these groups has reportedly left 50,000 people homeless as entire villages are burned to the ground. Militants have also burned granaries, putting thousands of people at risk of malnutrition and starvation. Eleven thousand people now live in displacement camps and the government of neighbouring Mizoram has restricted the displaced from crossing into its territory." (SAHRDC March 2001)

"The Kuki-Naga riots that rocked the state of Manipur in the mid-nineties, mainly during 1992-1993, leading to the deaths of hundreds of people [...], is another clear example of inter-ethnic battles in India's Northeast over territorial control. Both the Nagas and the Kukis are fighting for separate homelands and their territories overlap. Members of the two groups have frequently clashed in the past too for control of the lucrative heroin trade route through Moreh, an Indian

outpost close to the border with Myanmar. The key factors that have prompted the Kuki-Naga clashes include the desire of the Nagas, particularly the rebels, to ease out the Kukis who form a sizeable chunk of the population in the four hill tribal-dominated districts in Manipur that they have set their eyes on. This also led to the emergence or consolidation of the Kuki insurgent groups that also resorted to violent means to counter the Naga rebel actions or to defend the community, often located in remote hill-top hamlets. The Nagas in Manipur, including the United Naga Council, Manipur (UNCM), have been openly seeking the merger of the Naga areas in Manipur into the adjoining state of Nagaland.

[...]

According to an estimate 750 Kukis lost their lives and a total of 1,14,300 others belonging to both Naga

and Kuki communities have been displaced during the conflict." (Hussain, November 2004, pp.8-9)

"Conflict between tribal groups in Manipur and Nagaland reportedly has led to the displacement (at least temporarily) of as many as 130,000 Kukis, Paites, and Nagas since 1992.

[...]

The inter-ethnic conflict in Manipur has been among the various tribal groups and has not directly involved the majority Meiteis.

[...]

Ethnically mixed villages, once common in Manipur, have virtually ceased to exist. Kukis say that more than 40,000 Kukis were displaced, primarily between 1992 and 1996. Most have now resettled in other Kuki communities. Naga sources claim that the Naga/Kuki conflict has displaced as many as 90,000 Nagas in Manipur and another 5,000 in Nagaland, of whom only some 20,000 to 25,000 remained displaced as of mid-1998. According to one Naga leader, Artax Shimray, displaced Nagas in Manipur included 30,000 from Chenaburi District, 30,000 from Chandel District, 10,000 from Okrur District, and 20,000 from Tamelung District. Shimray said that displaced Nagas are not visible because they never established camps. "There is a strong support system among Nagas. Who ever became displaced was sheltered in the home of another Naga family," he said. In mid-1997, the Naga-Kuki conflict led to a spin-off conflict between Kukis and Paites in southern Manipur. The cause of the conflict is unclear: each side gives a different version of its genesis. Generally speaking, it appears that Kukis, who consider the Paites to be a Kuki sub-tribe, expected the Paites to support them against the Nagas. The Paites consider themselves a separate, distinct tribe from the Kukis, although they do say that both they and the Kuki, as well as the Mizo and Burmese Chin, are all part of what they call the Zomi peoples. Fighting between the Kuki and Paites displaced more than 15,000 Paites. Most were displaced within Manipur, where a Paites relief group set up 30 temporary camps for them, most often very near their original homes. Although as of mid-1998 many had not yet rebuilt their houses, they were living in their communities of origin and no longer displaced. Some 3,500 Paites fled into Mizoram, where the state government created three camps for them. The 3,500 who fled to Mizoram returned in July 1998, after the Kukis and Paites signed an agreement aimed at ending their rift." (USCR January 2000, p.9-10)

### **Manipur: displacement of Nagas**

- A cease fire agreement signed by the Central Government with the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Issac-Muivah) [NSCN (IM)] to extend the cease-fire by another year without territorial restrictions create violent protests, especially in Manipur
- While Nagaland welcomes the agreement, it was seen as intruding upon the territorial integrity of the neighbouring States of Manipur, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh
- Violent protests led to the displacement of at least 50,000 Nagas and an unknown number of non-Nagas in Manipur and Nagaland

- No information have been found about the situation of the displaced from the 2001 unrest - whether they have returned or resettled elsewhere
- In 2005, rival factions of the Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland have also clashed on several occasions, but only one report has been found about displacement of the civil population

***After June 2001, a ceasefire between the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) and the Indian government lead to protests and a new wave of displacement of Nagas due to violent protests in neighbouring states. More than 50,000 Nagas fled Manipur following the riots due to fear of revenge attacks. The number of Nagas remaining displaced is unknown. The Naga International Support Centre says most have returned to their villages.***

"The June 14, 2001 cease fire agreement between the National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Isak-Muivah (NSCN-IM) and the Union government without territorial limits received widespread approval in Nagaland. In addition to the organisations such as the Naga Hoho, the apex tribal council, terrorist outfits such as the Naga National Council-Federal (NNC-F) and the National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Khaplang (NSCN-K) welcomed the development. However, the move, which was seen to be intruding upon the territorial integrity of the neighbouring States of Manipur, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh led to frayed passions and large-scale violence in those States, especially in Manipur. The Union government was forced to review the decision of extending the cease-fire without territorial limits." (SATP assessment 2001)

"Following continuous threats by the Meitei population most Nagas no longer felt safe in their homes. They left for the hills where Naga brothers and sisters at Senapati and Ukhrul district took them in. More than 40.000 souls are still in camps while others were fortunate enough to be taken in by family living in all parts of the Naga Hills in Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur itself." (NISC, 9 October 2001, Press Release)

***By the end of July 2001, the Government of India announced that the ceasefire with the NSCN (IM) would be extended to Nagaland only. A peace agreement is still being discussed and the ceasefire extended until 31 July 2005:***

"The Indian government and Naga rebels in the north-east of the country have decided to extend their ceasefire by another year.

[...]

The two sides have been engaged in negotiations for the past seven years without a solution in sight to the five-decade-old Naga insurgency, India's first ethnic rebellion.

[...]

Talks between the two sides have continued since 1997 when the Naga rebel group decided to explore the possibility of a settlement through dialogue.

The ceasefire [...] will now be valid until 31 July 2005." (BBC, 30 July 2004)

"The NSCN entered an initial ceasefire with New Delhi in 1997 and has held several rounds of talks in Switzerland, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Thailand, Japan and Malaysia." (COE-DMHA 29 January 2004)

***There were incidents of fighting between Meiteis and Nagas as well as Meiteis and Kukis during 2003 which displaced an unknown number of people living in the hills of Manipur (May 2003):***

"The 'homeland war' is once again rocking the Northeast Indian State of Manipur, as the majority Meitei community is gripped by apprehensions that New Delhi is pushing ahead with a secret

plan to slice off the Naga inhabited areas of their State, and merge them with the adjoining Nagaland State as part of a possible deal with the separatist National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Isak-Muivah faction, NSCN-IM). The Indian Government is engaged in peace negotiations with the NSCN-IM.

Stoked by this fear, there has been a fresh Meitei uprising to protect their State's territorial integrity. The trouble began early last week, resulting in renewed confrontation with the Nagas, both within Manipur, as well as in nearby Nagaland." (Hussain, SAIR, 13 October 2003)

"For almost a week [...] after clashes between two underground militant organizations, the United Kuki Liberation Front (UKLF) and the [Meitei insurgent group] United National Liberation Front (UNLF) in the Chakpikarong sub-division of the Chandel district, in Manipur, residents of a number of villages were subject to widespread fear, forcing many to flee their homes. Although the exact numbers are not known or disclosed, both the underground organizations acknowledged having suffered casualties. Clashes between underground organizations are not altogether new in this area, but the tragedy has been not so much theirs, as it has been for the unarmed and hapless public, most often impoverished villagers in sparsely populated peripheries of the State." (Phanjoubam Pradip, SAIR, 26 May 2003)

"June 12 [2003]: Rival terrorist outfits of Manipur - UNLF and the United Kuki Liberation Front (UKLF) - agree to end hostilities between themselves and also decide to work towards resettling villagers displaced as a result of their conflict." (SATP, on page for United Kuki Liberation Front (UKLF))

***Rival factions of the Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland have also clashed on several occasions, but only one report has been found about displacement of the civil population:***

"Fresh clashes between rival underground groups in some areas of Tousem subdivision of Tamenglong district has resulted in an exodus of villagers from these areas to safer places, reports reaching here said. Nearly 500 villagers of Azuram and Chramram, two neighbouring villages in Tousem sub-division have fled their respective villages in apprehension after fighting broke out between NSCN (IM) cadres and a combined group of NSCN (K), UNLF and KNF in the region.

[...]

Since the area is located in the remotest part of Tamenglong district and no security forces are deployed there, figures of casualties on either side could not be ascertained till late evening, but fleeing villagers have reported seeing many injured cadres on both side being evacuated from the spot." (The Telegraph, 9 December 2004)

"[...] at least 10 people were killed in heavy fighting between the rival factions of the Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland, Isak-Muivah faction (NSCN-IM) and the NSCN, Khaplang (NSCN-K) in nearby Manipur state. Although both factions are fighting for an independent Naga tribal homeland in nearby Nagaland state, both are involved in a territorial struggle. At least 200 rebels have been reportedly killed in clashes between the two factions in the past 5 years." (COE-DMHA, 10 December 2004)

"At least seven rebels have been killed in the north-east Indian state of Nagaland in fierce fighting between two separatist factions, police say.

[...]

Some 50 rebels of the Muivah faction attacked a camp belonging to the rival Khaplang group in a central district of Nagaland early on Thursday.

Thousands have died in the fight for a homeland for Nagas in the north-east.

A spokesman for the Khaplang faction, K Mulatonu, told the BBC that fighters from his groups were able to repulse the attack." (BBC, 24 March 2005)

### **Arunachal Pradesh: threats and discrimination against Chakmas (2000- April 2004)**

- The Chakmas and Hajongs are legal residents of India. In 1964, the Government of India granted migration certificates into the country to approximately 35,000 Chakmas and 1,000 Hajongs
- The Chakma and Hajong population has grown to some 65,000 (as of 2000) and is now the third largest ethnic group in the state of Arunachal Pradesh
- The Chakma and Hajong communities remain stateless, disenfranchised, discriminated against by state authorities and the target of attacks by xenophobic groups in the state
- Both local groups (The All Arunachal Pradesh Students' Union), and the state government have called for the Chakmas' expulsion from Arunachal Pradesh
- Local groups have violently displaced at least 3,000 Chakmas, a figure which is likely to increase
- During 2003, the All Arunachal Pradesh Student Union (AAPSU) gave a quit notice on the Chakmas and Hajongs in last June and demanded that the Chakmas be deported from Arunachal Pradesh

"In Arunachal Pradesh, residents have protested the presence of the Chakmas, who began arriving from the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh in 1964. Many residents still view the Chakmas as refugees, despite a ruling of India's supreme court in 2000 directing the government to grant the Chakmas citizenship. In June, the All Arunachal Pradesh Students Union vowed to launch a "vigorous mass movement" to drive out the Chakmas." (USCR 2003)

"Some historical background is necessary to understand the devastating nature of the present situation. The Chakmas of Arunachal Pradesh belong to a tribal group that has for centuries inhabited the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHTs) of Bangladesh. Despite the fact that most of the inhabitants of the CHTs are either Buddhist or Hindu, the region became a part of Pakistan with the partition of India in 1947. In 1964, communal violence and the construction of the Kaptai hydroelectric dam displaced nearly 100,000 Chakmas. A large number of these displaced people sought refuge in India.

Nearly 1,000 members of the Hajong tribe, a Hindu group from the Mymensingh district of Bangladesh, were also settled in these areas. In the more than 30 years since their resettlement, the Chakmas and Hajongs have built villages, developed the land granted to them and paid state taxes on their land. Additionally, they have become integrated into the social fabric of Arunachal Pradesh and established strong ties to the region. Many of these Chakmas and Hajongs, who now number about 65,000, were born in India and know no other home.

The Chakmas and Hajongs are legal residents of India. In 1964, the Government of India granted migration certificates into the country to approximately 35,000 Chakmas and 1,000 Hajongs. The migrants were settled by the Government of India in the erstwhile North East Frontier Agency, an area that comprises the present-day districts of Lohit, Changlang and Papumpare in Arunachal Pradesh. These certificates indicated legal entry into India and the willingness of the Government of India to accept the migrants as future citizens. Additionally, under the Indira-Mujib Agreement of 1972, it was determined that India and not Bangladesh would be responsible for all migrants who entered India before 25 March 1971.

Many Chakmas and Hajongs also have the right to citizenship and the right to vote.

[...]

To date, not a single Chakma or Hajong has been included in the electoral rolls.

[...]

The Government of Arunachal Pradesh has systematically denied the Chakmas and Hajongs access to social, economic and political rights to which they are entitled under Indian and international law. It has conducted a three-pronged strategy of discrimination against them – denying them political rights, economic opportunity and access to basic social infrastructure. Additionally, the State Government has not checked the intimidation and threats issued by the AAPSU. In fact, on occasion it has openly supported AAPSU activities. The Chakmas have been suffering forcible eviction at the hands of the State Government for decades – one particular village in the district of Changlang, Vijoypur, was reportedly destroyed on three occasions, in 1989, 1994 and 1995.

The State Government has steadily dismantled basic social infrastructure in Chakma and Hajong settlements, rendering these people ever more vulnerable. All persons legally resident in India are entitled to ration cards if their income falls below a specified amount. In October 1991, the State Government discontinued issuance of ration cards to Chakmas and Hajongs, many of whom live in extreme poverty. In September 1994 the State Government began a campaign of school closing, burning and relocations that have effectively denied the Chakmas and Hajongs their right to education. Schools built by the Chakmas using local community resources were closed down or destroyed. Also, health facilities in Chakma and Hajong areas are all but nonexistent." (SAHRDC 6 August 2001)

"Over the years, the Chakma population has grown to some 65,000; they have become the third largest ethnic group in the state, which has a total population of only some 500,000. The tribal groups' resentment toward the Chakmas has also grown. In recent years, both local groups, most notably the All Arunachal Pradesh Students' Union (AAPSU), and the state government itself, have called for the Chakmas' expulsion from A.P.

[...]

Local groups' antagonism has turned violent, and as many as 3,000 Chakmas have become internally displaced. An unknown number of others have left the area altogether. Be-cause of the growing tension over the issue, USCR is concerned that violence toward the Chakmas will increase, resulting in greater displacement."(USCR January 2000, p.10-11)

***Chakma residents are sometimes threatened by indigenous groups:***

"Two pertinent issues arise. First, the All Arunachal Pradesh Student Union (AAPSU) had served a quit notice on the *Chakmas* and *Hajongs* in last June and have threatened a widespread agitation unless the refugees are deported from Arunachal Pradesh. While its mainstream leadership and the state government are pursuing peaceful protest, the threat of violence and consequent threat to refugees comes from radical elements within the indigenous community who take to the path of violence to evict 'aliens' from their 'land'. The Convener of the Core Committee on Deportation of *Chakma* Refugees (CCDCR), *Domin Loya*, delivered a threat recently when he stated that New Delhi's belligerent stand allowing the *Chakmas* to settle in Arunachal might force some people to take up arms and fight them.

This problem poses imminent threats to security at different levels. The threat of violence by radical elements within the community, the seeds of which lie in the formation of the Eastern India Liberation Tigers Front (EILTF), could result in another prolonged insurgency movement given the fact that militancy tends to develop its own dynamics. This has generated a counter-reaction from the refugees, with a section of *Chakma* and *Hajong* refugee youths having crossed over to Bangladesh to smuggle in arms. The prospect of a violent ethnic conflict looms large on the horizon, unless a timely resolution to the problem is found." (IPCS, 19 September 2003)

## Displacement of Nepalis in North-East India (January 2005)

- Nepali IDPs has failed to draw much attention first, due to their small numbers and because they tend to move around
- Nepalis have been displaced both in the states of Assam, Manipur and Meghalaya

"Anti-foreigner movements almost all over Northeast India, triggered by the son of the soil agitation in Assam, the Assam Movement (1979-85), which sought out Nepali and Bangladeshi migrants to be deported to their respective countries of origin, have made these migrants vulnerable to growing instances of nativist backlash.

[...]

the issue of the Nepali IDPs has failed to draw much attention first, due to their small numbers and second, due to the apparently mobile nature of the community that makes it easy to ignore the many complexities that affect this community in recent times in Northeast India.

[...]

The Nepali population in the Bodo Autonomous Council (BAC) areas in Western Assam, which the Bodos see constituting their own homeland was only 2.5% on an average and in no way large enough to constitute a threat to the Bodos. But the presence of the Nepalis along with the 63% non-Bodos (Bodos are 34%) constituted a major threat. In the ethnic cleansing of these areas a considerable number of Nepalis were displaced from the villages of Amteka (Betini), Patabari, Malivita, Koila etc. Besides, these in an attack on the Amteka Betini village in the Kokrajhar district, which had combined Nepali and Adivasi residents, along with the Adivasis, about 15 – 20 Nepali families also shifted to nearby villages. Similarly about 20 – 25 families from the Mangalchara forest village and about 20 – 25 families from the Khalasi forest villages were displaced in the ethnic clashes. In all these cases it was apparent that the Nepalis were not directly hit but were caught in the crossfire.

[...]

The anti-foreigner sentiment was evident in the other states of Northeast India as well. In Manipur, the sentiment took the form of a movement, manifesting itself in direct attacks on the Nepalis in 1980 compelling many of them (who were made the domicile community in 1947) to shift houses and flee to safer areas [...]. Meghalaya, another state in the Northeast, saw similar sectarian violence in 1987. Actually, in Meghalaya, tensions existed since 1931 between the Nepalis and the Khasis because of the damage done by the former's buffaloes and the indiscriminate cutting down of forests by them to make room for their increasing herds [...]. In 1987, the violence primarily targeted the Nepali minority living in Shillong, Jowai and other parts of Meghalaya, which had over 150,000 Nepali population. The Nepali labourers in the coalmines in Jowai were the first targets, from where it spread to other parts of Meghalaya. A weekly magazine reported: 'Dozens of innocent children of Nepalese working in Jowai coal-mines died of hunger because

their parents did not return to their home even weeks after the incident.'[...] Violence involved killings, burning of Nepali villages and schools and finally their deportation by the state government in complicity with the police [...]. Most of the Nepali people fled and the worst affected were the dairy farmers who had to give up their occupation and leave the state. Today, most of the displaced from Meghalaya and Manipur are settled in Rupandehi, Jhapa, and Banke and other parts of Nepal's *terai*, besides Kathmandu and Pokhara.[...] The anti-foreigner upsurge also spread to Mizoram and Nagaland where the Nepalis who have been domiciled for years, suffered violence and eviction.[...]" (Nath, in *Peace and Democracy in South Asia*, January 2005, pp. 57, 58, 66, 67)

## Internal displacement in West-Bengal

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### **Displacement reported in the West-Bengal district of North Dinajpur due to clashes between border guard forces (February 2005)**

- Tensions have increased between the border guard forces of India and Bangladesh
- Skirmishes and sometimes raids into each other's territory have led to episodes of displacement

"A number of issues have plagued the bilateral relationship between India and Bangladesh in recent times. But India has been seriously concerned about two issues. First is use of Bangladeshi territory by the insurgent groups who are operating in northeastern India for anti-India activities. India is also concerned about illegal immigration which has reached serious proportions in recent years. India sought Bangladesh cooperation to sort these issues, but its requests fell on deaf ears. What is worse, steps taken by India to check cross border terrorism and illegal immigration have been resented by Bangladesh. Its result has been regular skirmishes between the border guards of two countries.

India shares its largest border with Bangladesh which is also extremely porous. The border runs through jungles, hills, villages, paddy and jute fields, making it easy to cross. There is also a small riverine portion. Five Indian states border Bangladesh, including four in India's troubled northeast where dozens of militant groups are fighting for full statehood, more autonomy or independence. Dhaka denies the presence of rebel camps, calling the allegations baseless, but the issue remains a thorny one in ties between India and Bangladesh. This border also faces problems like illegal immigration, smuggling, arms trafficking, drug trafficking and trafficking of women and children. To deal with some of this problem India had suggested joint patrolling of the border to which Bangladesh did not agree. However, Bangladesh agreed for coordinated patrolling, but that was not sufficient to solve problem of this magnitude.

As a result, India has been forced to take its own steps. To check problems like illegal immigration and arms trafficking, India decided to erect barbed fences. It had seen its positive impact on the north western frontiers. It wants to replicate the same experience on its eastern border too. So far, it has managed to fence over a third of the 4,894 kilometers (3,034 mile) long border with Bangladesh." (Kumar, 8 April 2004)

"[In Moragati (North Dinajpur)] The fluttering red flag and deserted villages are a pointer to how things have been in this border area, shuddered out of lull by blazing guns and a failed bid at truce.

The Border Security Force (BSF) is on alert and ready for "any eventuality", just like their counterparts on the other side of the Nagar river.

Bullet-ridden walls and roofs bear testimony to the exchange between the border forces, allegedly started by the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) after the BSF objected to the construction of a stone embankment along the river.

BSF sources said the construction was being carried out despite an embargo on such work within 150 m of the border. The BDR apparently resumed construction late on Friday evening after halting it following early Indian objections.

"When we objected to the violation of the agreement between the two countries, they opened fire," said Rakesh Chauhan, the commandant of the BSF's 32 Battalion here, some 20 km from Islampur.

The BSF source said the BDR fired over 100 rounds, while the BSF replied with around 50 shots. There were no casualties on either side.

Yesterday morning, the two commandants met on the Indian side. "The talks fell through as the BDR refused to see reason. Their commandant, Mustafizur Rehman, returned unconvinced," a senior BSF officer said. "We are on alert as BDR personnel have taken up positions on their side. We are ready for any eventuality."

The men of two small settlements on the Indian side, Pakhargaj and Singatgaj, have moved the women and children to safety. Upset over the turn of events, they blamed the BSF for not warning them about tension along the border." (The Telegraph, 27 February 2005)

## **Internal displacement in Central India**

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### **Central India: displacement on the increase because of fighting between leftist extremist groups and government forces (January 2006)**

- Indian Maoists, known as the Naxalites or Naxals, are waging a growing low-intensity insurgency against the government in several states
- Naxalite groups are rapidly increased their influence in Central India. The movement is also becoming more centralised after the major Naxalite group, Communist Party of India Marxist-Leninist - People's War (CPML-PW) merged with the Maoist Communist Centre of India (MCCI) to create the Communist Party of India (Maoist)
- Displacement of the civilian population is growing, both due to the government-led campaign against the Naxalites that has included forcible displacement of local tribes and because people flee increasing insecurity
- In Chhattisgarh, counter insurgency measures such as the creation of a popular movement to resist naxalist groups, Salwa Judum, has led to the displacement of at least 15,000 people

"The Indian Maoists are known as the Naxalites or Naxals, a general name given to numerous groups in India that are waging a low-intensity insurgency against the government in several states. These revolutionary Maoist groups developed from a division in the Indian communist movement that corresponded with the Sino-Soviet split in the early 1960s. Since 1967, the Naxalites have been waging what they call a class struggle against the Indian government, with the aim of establishing a communist regime. Over the years, one Naxalite group, the People's War Group, has targeted Indian police, government officials, multinational corporations, landlords and other institutions in the name of their class struggle.

In return, New Delhi has waged a campaign against the Naxalites that has included forcible displacement of local tribes that are sympathetic to the Maoists. In addition to overt pressure from federal police and paramilitary forces, the Indian government reportedly has used vigilantes to attack the Naxalites and their supporters. In addition, several states run private armies and other organizations whose job it is to terrorize the Naxalites, the Naxalites say. In Jharkhand state, for example, the government has sponsored hunts by villagers — backed by police — for Naxalites and their sympathizers. The Naxalites, believing these actions are intended to tame or to drive out tribal elements that resist the entry of multinational corporations, have vowed to lead a popular insurrection against the government. This insurrection is warranted, they say, in order to combat what they see as oppression of the peasant class. The insurrection will include raiding government arsenals in order to arm tribes in the so-called "Red Corridor" running south from Nepal.

According to the Maoists, the attacks will occur in Jharkhand, Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra states. The Dandakaranya region of Orissa state, which has witnessed a campaign by India's government to forcibly displace Naxalite

sympathizers among the local tribes, was specifically mentioned. In addition, the Central Committee told the Indian journalists that its cadre also will target banks and the Dandakaranya-Visakhapatnam natural gas pipeline.

[...]

Foreign investment in India's high-tech sector — including plants operated by Motorola, Dell and IBM — is critical for the country's economic growth. The Maoists therefore can be expected to attack the high-tech industry — and the government can be expected to rigorously defend it. Should the Naxalites make good on their recent threats, the security situation in India could deteriorate further." (Stratfor, 16 January 2006)

"Naxal violence during 2004 continued to be a cause of concern. Despite serious efforts at the Central and State levels to contain naxal violence and initiation of peace process between Communist Party Marxist Leninist- Peoples Wargroup (CPML-PW) and the Government in Andhra Pradesh, the overall level of naxal violence remained more or less at the same level as during the preceding year. However, the problem has affected a larger area in varying degrees. At present, 76 districts in 9 States of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhatisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal are afflicted with naxalism. CPML-PW and Maoist Communist Centre-India (MCC-I) have been trying to increase their influence and operations in some parts of three other States, namely, Tamil Nadu, Karanataka and Kerala and also in certain new areas in some of the already affected States. On October 14, 2004, CPML-PW leaders announced the merger of CPML-PW and MCCI and creation of single outfit called the Communist Party of India(Maoist), adding a new dimension to naxal scenario." (MHA – GOI 2005-2005, p. 3)

"Another disturbing facet for the law-enforcers was brought up in a recent study by journalist Richard Mohapatra.

After the formation of the CPI(Maoist), he said, Naxalites have been spreading their net at the rate of two districts per week. They extended their influence from 55 districts in nine states, in November 2003, to 155 districts in 15 states by February 2005 and plan to control 25 districts by 2007." (The Telegraph, 26 November 2005)

"“Different Naxal groups now control 19 per cent of India 's forests over an area two-and-a-half times the size of Bangladesh , reveals a study”, [...] based on a report “Unique Forests – A Comprehensive Look at How Forest Laws are Triggering Conflicts in India with a Focus on naxalite Movement” prepared by the Prem Bhatia Memorial Trust Scholarship for young Indian journalists." (SAAG, 13 June 2005)

***In Chhattisgarh, counter insurgency measures such as the creation of a popular movement to resist naxalist groups, Salwa Judum, has led to the displacement of at least 15,000 people:***

"1. The Salwa Judum is far from the spontaneous uprising of tribals against Maoists that it is claimed to be. It is an organized, state managed enterprise that has precedents in the Jan Jagaran Abhiyans that have occurred earlier under the leadership of the current Dantewara MLA, Mahendra Karma. The Collector himself has been part of 75% of the Salwa Judum meetings and security forces have been backing the Judum's meetings. The main cadre of Salwa Judum are comprised of Special Police Officers who are being paid and armed by the state, at a rate that is standard in counter insurgency operations across the country.

2. The Salwa Judum has led to the forcible displacement of people throughout Bhairamgarh, Geedam and Bijapur areas, under police and administrative supervision. According to official estimates approximately 15,000 people from 420 villages are living as refugees in temporary camps. People have left behind their cattle and most of their household goods. The entire area is being cleared of inhabitants even as new roads are being built and more police and para-military stations are being set up. The region is being turned into one large cantonment. In

many places regular economic activities like weekly haats have stopped." (PUCL, 2 December 2005)

Read also [\*Naxalism and Civil Wars in India\*](#)

Asian Centre for Human Rights (ACHR), 21 September 2005

## Internal displacement in Gujarat

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### Gujarat: displacement due to communal violence (April 2002-2003)

- Hindu-Muslim violence in 1969, 1985, 1989, and 1992 caused increasing ghettoization of the Muslim population
- In 1998 and 1999, Hindu nationalist groups attacked Christian communities
- The 2002 violence was historically unusual, both because of state involvement and the involvement of all societal classes
- The violence in Gujarat started after Muslims attacked Hindu activists travelling by train
- Between 28 February 2002 and 2 March 2002 Hindu retaliation killed hundreds and displaced more than 100,000 Muslims
- Although the attacks were defined as 'spontaneous', human rights organisations stated that they were planned with extensive involvement of state and police

"Communal violence is not new to Gujarat. Successive episodes of Hindu-Muslim violence (in 1969, 1985, 1989, and 1992) have resulted in the increasing ghettoization of the state's Muslim community, a pattern that promises to reinforce itself as Muslim residents once again look for safety in numbers and refuse to return to what is left of their residences alongside Hindu neighbors. After the experience of earlier riots, many Muslim establishments had also taken Hindu names. Those too were selectively targeted for attacks using lists prepared in advance. The current climate also cannot be divorced from heightened conflict in Kashmir, India's deteriorating relations with Pakistan, and the VHP's ongoing temple construction campaign in Ayodhya.

Hindu nationalist groups were also directly responsible for the spate of violence against the state's Christian community in 1998 and 1999.

[...]

Between December 25, 1998, and January 3, 1999, churches and prayer halls were damaged, attacked, or burned down in at least twenty-five villages in the state. Scores of individuals were physically assaulted, and in some cases tied up, beaten, and robbed of their belongings while angry mobs invaded and damaged their homes. Thousands of Christian tribal community members in the region were also forced to undergo conversions to Hinduism.

[...]

A history of communal violence has left its mark. Over one hundred areas in Gujarat have long been declared "sensitive" or violence-prone by state authorities, yet few, if any, of the state's many guidelines on preventive measures to address communal violence at the first sign of trouble were implemented following the Godhra attack." (HRW, April 2002, pp. 45-46)

"In 2002, India experienced its greatest human rights crisis in a decade: orchestrated violence against Muslims in the state of Gujarat that claimed at least 2,000 lives in a matter of days. On February 27, 2002, in the town of Godhra, a Muslim mob attacked a train on which Hindu nationalists were traveling. Two train cars were set on fire, killing at least fifty-eight people. In the days following the Godhra massacre, Muslims were branded as terrorists by government officials and the local media while armed gangs set out on a four-day retaliatory killing spree. Muslim homes, businesses, and places of worship were destroyed. Hundreds of women and girls were gang-raped and sexually mutilated before being burnt to death. In the weeks that followed the massacres, Muslims destroyed Hindu homes and businesses in continued retaliatory violence. According to one official estimate, a total of 151 towns and 993 villages, covering 154 out of 182 assembly constituencies in the state, were affected by the violence." (HRW July 2003, *Compounding Injustice*, p.4, )

"The destruction, enmity, and insecurity left by the communal violence in Gujarat forced more than one hundred thousand Muslims into more than one hundred makeshift relief camps throughout the state, some located in Muslim graveyards. Between June and October 2002, the government unilaterally began to close the camps, forcing thousands of victims either to enter unofficial relief camps or to return to villages and neighborhoods where their security was continually threatened." (HRW July 2003, *Compounding Injustice*, p. 6)

"Human Rights Watch's investigations, and those of Indian human rights groups, revealed that much of the violence was planned well in advance of the Godhra attack and was carried out with state approval and orchestration. Gujarat is headed by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), a Hindu nationalist party that also heads a coalition government at the center. State officials and the police were directly involved in the violence: In many cases, the police led the charge, using gunfire to kill Muslims who got in the mobs' way. The groups most directly responsible for this violence against Muslims included the VHP, the Bajrang Dal (the militant youth wing of the VHP), and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (National Volunteer Corps, RSS), collectively forming the *sangh parivar* (or "family" of Hindu nationalist groups)." (HRW 2003, *World Report- India*)

"Reports indicate that the violence was State wide, affecting at least twenty-one cities and sixty-eight provinces. Information from these areas also suggest a consistent pattern in the methods used, undermining government assertions that these were 'spontaneous' 'communal riots.' There is more than enough evidence to show how there was State complicity in the attacks all along. As one activist noted, 'no riot lasts for three days without the active connivance of the State.' 2000 people were killed in the violence although the official figure is 762 (822 including Godhra). 2500 people are 'missing' (or killed) according to unofficial estimates and around 113,000 people were displaced and were living in relief camps.<sup>155</sup>

Attacks on Muslims took place in 19 districts of Gujarat, and were particularly intense in 8 districts along the northeast and southwest axis. These were Ahmedabad, Sabarkantha, Panchmahals, Mehsana, Anand, Kheda, Vadodara, and Dahod. The attacks took place in distinct phases. These districts were engulfed in the most organized armed mob attacks between February 28th and March 3rd when most of the attacks were concentrated. This was the most intensive, bestial and horrifying phase of violence, marked by large scale hacking, looting, raping and burning men, women and children to death. Mobs continued to be on the rampage until mid-March. Nowhere were the mobs less than 2-3,000, more often they were over 5-10,000 in number.

[...]

Another horrifying feature of the violence in Gujarat was the speed and extent to which the violence simultaneously spread to rural areas, in some cases to places that had no history of communal tension. In Sabarkantha district, 94 villages were affected." (International Initiative of Justice, December 2003, p. 156)

## **Gujarat: an estimated 61,000 still displaced (June 2005)**

"A detailed report, 'Gujarat –Three Years Later' is currently being compiled by *Communalism Combat*. Our preliminary investigations reveal that on a rough estimate about 61,000 persons continue to be internally displaced within the state.

Included among them are key witnesses of the major massacres, who even today cannot go back to their villages or localities simply because they have chosen to fight for justice. Many are both victims of the massacre and key eye-witnesses.

The large majority of the internally displaced were small minority groups scattered across many of Gujarat's 18,000 villages. They have had to surrender their homes and petty landholdings in return for a life of penury-struck refugees. This is the stark and shameful reality of Gujarat, where even the political Opposition has stopped addressing issues arising out of a State-sponsored pogrom and where the perpetrators continue in seats of power and influence." (*Communalism Combat*, June 2005)

## **Development induced displacement**

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### **Links to information on development-induced displacement in India**

*While the focus of the Global IDP Project is on conflict-induced displacement, development and urban infrastructure projects are the main reasons for involuntary displacement in India. The tribal population has been disproportionately affected: An estimated two per cent of the total Indian population has been displaced by development projects. Of these, 40 percent are tribals although they constitute only 8 percent of the total population (Courtland Robinson, May 2003 pp. 10-11). This envelope includes some basic information on displacement due to development projects and also provides links to internet pages with more exhaustive information.*

During the last fifty years, some 3,300 big dams have been constructed in India and another 1,000 are under construction (Courtland Robinson, May 2003 p. 17). Many of them have led to large-scale forced eviction of vulnerable groups. The situation of the *adivasis* or tribal people is of special concern as they are reported to constitute between 40 and 50% of the displaced population. As a result of misguided (or non-existing) state policy, project-affected communities have been subject to sudden eviction, lack of information, failure to prepare rehabilitation plans, low compensation, loss of assets and livelihoods, traumatic relocation, destruction of community bonds, discrimination and impoverishment (Mander, August 1999, p.4-5, 13-17). Amnesty International has documented human rights abuses against those who protest against forced displacement (AI 2000).

There are no official statistics on the numbers of people displaced by large projects since independence. In 1994, the Government mentioned the figure of 15.5 million internally displaced and acknowledged that some 11.5 million were still awaiting rehabilitation. However, calculations based on the number of dams constructed since independence indicate that as many as 21 to 33 million persons are likely to have been displaced (Fernandes 2000, p.277; Mander, August 1999, p.5). However, these estimates do not include persons displaced by canals, or by the

construction of colonies or other infrastructure. Neither do they include those who have been subjected to multiple displacements (Rangachari, 2000, p. 116-117). According to Human Rights Watch, Indigenous peoples, known as Scheduled Tribes or Adivasis, suffer from high rates of displacement. They make up 8 percent of the total population but constitute 55 percent of displaced people. This has had a serious effect on the overall development of these communities, particularly tribal children. The government continues to use the 1894 Land Acquisition Act to displace indigenous peoples from their lands without sufficient compensation (HRW, January 2006).

The resettlement and rehabilitation of the large number of persons displaced by development projects has been far from successful. A major obstacle has been the government's reluctance to adopt a clear "land-for-land" policy. Instead, insufficient cash compensation or poorly designed non-land based projects has left many destitute. At the same time, local social networks and traditional support systems have been destroyed, leaving many development-displaced with no option but to head for the slums of the major cities (Mander, August 1999, p.8-10, 13-14).

One of the most controversial development projects in India is the Narmada Valley Development Project. It envisages building 3,200 dams that will reconstitute the Narmada and her 419 tributaries into a series of step-reservoirs – an immense staircase of amenable water. Of these, 30 will be major dams, 135 medium and the rest small. Two of the major dams will be multi-purpose mega dams. The Sardar Sarovar in Gujarat and the Narmada Sagar in Madhya Pradesh, will, between them, hold more water than any other reservoir in the Indian subcontinent (Roy 5 February 2000).

The first dam on the Narmada River, the Bargi Dam which was completed in 1990, reportedly displaced 114,000 people from 162 villages and today irrigates only 5% of the land it was said to benefit. Most of the evicted got no compensation for lost land and livelihood (Roy 5 February 2000).

The construction of the Sardar Sarovar Reservoir has been the most contested so far. In 1979, the official estimate for the number of families that would be displaced by the Sardar Sarovar Reservoir was about 6,000. Today, the official estimate range between 40,000 and 42,000 families, which means about 200,000 people. However, this figure is strongly contested by local activist groups. The NBA [*Narmada Bachao Andolan*-Movement to Save Narmada], estimates that close to half a million people will be affected by the project (Roy 5 February 2000).

In what was seen as a major victory for the anti-dam activists, the World Bank withdrew from the Narmada project in 1993 and the construction of the Sardar Sarovar Dam was stopped shortly afterwards (BBC 16 November 2000). However, an October 2000 ruling by the Indian Supreme Court authorizes renewed construction of the Sardar Sarovar Dam. The ruling stipulated that those displaced by the dam would be compensated. However, many human rights advocates and NGO's continued to allege that the construction of the dam would displace 40,000 families without adequately compensating those who are resettled (U.S.DOS February 2001).

***For further reading:***

*The Paper "Risks and Rights: Causes, Consequences, and Challenges of Development-Induced Displacement" by Courtland Robinson (Brookings-SAIS, May 2003) contains a substantial bibliography on development induced displacement in India:*

<http://www.brook.edu/fp/projects/idp/articles/didreport.pdf>

# POPULATION FIGURES AND PROFILE

## Global figures

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### Displacement Figures (2000 -January 2006)

- Political sensitivities prevent the government from releasing data on displacement
- Regular monitoring is not possible without a central authority responsible for coordinating data from central and state governments
- At least 650,000 and maybe over one million persons are internally displaced due to conflict as of October 2003

"In recent years, internal displacements caused by violent ethno-national conflicts between tribals and denizens in many parts of northeast India have attracted the attention of refugee advocates. While most agree that there is substantial internal displacement in the region, calculating the precise number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) has not been easy. Jawaharlal Nehru University professor Mahendra Lama describes the nature of the problem in India as a whole. Political sensitivities prevent the government from releasing data on displacement, he says. But without "a central authority responsible for coordinating data from central and state governments, regular monitoring is not possible in such a huge country". The "nature, frequency and extent of the causes of internal displacement" in India are so varied that it would be a "Herculean task to monitor and record them". (Baruah 2003, Refugee Survey, p. 46)

"At present, India has over half a million conflict-induced Internally Displaced Persons respectively — 200,000 consisting of the Adivasis, Bodos, Muslims, Dimasas and Karbis in Assam; 2,62,000 Kashmiri Pandits from Jammu and Kashmir; 35,000 Brus/Reangs from Mizoram and about 50,000 displaced persons in Tripura." (Chakma, in The Tribune 1 January 2006)

**Overview of available estimates of internally displaced due to conflict in India:**

<b>State and year of estimate</b>	<b>Lowest numbers of IDPs found in sources</b>	<b>Highest estimates of IDPs found in sources</b>
<b>Jammu and Kashmir</b> (2003)		
<b>Kashmiri Pandits</b>	56,246 families (= 250,000 persons) (Gol 2002-2003)	"Maybe as many as" 450,000 (USCR 2003)
<b>Residents LoC and border areas</b>  As of end 2005: over two years after the conclusion of the ceasefire with Pakistan in November 2003  As of 2003: Displaced due to shelling between Indian and Pakisistani forces.	6,070 families (Daily Excelsior, 10 August 2005)  150,000 displaced prior to ceasefire in November 2003:  32,000 of 39,000 families returned as of 5 March 2004 (COE-DMHA) (= 35,000 people still displaced)	"Many still in transit camps upon return, impossible to estimate the numbers of returnees." (undisclosed source)
<b>North-East</b>		
<b>Assam</b> (2003) Santhal-Bodo Conflict	Over 100,000 people displaced in Krokrajhar district: 85,000 people in relief camps in Gossangaon subdivision (19 camps with Santhals, 3 with Bodos, 1 with Rabhas). "Some more" in Krokrajhar subdivision. (Times of India 8 Jan. 2004)	134,000 (The Hindu 16 Mar. 2004))
<b>Assam</b>	2,000 Karbis (COE-DMHA, 29 March 2004)	2,000 Karbis (COE-DMHA, 29 March 2004)
<b>Assam</b>  Fighting between Karbis and Kukis between October-	1,500 people (Daily Times, 15 Nov. 2003)	5,000 Kukis (IPCS Jan. 2004)

November 2003		
<b>Assam</b> Hindi speaking people fleeing attacks November 2003	18,000 sheltered in 40 camps (The Hindu 2 Dec, 2003)	About 20,000 in camps – unknown number of people displaced outside camps (Observer November 2003)
<b>Assam</b> Fighting between Dimasas and Hmars tribes April 2003	2,000 Dimasas still displaced (Organiser, Mar. 2004)	Thousands of Dimasas and Hmars in 25 relief centres (The Telegraph, 20 June 2003)
<b>Assam</b> Muslims of Bengali origin evicted Spring 2005	Muslim leaders: Thousands BBC, June 2005	Local authorities: 600-700 BBC, June 2005
<b>Assam</b> Ethnic fighting between Karbis and Dimasas (fall 2005)	44,000 ACHR, 7 November 2005	Up to 50,000 COE-DMHA, December 2005
<b>Manipur</b> January 2006  (2001 - 2002)  Displacement of Kukis, Paites and Nagas	6,000 Hmars and Paites displaced – 1,000 in Mizoram and 5,000 in the Tipaimukh sub-division of Manipur. (host: Web India 123.com)  No recent information:  11,000 in displacement camps (SAHRC 2001)  50,000 Nagas (NPMHR 2002) (Many displaced Nagas have reportedly returned to their villages.)	28
<b>Tripura</b> (2003)  Displaced tribals and non-tribals  Recent reports of displacement:	47, 742 displaced between Jan. 1999 and Nov. 2003. (State minister reply to Congress, the Assam Tribune 2 Jan. 2004)	More than 100,000 Bengali settlers have been internally displaced. (BBC News, 6 May 2004)  State government says 19,468 families displaced between 1998 and February

	2,000 tribal families displaced. (Rediff Com, 21 May 2003)	2003. (IPCS, 17 Jan, 2004)
<b>Tripura</b> Displaced Reangs from Mizoram	31,000 Reangs (GoI)	31,000 Reangs (GoI)
<b>Tripura</b> Displaced due to building of fence along Indo-Bangladesh border	10,000 families (The Telegraph, 13 March 2005)	
<b>Arunachal Pradesh</b> (1998)	No recent information  3,000 (USCR 2000)	No recent information
<b>Gujarat</b> New survey, 2005: (End 2002)	An estimated 61,000 remain displaced (Communalism Combat, June 2005) Unknown	Up to 100,000 (USCR)
<b>Central India</b> <b>Chhattisgarh</b>	Approximately 15,000 people from 420 villages (PUCL, 2 December 2005)	

***Displacement situations where the population is reported to have returned to their homes:***

<b>Displacement situation</b>	<b>Return of displaced:</b>
<b>Jammu and Kashmir:</b> Residents LoC and border areas Displaced due to shelling between Indian and Pakistani forces.	Over 150,000 (GoI 2002-2003)  <b>32,000 of 39,000 families returned as of 5 March 2004</b> <b>(COE-DMHA 5 Mar 2004)</b>  (one source says that many returnees are in transit camps)
<b>Assam</b>  Khasi-Pnar tribals fleeing attacks by Karbi insurgent groups	5,000 (IPCS 18 Dec. 2003) <b>Returned after two months in camps</b>
<b>Kerala</b>	400 Muslim families = 1,600 persons (local media) <b>Returned during fall 2003</b>

## Geographical distribution

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**Number of internally displaced Kashmiri Pandits from the Kashmiri Valley since 1989 (February 2005)**

- As many as 350,000 Kashmiris, mostly Hindu Pandits, have been displaced since 1990 (USCR 2003) - South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) estimates over 400,000 displaced
- The total number of officially registered displaced families is approximately 55,000 - or 250,000 people
- Some 250,000 displaced Kashmiris are living in or near the city of Jammu while an estimated 100,000 Kashmiris are displaced elsewhere in India, primarily in the New Delhi area
- In New Delhi, a majority of the displaced are dispersed throughout the city, living mostly in private accommodations
- According to estimates there are currently 9,000 Pandit families left in the Kashmir Valley

"[...] the Minister of state for Home Sri Prakash Jaiswal [...] said 56,380 [Kashmiri Pandit] migrant families are living in various parts of the country. Of this, 34,644 families are staying in Jammu and 19338 in Delhi. A total of 4778 families in Jammu and 237 families in delhi are still living in camps." (Kashmir Times, 13 July 2004)

"The first exodus saw 250,000 Kashmiri Pandits leaving their homes in Kashmir valley for sanctuary in Jammu and Delhi.

Subsequent targeted killing of Pandits forced the remaining to also flee and take refuge in shanty camps; those who could afford it, moved into rented accommodation. The final number of Pandits reduced to living as refugees in their own country would be as high as 400,000.

[...]

According to official statistics, notorious for being inaccurate if they are provided by the apology of a state government in Jammu & Kashmir and unreliable if they emanate from the Union home ministry, some 250,000 Kashmiri Pandits continue to camp in Jammu; another 100,000 are in Delhi. A large number of families have moved to other cities, some have migrated to the US or European countries." (Rediff.com, 3 February 2005)

"While most Kashmiri organisations put the number of displaced Hindus anywhere between 3 lakhs and 4 lakhs, the total number of registered migrant families is approximately 55,000. In the last assembly polls of 2002, about 59,000 displaced Kashmiris were listed as voters. Out of the total number of those displaced about 36,000 families comprising 1.40 lakhs are in Jammu and its environs while 19,000 families live in camps or stay on their own in Delhi and other parts of the country. Many displaced Kashmiris also include Muslims, Sikhs and other minorities, though they may comprise a minuscule number for which figures were not available. Only about 5,274 families live in various camps in Jammu and most of them hail from rural areas." (Communalism Combat, January 2004)

"At least 350,000—and perhaps as many as 450,000—Kashmiris, mostly Hindus (known as Pandits), have been displaced since 1990 as a result of long-standing conflict in Kashmir between the Indian armed forces and Muslims—a majority in the region—seeking either independence or accession to Pakistan.

[...]

At least 250,000 displaced Kashmiris are living in or near the city of Jammu, both in private homes and in nine camps for the displaced in Jammu District. As many as 100,000 Kashmiris are displaced elsewhere in India, primarily in the New Delhi area. " (USCR 2003, India)

"[...], over 400,000 Kashmiri Pandits – out of an original population in the Kashmir Valley of 425,000 prior to 1989 – continue to be displaced. Official records indicate that some 216,820 of them live as migrants in makeshift camps at Jammu, another 143,000 at Delhi and thousands of others are now dispersed across the country. Many of those registered at the camps have also been dispersed according to the exigencies of employment and opportunities for education, trade or business. " (SATP assessment 2002, Kashmir)

"Kashmiri pandits living in abysmal conditions in refugee camps in Delhi and Jammu as a result of long tanding conflict in Kashmir. [...] today Pandit sources estimate that only 5,000 to 20,000 Hindus remain in the Kashmir Valley.

[...]

Of the total 53,538 registered displaced families, 31,490 families are living in the Jammu region; 19,338 in Delhi, and 2710 in other part of the country [...]. Many families, however, are not registered and are staying outside the camps on their own.

[...]

In New Delhi, according to a representative of a Kashmiri association, the government of India recognizes some 21,000 displaced Hindu Pandit families (about 100,000 people). In New Delhi, according to a representative of a Kashmiri association, the government of India recognizes some 21,000 displaced Hindu Pandit families (about 100,000 people). A majority of the displaced are dispersed throughout the city, living mostly in private accommodations, though some 2,000 to 3,000 continue to live in 14 camps for the displaced. Those living outside the camps receive the same government assistance as displaced Hindu Pandits living outside of camps in Jammu. Those living in the camps receive 1,200 rupees (U.S. \$27), plus housing, electricity, and some food aid. " (ORF Sep. 2003, Bhati), though some 2,000 to 3,000 continue to live in 14 camps for the displaced." (Bhati, ORF Sep. 2003)

***The Government estimates that 56,246 families or about 250,000 Kashmiri Pandits are displaced in Jammu, Delhi and other states:***

"The targeted attacks by the militants against civilians in the initial phases of the terrorist violence in J&K forced a situation where a vast majority of Kashmiri Pandits and a sizeable number of Sikhs and other Hindus and some Muslims had to migrate from the Valley in 1990 and thereafter. There are 56246 migrant families of which 34305 families are in Jammu (which includes 30306 Hindus (Pandits) ), 19338 families in Delhi and 2603 families in other States. Of these, 21824 families are of Government employees/pensioners. 238 migrant families are living in 14 camps in Delhi and 4778 families in 12 camps in Jammu." (GOI, 2002-2003, chapter III, p. 27)

"Statement indicating Kashmiri migrant families living within and outside J&K:

(Figures Collected from State Government/Union Territories:

Jammu	
Delhi	34,644
Himachal Pradesh	19,338
Haryana	11
Chandigarh	924
Punjab	114
Uttar Pradesh	319
Madhya Pradesh	500
Karnataka	169
Maharashtra	38
Rajasthan	208
	58
	-----
Total	56,323

"

Note: Individual States are disbursing relief to register Kashmiri migrant families at scales fixed by them depending upon the State's Budget and the local requirements. Ministry of Home Affairs has requested the various States/UTs to provide identity cards to Kashmiri migrants staying in their respective States and also to consider appropriate enhancement of relief being given to the migrant families.

Source: Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India" (ORF Sep. 2003)

***Main locations of IDP camps for Kashmiri Pandits (2000):***

**Main Camp Sites in Jammu**

Muthi Camp, Jammu  
Transport Nagar, Jammu  
Purkhoo Camp, Jammu  
Stadium Camp, Jammu  
Jhiri Camp, Jammu  
Nagrota Camp, Jammu  
Mishriwala Camp, Jammu  
Battalbalian Camp, Udhampur

**Main Camp Sites in Delhi**

Nandnagri  
Sultanpuri, Kailash Colony  
Maviya Nagar  
South Extension  
Palika Dham  
Lajpat Nagar  
Aliganj  
Bapu Dham  
Amar Colony  
Mangol Puri  
Patel Nagar  
Sultanpuri  
Moti Nagar  
Begampura

(Kasmiri Pandits Virtual Homeland 2000)

"According to estimates there are currently 9,000 Pandit families in the Valley. They did not migrate when a majority of the Pandits shifted during the time of the then Governor, Jagmohan Malhotra, in the early 1990s to Jammu and other parts of the country. " (The Hindu, 7 September 2003)

**More than 150,000 people were displaced due to tensions between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, at least 30,000 remain displaced two years after the ceasefire (August 2005)**

- More than 150,000 were estimated displaced from the villages along the border with Pakistan and the Line of Control (LoC)
- Thousands of families have also left the militancy affected districts of Doda, Rajouri and Poonch, but the government has not registered them as migrants
- In Jammu, militancy displaced 117,000 only in the blocks of Akhnoor, R.S.Pura, Bishnah and Samba
- The number of internally displaced was substantially reduced as people has returned after the ceasefire was concluded between India and Pakistan
- In March 2005, 5,300 families (4,000 families from Doda, Udhampur, Rajouri and Poonch and 1,300 families from Akhnoor) were still internally displaced:

***In 2002, the number of internally displaced from the international border and the Line of Control was estimated at between 150,000 - 175,000:***

"The number of migrants from the border villages and Line of Control as stated by the Divisional Commissioner in an official meeting is 1.50 lakhs. A team of the Union Home Ministry estimated the number at 1.75 lakhs. Obviously none of them had made an actual head count of all the migrants. " (Daily Excelsior, 7 July 2002)

"3.91 The December 13 attack on Indian Parliament and the resultant military build up along the Line of Control/International Border and stepped-up cross-border firing resulted in the displacement of a large number of families from the border areas. About 30,771 families comprising 1,53,131 individuals have been forced to migrate from the border areas/LoC of

Rajouri, Poonch, Jammu and Kathua districts. The figure includes 6,040 families (22,000 persons) who had migrated from Akhnoor tehsil in the wake of Kargil conflict in 1999." (GOI, Annual Report 2003-2004)

***Internally Displaced in Jammu:***

"There are other kinds of migrants also on Jammu's soil on account of the on going militancy. A few thousand families have migrated to around Jammu city from the militancy affected districts of Doda, Rajouri and Poonch, whom the government refuses to register and to give them any relief lest it should encourage further migration. Then there are intra district migrations. People, mostly Hindus have started migrating from rural and tops of hills to towns or district headquarters as they became more insecure to the militant threats after the army was moved from the hinterland to the border. Above all, bulk of migration of almost the entire Kashmiri Pandit community from Kashmir in the first year of the start of militancy in 1990 was absorbed in Jammu. About 33,000 KP families were registered with the government, most of whom are still living in small tenements in camps.

In addition 1600 Muslim and 1656 Sikh families, who migrated from Kashmir valley are also registered. " (Daily Excelsior, 7 July 2002)

" [...] thousands of people uprooted from their homes along the Akhnoor frontier in Jammu and Kashmir during the conflict continue to suffer. Massive shelling from across the border during the war had forced them to leave and since then they have received little relief. According to estimates, over 50,000 people along with their cattle migrated from the forward tehsils of this border area.

The migrants are still holed up in tents along the Jammu-Poonch National Highway and left to care for themselves. A number of times they tried to return to their villages but could not due to the frequent outbreak of tensions. In 2001, many of them came home but had to leave again after India-Pakistan tensions escalated after the December 13, 2001, attack on India's Parliament.

People living in villages in other places along the border returned after the war, but the Akhnoor migrants could not. For, most of their homes had been destroyed in the shelling and their fields rendered infertile due to the increased toxicity in the soil." (The Hindu, 27 July 2003)

***According to local authorities, most of the internally displaced have returned to their homes after conclusion of a ceasefire between India and Pakistan. Some 8,000 families were reported to be still internally displaced according to the Government of India's Home Ministry 2003-2004 report:***

"The situation has improved substantially in the border areas close to the Line of Control and people have voluntarily returned home after the ceasefire, said Hakim Yasin, the state's relief and rehabilitation minister. 'Of the 39,527 migrant families, 31,621 families have so far returned to their homes in the border areas,' the minister said." (The Indian Express, 5 March 2004)

"3.94 After commencement of de-induction of the troops from Jammu Border, the migrants have started going back to their villages. As intimated by Government of J&K all the migrant families, except the following, returned to their homes –

Jammu - 6019 families

Rajouri - 1834 families

Poonch - 541 families" (GOI, Annual Report 2003-2004)

***In March 2005, this figure had decreased to 5,300 families (4,000 families from Doda, Udhampur, Rajouri and Poonch and 1,300 families from Akhnoor):***

"Minister for Housing and Urban Development [...] today said that as per the reports filed by screening committee constituted by Deputy Commissioner Doda, Udhampur, Rajouri and Poonch, 4017 families comprising 20,931 souls were displaced from the militancy effected areas during the past ten years and the cases of 1717 families of these districts are under investigation.

Responding to a question of Prof Bhim Singh in the Upper house here today the Minister in district Udhampur alone, there are 650 such cases, in Rajouri 172 cases, Doda 761 cases while 134 cases in district Poonch.

In response to another question of Prof Singh, the Minister said during Kargil conflict nearly 1.57 lakh people were displaced from the border belt. Now, all of them have returned to their respective places except 1302 families of Niabat Khour in Akhnoor. Of the total, 1.07 lakh were migrated from Jammu, 17,692 from Kathua, 10,327 from Rajouri and 21,952 from Poonch. Besides this, in Kupwara district 16 families consisting of 97 souls were displaced." (Daily Excelsior, 22 March 2005)

***However, information is conflicting as less than ten percent of the amount for relief and rehabilitation of the internally displaced has been allocated. Many still remained in relief camps as of July 2004:***

"[...] even after the demobilisation of forces along the Line of Control, in sharp contrast to the farmers along the Indo-Pak International Border, a majority of the residents could not return. This was because a large area remained under mines near the Line of Control and de-mining process was quite slow. Residents say that most of the houses have been destroyed in this sector and fields have become absolutely barren due to the high toxicity in the soil due to heavy bombardment." (The Hindu, 7 July 2004)

***Estimates continue to vary: as of August 2005, more than 6,000 families were still displaced:***

"[...] the conditions of the 60,000 displaced persons from border areas remained deplorable. [16] The State government had taken a few measures to resettle them." (ACHR, Annual Human Rights Report 2005, Jammu & Kashmir)

"The Centre has cleared a Rs 78 cr relief package for the border migrants involving allotment of plots of 5 marlas and compensation among nearly 6070 families of 21 villages in Chhamb and Akhnoor constituencies of district Jammu." (Daily Excelsior, 10 August 2005)

***The following tables show the number of families displaced and the number of villages deserted in the respective blocks of Jammu District as of May 2003:***

Table No.2

Block	Total Population	No. of Families displaced	No. of Souls Displaced	No. of Villages Deserted
Akhnoor	128,346	8,457	40,464	26
R.S.Pura	177,311	7,820	35,621	-

Bishnah	71,147	3,019	14,154	27
Samba	15,277	5,183	26,768	40
Total	392,081	24,479	117,007	93

Source: **Bhai, Rainoo and Dayal, Prabhu** , 15 May 2003

These displaced people are sheltered at various places which are notified as migrant camps by the State Government. Various such camps identified during the survey are mentioned in the following table:

Table no. 3

Tehsil	No. of Camps	Major Camps
a. Akhnoor	10	Bombal Naiwal Devipur Thandi Choie Doomi-non Camp Domana School Khore Garkhal Doomi Camp Kangrail
b. R.S.Pura	25	HrSec.School/Ranbir Singh Pura Bana Singh Stadium Mill Area Middle School Primary School Dangre Police Station-Gokhari Tibba Gaiya Badyal           Kadhyan/Dadliyal Slaid  SIDCO (Small Scale Industrial Development Complex) Samba, Rehian/Khanwal School, Ramgarh School Centre (Dugh), Channi Fatwal,       Centre-Chowani (Rakh-Abtal), Centre Abtal and Centre Khore-Slarian
c. Samba	7	Government School Bishnah Government School Arnia

d. Bishnah	11	
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Source: **Bhai, Rainoo and Dayal, Prabhu** , 15 May 2003

**By the end of 2001, USCR estimated a total of 157,000 internally displaced in North-East India**

- In 2001, an estimated 157,000 persons were displaced in several states in Northeast India
- The world report 2003 estimates that 150-200,000 persons are internally displaced

## ESTIMATES OF NUMBERS OF PERSONS DISPLACED IN NORTHEAST INDIA

[Note: Several of the following ethnic groups sometimes refer to themselves by a different name than that by which they are commonly known. Because these populations are already little known outside India, the author has used the more commonly recognized name for the sake of clarity. While some of these estimates are widely cited, others have been provided by a single source that may have connections to the displaced population in question. These 1998 estimates should therefore be considered very tentative.]

State	Number Displaced	Maximum Displaced <sup>1</sup>	Displaced Groups	Parties to Conflict
Assam	87,000 <sup>+2</sup>	250,000	Santhals, Nepalis	Bodos <sup>3</sup> /non-Bodos
Assam	3,500 <sup>4</sup>	60,000	Bengalis	Bodos/non-Bodos
Manipur	n/a*	40,000 <sup>5</sup>	Kukis	Nagas/Kukis
Manipur	n/a*	15,700 <sup>6</sup>	Paites <sup>7</sup>	Kukis/Paites
Manipur, Nagaland	20,000 <sup>8</sup>	95,000 <sup>9</sup>	Nagas	Nagas/Kukis
Tripura	39,000 <sup>10</sup>	39,000	Reangs <sup>11</sup>	Mizos/Reangs
Tripura	25,000 <sup>12</sup>	200,000	Bengalis	Tribals/Bengalis
Arunachal Pradesh	3,000 <sup>13</sup>	3,000	Chakmas	Tribals/Chakmas

Other groups in the Northeast have also experienced displacement or remain displaced, including Bodos in Assam,<sup>14</sup> Chakmas in Mizoram,<sup>15</sup> and ethnic minorities in Meghalaya.

### Notes:

- 1) These numbers represent the largest numbers of people displaced in each state in recent years.
- 2) 80,000 as of August 1998: interview with Prof. Omprakash Mishra, Calcutta; interview with Mr. Naqib Ahmed, Santhal representative; 65,000 Bhaumik. According to the June 1, 1999 *The Statesman* (India), another 7,000 became displaced in June 1999.
- 3) Bodos refer to themselves as Boros.
- 4) Some 3,500 displaced Bengalis were living in one camp visited by the author. There are undoubtedly many more living in other camps or by their own means, but there are no estimates of their total.
- 5) Interview with Dr. T. Haokip of North Eastern Hills University (Shillong), Guwahati, August 1998.
- 6) Zomi Coordination Committee on Relief and Rehabilitation, July 13 1998,
- 7) Paites refer to themselves as Zomis.
- 8) Interview with Artax A. Shimray, Naga leader. This was the only source for this figure.
- 9) Ibid.
- 10) Presentation by Professor Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury, Symposium on Internally Displaced Persons , Jadavpur University, Calcutta, August 1998. In an interview with USCR, Prof. K. Debbarma of North Eastern Hills University, Shillong, said there were 36,000 as of August 1998.
- 11) Reangs refer to themselves as Bru,
- 12) Bhaumik, Subir. "Flower Garden or Fluid Corridor," unpublished.
- 13) Chaudury said 3,000-4,000 Chakmas had been displaced for more than five years.
- 14) According to Jitu Basumatari, a member of a Bodo organization, more than 700 Bodos remained displaced. Other sources, however, said that all formerly displaced Bodos had returned home.

15) Some 200 families, according to Samran Chakma, representative of a Chakma groups.

\* As of 1998, most displaced Kukis and Paites had returned home or resettled in new communities. USCR was unable to establish how many of those who remained displaced were vulnerable as a result.

(USCR January 2000, p.2-3)

### ***USCR estimates in 2002 and 2003 :***

"An estimated 157,000 persons of various ethnicities were displaced in several states in Northeast India, a geographically and politically isolated area of India that is home to many "tribal" groups." (USCR, 2002, India chapter)

"An estimated 150,000 to 200,000 persons of various ethnicities were displaced in several states in Northeast India, a geographically and politically isolated area of India that is home to many tribal groups. Once sparsely populated, Northeast India's population has swelled with the arrival of millions of ethnic Bengali Hindus and Muslims from Bangladesh and from India's West Bengal State." (USCR 2003, India)

### **Assam: internal displacement of Santals and Bodos (2003 - December 2005 estimates)**

- As of April 2003, around 150,000 Santhals and Bodos were reported to be in relief camps for internally displaced in Kokrajhar and Gossaigaon sub-divisions
- Every fourth person in the Kokrajhar district is a conflict induced displaced person

### ***Varying estimates of the number of displaced Santhals and Bodos after violence in 1996 and 1998:***

"Assam officials say only about half of the quarter million displaced people were still left in makeshift relief camps. Assam government records, now available with the BBC, indicates only 33362 displaced people were left in the camps Kokrajhar district and 74123 were left in the camps in Gosaigaon district." (BBC, 9 December 2005)

"As of today, some 1,33,794 people belonging to 30602 Adivasi and Bodo families of Kokrajhar Lok Sabha constituency have been languishing in 40 relief camps, set up by the Kokrajhar district administration to provide shelter to victims of ethnic riots between the two communities in 1996 and 1998.

[...]

There are over 42,000 minor children in these camps." (The Hindu, 16 March 2004)

"In 2002 a total 29,065 families were living in 49 relief camps. With the situation in Kokrajhar district having improved considerably in the past couple of years, many people have began returning to their original villages and fields.

[...]

The remaining 21,180 families (1,08,692 persons) are still living in 29 relief camps." (ACT- LWFI, 20 February 2004)

"More than 100,000 people are estimated to be still staying in relief camps in the Kokrajhar district, more than seven years after the riots between Bodos and Santhals that had left nearly 250,000 people homeless.

Of those, while some arrived in the camps in 1996, in the first phase of the riots, and others in 1998, in its second phase.

Gossangaon subdivisional relief officer P K Doley said on Wednesday that nearly 17,000 families, comprising 85,000 people, were still staying in 23 relief camps in the sub-division. In the Kokrajhar subdivision, there were some more, though the riots had hit the Gossaigaon sub-division the hardest.

Among these 23 camps, 19 housed adivasis (Santhals), three of them housed Bodos and one Rabhas. Two of the biggest camps were Kochugaon, with about 20,000 inmates and Sapkatha with 15,000, both adivasi camps." (The Times of India, 8 January 2004)

**RELIEF CAMPWISE INMATES POSITION OF KOKRAJHAR SUB-DIVISION FOLLOWING THE ETHNIC VIOLENCE OF 1996 – 1998**

Year of Riot	Name of Relief Camps	Community	No. of Families	Total persons
1996	1. Joypur	Adivasi	263	1551
	2. Bishmuri	Adivasi	145	589
	3. Deosri	Adivasi	643	3570
Sub - Total			1051	5710
1998	1. Vety Complex Bengtal	Adivasi	97	528
	2. Jaypur (A)	Adivasi	1880	9832
	3. Amguri	Adivasi	425	2600
	4. Bhumka - Maligaon	Adivasi	73	382
	5. Jaypur (B)	Adivasi	753	4240
	6. Sanitpur	Adivasi	246	1406
	7. Deosri (B)	Adivasi	271	1364
	8. Bishmuri (B)	Adivasi	365	1745
	9. Rnikhata & Bhurpar	Adivasi	967	5595
	10. Serfunguri	Bodo	237	1571
	11. Bishmuri - Mahendrapur	Bodo	815	6066
	12. Bashbari	Bodo	167	1270
	13. Diglipara	Bodo	369	2684
	14. New Laoripara	Bodo	186	1261
	15. Amguri (Dodo & Rava)	Bodo & Rava	145 24	999 142
	16. Athiabari – Tiniali	Bodo	56	370
Sub - Total			7,076	42,055
		GRAND TOTAL	8,127	47,765

**PRESENT INMATES POSITION OF RELIEF CAMPS AFTER PAYING OF REHABILITATION GRANT UNDER GOSSAIGAON SUB – DIVISION**

Sl. No.	Name of Relief Camp	Community	No. of Family	No. of Ind.
1	Sapkata	Adivasi	3058	14858
2	Sapkata (Enchroacher	Adivasi	1057	5726
3	Habrubil	Adivasi	620	2264

4	Bhadeyaguri	Adivasi	1677	6215
5	Kachugaon	Adivasi	4917	26851
6	Kachugaon (Enchroacher)	Adivasi	378	1998
7	Nabinagar	Adivasi	105	680
8	Teliapara	Adivasi	424	2499
9	Matiajuli	Adivasi	147	908
10	Garufela	Adivasi	1455	6125
11	Panbari	Adivasi	443	1823
12	Balagaon	Adivasi	1542	8999
13	Bashbari	Adivasi	104	651
14	Singibil	Adivasi	40	200
15	Satyapur	Adivasi	55	300
16	Joymagaon	Adivasi	955	5780
17	Bhaoraguri	Adivasi	80	348
18	Srirampur	Adivasi	402	2374
19	Mokhrabil	Adivasi	318	1332
20	Hakma	Bodo	343	1150
21	Bairal	Bodo	814	3212
22	Saraibil	Bodo	475	3785
23	Jaraguri	Bodo	230	1222
24	Kashibari	Bodo	314	2195
25	Hatidura	Bodo	40	215
	GRAND TOTAL		19,993	101,660

Source: Kokrajhar Local Government, 30 April 2003

### **Assam: estimates of internal displacement of Karbis, Kukis, Biharis, Hmars and Dimasas (2003- December 2005)**

- Up to 50,000 Karbis and Dimasas displaced during fall 2005
- Thousands of Karbis and Kukis fled fighting during fall 2003 - one estimate says that as many as 5,000 Kukis were displaced
- Nearly 2,000 people of the Karbi ethnic group fled their homes in the district of Karbi Anglong in March 2004
- More than 18,000 Hindi speaking people fled Assam mobs and militants and took shelter in about 40 camps - an unknown number were internally displaced outside camps
- Thousands are displaced due to fighting between the Hmar and Dimasa tribes since April 2003

#### ***Demographic data of people displaced during the Karbi-Dimasa conflict autumn 2005:***

"Of the 44,071 inmates, 17,971 or an overwhelming 40.78 per cent are listed as minors by the government. Yet, there is no baby food. Nor is there any special treatment for 200 women who are in advance stage of pregnancy. Sanitation and hygiene is a serious problem.

In Karbi Anglong, 32,871 inmates have been provided only 8,504 plates. It means four persons have to share a plate. To paraphrase Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi, such things including the macabre killings are bound to happen in the jungles." (Chakma, in The Tribune 1 January 2006)

"Up to 50,000 people have also been displaced in attacks that have included massacres of villagers by militants." (COE-DMHA, 28 December 2005)

***As of January 2006, no information has been found about return or local integration of internally displaced in the situations listed below:***

***Number of Karbis fleeing attacks in March 2004:***

"Authorities have called in the Army to help stem the violence as nearly 2,000 people of the Karbi ethnic group have fled their homes near the town of Bokajan in the district of Karbi Anglong. Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi confirmed the numbers and said that most IDPs (internally-displaced persons) were in government-run relief camps." (COE-DMHA, 29 March 2004)

***Number of Karbis and Kukis fleeing fighting in October and November 2003:***

"Soldiers were deployed to an insurgent-ridden district in Gauhati, India [...] after fighting between two tribal groups killed at least 10 people and forced more than 1,500 to flee their homes." (Daily Times, 15 November 2003)

"More than 300 families have reportedly fled the ethnic conflict and are in relief camps in Manja district. Earlier this week, it was reported that about 125 Kuki ethnic people had fled to the neighboring state of Manipur." (COE-DMHA, 5 December 2003)

"Between October and November 2003, another 5000 Kukis fled to Manipur and Nagaland as the Kuki-Karbi relations in Karbi Anglong district hit rock bottom." (IPCS, Routray, 17 January 2004)

***Number of displaced after violence against Biharis in November 2003:***

"[...] more than 18,000 people had taken shelter in about 40 camps and they would be rehabilitated at places of their choice." (The Hindu 2 December 2003)

"Even the number of persons in the relief camps is constantly changing. Leaving aside the uncounted numbers of those internally displaced, about 20,000 persons, perhaps more, are believed to have fled the State." (Frontline, 6 December 2003)

***Number of displaced due to fighting between the Hmar and Dimasa tribes in April 2003:***

"The worst carnage took place in April when about 23 Dimasas were brutally killed by Hmar militants. Since then, each has been routinely killing members of the other and burning down villages. This has not only spread terror in and around the Cachar district, but resulted in thousands of Dimasas and Hmars being displaced from their gutted down villages, to take shelter in about 25 relief centres." (The Telegraph, 20 June 2003)

"At least fifty Dimasas have been killed and 28 Dimasa villages were burnt down by the HPC (D) extremists. About 2000 Dimasas are living in relief camps in unhygienic and inhuman condition since April 2003." (Organiser, March 2004)

**Manipur and Nagaland: estimates of internally displaced (2000-2001)**

- Violence between Kukis and Paites and friction between Nagas and Meiteis has reportedly left 50,000 people homeless

- USCR says 130,000 have been displaced at least temporarily since 1992
- Kukis say that more than 40,000 Kukis were displaced, primarily between 1992 and 1996, most have now resettled in other Kuki communities
- Naga sources claim that the Naga/Kuki conflict has displaced as many as 90,000 Nagas in Manipur and another 5,000 in Nagaland, of whom only some 20,000 to 25,000 remained displaced as of mid-1998
- Violence in Manipur since June 2001 displaced some 50,000 Nagas
- In January 2002, a report by the Naga Peoples Movement for Human Rights (NPMHR) concluded that more than 50,000 persons remained displaced
- No recent information has been found on the number of internally displaced

"Kukis and Paites have clashed since 1997 and friction persists between the Nagas and Meiteis. Violence between these groups has reportedly left 50,000 people homeless as entire villages are burned to the ground. [...] Eleven thousand people now live in displacement camps and the government of neighbouring Mizoram has restricted the displaced from crossing into its territory." (SAHRDC March 2001)

"Conflict between tribal groups in Manipur and Nagaland reportedly has led to the displacement (at least temporarily) of as many as 130,000 Kukis, Paites, and Nagas since 1992. [...]

Kukis say that more than 40,000 Kukis were displaced, primarily between 1992 and 1996. Most have now resettled in other Kuki communities. Naga sources claim that the Naga/Kuki conflict has displaced as many as 90,000 Nagas in Manipur and another 5,000 in Nagaland, of whom only some 20,000 to 25,000 remained displaced as of mid-1998. According to one Naga leader, Artax Shimray, displaced Nagas in Manipur included 30,000 from Chenaburi District, 30,000 from Chandel District, 10,000 from Okrur District, and 20,000 from Tamelung District.

[...] Fighting between the Kuki and Paites displaced more than 15,000 Paites. Most were displaced within Manipur, where a Paites relief group set up 30 temporary camps for them, most often very near their original homes. Although as of mid-1998 many had not yet rebuilt their houses, they were living in their communities of origin and no longer displaced. Some 3,500 Paites fled into Mizoram, where the state government created three camps for them. The 3,500 who fled to Mizoram returned in July 1998, after the Kukis and Paites signed an agreement aimed at ending their rift. " (USCR January 2000, p.9-10)

#### ***Violence in Manipur since June 2001 displaced some 50,000 Nagas:***

"Following continuous threats by the Meitei population most Nagas no longer felt safe in their homes. They left for the hills where Naga brothers and sisters at Senapati and Ukhrul district took them in. More than 40,000 souls are still in camps while others were fortunate enough to be taken in by family living in all parts of the Naga Hills in Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur itself." (Naga International Support Center, 9 October 2001, Press Release)

***This report dates from January 2002. No information has been found on the number of Nagas remaining displaced, but the Naga International Support Centre says many have returned to their homes.***

"According to *Ajai Sukla*, a reporter from the *New Delhi Television (NDTV)* dated 19 August 2001 from Senapati, "the refugee situation in Manipur is turning ugly. Up to 50,000 Nagas have now fled the Imphal valley to the Naga areas of Senapati and Ukhrul, provoking Naga anger both in Manipur and in Nagaland state ... The Manipur government has provided no assistance to the refugees other than to offer to convey them back to their homes in Imphal but the refugees are

too scared to return... If the situation is not resolved quickly by the government, the current peaceful scenario could quickly turn into violence".

[...]

The 'Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)' in this report incorporates three categories of persons/families. The first category- comprise of totally uprooted persons with no other alternative resettlement who are taken care in the relief camps. The second category-comprise of displaced persons who are provided temporary support by communities or relatives in the Hills. The third category- comprising of mainly professionals, Government employees, businesspersons, etc. who continue to managed themselves through their own efforts.

This report covers NPMHR visits to the relief camps in the Naga Hill areas to assess the conditions of the displaced Nagas and to prepare the humanitarian needs of the thousands of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) scattered in the four Hill districts of Manipur, Senapati, Chandel, Ukhrul, Tamenglong including the 27 Naga villages placed under the Henglep sub-division, Churachandpur district bordering the Mizoram state. [...] Apart from the many Relief camps in the Naga areas of Manipur, there are above 1000 IDPs in Kohima and Dimapur who are been hosted by the relatives, friends and sympathizers in Nagaland state.

#### **Senapati:**

NPMHR received a preliminary data of IDPs containing more than 4000-5000 names of displaced persons from different ethnic communities stationed at Senapati town. The IDPs hosted in Senapati are from different communities such as Rongmei (2606), Zemei (15), Liangmei (469), Inpui (27), Mao (112) Poumai (510), Tangkhul (702), Thangal (102), Maram (3), Chothe (19), Maring (59), Anal (3), Chiru (234), Lamkhong (22), Kom (3) and Moyon (3) according to the data collected so far. A rough compiled report brought out by Senapati District Students Association (SDSA) along with ZU/ZYF/ZSU on 18 August 2001 Senapati currently host 4889 persons displaced from 55 villages and 632 house-holds. However, these compilation are still unorganized as near about the same numbers of IDPs are scattered in the different towns and villages in Senapati District. The tentative figure listed so far is confined to Senapati town areas. According to the Naga Peoples Organisation (NPO), Senapati there are more than 8000 IDPs in Senapati District.

#### **Chandel:**

Tolkham Maring, a reporter with local papers based in Chandel has shared that the IDPs situation in Chandel which comes to roughly 1483 persons are accommodated by the relatives and communities in the different villages in Chandel Districts. The numbers of IDPs in different communities in Chandel are Anal (498), Chothe (49), Lamkhong (271), Maring (455), Monsang (36), Moyon (138), Tarao (20) and Zeliangrong (16).

#### **Tamenglong:**

Tamenglong District headquarter host roughly a 1000 IDPs. According to the Zeliangrong Union (ZU) dated 29 th August 2001 compiled report the Longmai (Noney) Relief camp hosts about 4074 persons. The report listed 74 villages and 708 families been displaced by the recent exodus. The recent submission of data corroborate the existence of more than 15,000 IDPs in Tamenglong district.

#### **Ukhrul:**

In Ukhrul District according to the Tangkhul Core Committee on Cease-fire dated 30 the July 2001, the statistical report reveals 11,772 persons being displaced and hosted at Ukhrul town. However, latest report reveals that there are over 20,000 displaced Nagas in Ukhrul. (Nagaland Page- 19 August 2001). The latest update of the status of IDPs in Ukhrul has been listed as 26,172 as per the submission of Tangkhul Naga Long to the UNC Working Group on 11 th October 2001.

[...]

**Table of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) Nagas in the Naga areas of Manipur**

Sl.no.	Location	camps	No. of camps	No. of IDPs	Total No. of IDPs	remark
1.	Naga hills, Manipur	Senapati	19	8000+		4000 persons in camps
		Ukhrul	Not available	26,172		400 families given relief
		Chandel	Not available	1,483		400 persons received relief
		Tamenglong	18	15,000		3800 persons in camps
2.	Nagaland	Dimapur & Kohima	Not available	1,000+		
					51,655	

(Revised and updated 12/10/2001)" (NPMHR, 5 January 2002)

### **Displacement in Manipur reported during 2005**

"Over a thousand Hmars and Paites have fled to neighbouring Mizoram while about 5,000 have been displaced within Tipaimukh sub-division following alleged attack and threats by the members of the armed opposition group, United National Liberation Front of Manipur." (Web India 123.com, 23 January 2006)

### **Tripura: conflicting estimates of internally displaced (2005)**

- In September 2003, the Tripura Government said 19,468 families have been displaced between March 1998 to February 2003 - while 20,494 families were displaced as of June 2004
- According to BBC; more than 100,000 Bengali settlers have been internally displaced in Tripura due to the rebel violence since 1993 when the Left Front came to power
- New displacement of at least 10,000 families due to building of a fence along the India-Bangladesh border
- In another statement, a representative said that during the last four years more than 47,000 persons both tribal and non tribal were displaced.
- Insurgency and terrorism continue to displace the civilian population
- During spring 2003, more than 2,000 tribal families fled remote areas and camped along the main roads
- Estimates of internally displaced in north Tripura vary, but Mizoram human rights groups estimate that some 31,000 Reangs fleeing violence in Mizoram presently are being sheltered in 6 camps in North Tripura

"Tripura has a large number of people displaced because of increasing land alienation, insurgency and fencing of Indo-Bangladesh border. There were about 70,000 internally displaced persons but the government has little plans of action to rehabilitate them." (ACHR, Human Rights Report 2005 - Tripura)

"The Centre has deputed a team of three officials to determine the amount of funds required to compensate over 10,000 families displaced by the erection of a barbed wire fence along Tripura's 856-km-long border with Bangladesh." (The Telegraph, 13 March 2005)

"The Revenue Minister, Keshab Majumdar, said in the Assembly session last month that 20,494 persons [**families?**] were displaced from seven sub-divisions largely due to extremist activities. Bishalgarh sub-division in West Tripura district bore the brunt of it with a little over 13,000 persons [**families?**] leaving their habitats. Official figures indicate that 4,340 families have been affected in Longtarai sub-division, 1,196 in Kanchanpur sub-division, 504 in Gandacherra sub-division and 509 in Sadar sub-division." (The Hindu, 25 July 2004)

"More than 4000 people have died in Tripura since [ethnic riots of 1980], the same number have been kidnapped and more than 100,000 Bengali settlers have been internally displaced in Tripura due to the rebel violence." (BBC News, 6 May 2004)

"Though several crores of rupees were spent in the name of jhumians rehabilitation in Tripura for the last several years, according to an estimate there are still more than 48,000 jhumias languishing in the hilly areas. Apparently instead of reduction of the jhumias figure it only increased over the years.  
[...]  
many of whom had been displaced due to militancy, [...]." (The Assam Tribune, 5 February 2004)

"The Tripura state Revenue Minister, in a statement in the Legislative Assembly, on 24 September 2003, quoted IDP figures in the state, in what could be the first such attempt by any state government in the region to assess the scale of physical movement of people due to militancy. The minister said, "Between March 1998 to February 2003, 19,468 families have been displaced from their original places".. If each family is estimated to have five members, the total number of people displaced would be around 98,000, roughly amounting to more than three per cent of the state's total population" (IPCS, Routray, 17 January 2004)

"Official figures [...] disclose that the impact of insurgency/terrorism has been phenomenal in terms of the internal displacement of civilian populations. Nearly 19,468 families have been displaced between March 1, 1998, and February 28, 2003, in the State. Subdivisions like Bishalgarh in West Tripura district suffer the most, with a recorded displacement of 12,106 families. The Khowai, Sadar, Udaipur and Belonia subdivisions also recorded high volumes of such displacement." (Routray, SAIR, Vol.2 no.14 , 20 October 2003)

"Due to militancy during the last four years more than 47,000 persons both tribal and non tribal were displaced. Revenue minister Keshab Majumder, answering to the question of Congress MLA, Ratan Lal Nath said, since January 1999 to November 2003, a total of 47,782 were forced to leave their homes and hearths for protracted insurgency.

Most affected were Bishalgarh and Khowai in West district. In Bishalgarh 12,800 people were displaced which was closely followed by Khowai sub-division with 9,598 people. However, there were no displacement in four subdivisions – Kailashahar, Dharmanagar (both in North Tripura), Sonamura in West and Sabroom." (The Assam Tribune, 2 January 2004)

"Tripura has nearly 10 lakh [1 million] indigenous tribals who live in abject poverty in the hilly and often inaccessible areas of the state. The two banned militant groups -- All Tripura Tigers Force and the National Liberation Front of Tripura -- who have bases in Bangladesh across the porous international border, have stepped up their activities in the past two-three months.

[...]

The militant activity has resulted in more than 2,000 tribal families fleeing the interior areas and camping along the main roads. " (Rediff Com, 21 May 2003)

#### ***Internally displaced Reangs from Mizoram in Tripura:***

"Aizawl [*representing Mizoram Government*] says there are at most 16,000 Reangs who were its subject while the Tripura Government puts the figure at double 31,000 plus.

Only recently a Ministry of Home Affairs officials visited Kanchanpur to ascertain in the actual figure of the refugees in the camps. The North Tripura district also undertook a head count and now the official sources in Agartala stands by its previous figure of 31,000." (The Assam Tribune, 27 May 2003)

#### **Gujarat: internal displacement due to communal violence (June 2005)**

- More than 100,000 were displaced and sheltered in more than 100 relief camps due to communal violence in Gujarat in February and March 2002
- Taking into account those displaced who moved in with families and friends, the total number of internally displaced people is estimated at not less than 250,000 persons
- Although the official figure is 762, about 2000 people were missing or killed according to unofficial estimates
- In June 2002, the government began closing the relief camps - an unknown number of persons remain displaced with friends or in slum ghettos

"A detailed report, 'Gujarat –Three Years Later' is currently being compiled by *Communalism Combat*. Our preliminary investigations reveal that on a rough estimate about 61,000 persons continue to be internally displaced within the state." (Communalism Combat, June 2005)

"No accurate figures of persons sheltering in camps are available; camps in Ahmedabad alone by 5 March 2002 accommodated according to official estimates 66,000 people while independent assessments speak of 98,000 people. Unofficial estimates and official figures speak of another 76,000 and 25,000 persons respectively displaced outside Ahmedabad, many in remote and insecure locations and deplorable conditions. While most estimates are of 100,000 people in camps in Gujarat, taking into account those displaced who moved in with families and friends, the total number of internally displaced people is estimated at not less than 250,000 persons.

[...]

After privately run relief camps were closed, no alternative housing was provided forcing those once again displaced to seek refuge with relatives or move into rented accommodation, provided they could pay for it.

[...]

Two years after the violence in Gujarat, many victim survivors driven out by intense violence, have not returned to their original places of residence with many resettled by Muslim

organizations amongst other Muslim communities inside or outside the state." (Amnesty International, January 2005, 7.6.a, 7.6.c)

"Although the official figure is 762, about 2000 people were missing or killed according to unofficial estimates and around 113,000 people were living in relief camps while others who were displaced were living with relatives in Gujarat or outside." (International Initiative of Justice, p. 2)

"Following the violence in Gujarat in February and March 2002, more than 33,000 children were forced into relief camps throughout Gujarat, representing one-third of the total displaced population." (HRW July 2003, p.7)

### **Central India: thousands displaced due to naxalite insurgency (January 2006)**

"New Delhi has waged a campaign against the Naxalites that has included forcible displacement of local tribes that are sympathetic to the Maoists." (Stratfor, 16 November 2005)

***In Chattisgarh*** "The Salwa Judum [popular movement mobilising to resist naxalite groups] has led to the forcible displacement of people throughout Bhairamgarh, Geedam and Bijapur areas, under police and administrative supervision. According to official estimates approximately 15,000 people from 420 villages are living as refugees in temporary camps." (PUCL, 2 December 2005)

# PATTERNS OF DISPLACEMENT

## General

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### **Jammu and Kashmir, people living along the international border and Line of Control were forced to flee several times due to military tension (2002 – 2003)**

- Most of the displaced people stayed temporarily with friends and relatives, but thousands also camped in public buildings and tents
- Between 1995-1998 displacement occurred from various areas of the Doda district
- Since 1999, tension between India and Pakistan displaced people from border areas in Jammu, the majority of whom took shelter with friends and relatives
- The Akhnoor sector has been particularly hard hit by displacement and many have lost their houses which have been either occupied by the Army or destroyed in cross-border shelling
- Most of the internally displaced from the Akhnoor sector live in camps (as of May 2003)

"Forcing migration of civilians has remained one of the main features of the 14-year long proxy war. It first started with the migration of over 3.50 lakh Hindus from the Kashmir valley in 1990. This was followed by migration from various areas of Doda district between 1995 and 1998. Since the Kargil conflict of 1999 Pakistan triggered migration from several segments of the Akhnoor sector where at least 20 villages, including Pallanwala and Panjtoot, were targeted by the Pak gunners. From May 1999 onwards more than 45,000 people in the border villages of the Akhnoor sector fled to safer places. " (The Tribune 16 February 2003)

" The Jammu District hosting three types of migrants :

- (i) One is the group of migrants who had come in the wake of armed attack in 1948:
- (ii) The second group is the Kashmiri Pandits who have been sheltered by Government in Jammu region; and
- (iii) The third group is the border migrants who had to flee the borders because of constant firing by the Pakistan rangers and Pakistani Army on International border and Line of Control running along Jammu District.

[...]

The displacement in Jammu District has occurred in three phases[...]:

First, in Akhnoor Sector since June 99 during Kargil war. Secondly, in Samba and Akhnoor Sector since December 2001 (Deployment of forces at border from December 18, 2001, after terrorists attack on Indian Parliament). Thirdly, in R.S.Pura and Bishnah Sector since May 25, 2002 after Kaluchak (Army Camp, Jammu) massacre on May 14, 2002) [...]

[...]

The first mass displacement took place in Akhnoor block during June 1999. This block witnessed largest and the longest displacement. Initially, the people stayed with their relatives or in rented accommodation which obviously could not be a permanent arrangement. They spent out their small savings and had to sell off their valuable possessions and livestock to sustain. This persistent problem of instability forced them to approach the Government for relief. The second most affected Block is Samba. Here the zero line villages like Bain-Glad, Chagla Camp, Chak

Fakira and Sordli etc. were advised by the Army to evacuate. With more intense firing on border the District Administration asked the people to shift designated camps  
[...]

R.S.Pura and Bishnah block witnessed migration for shorter period during the month of January 2002 [...]. However, mass displacement occurred in the month of May 2002 as aftermath of Kaluchak massacre. According to Block officer of Bishnah and Ranbir Singh, this displacement was also temporary and the emigrants moved back to their native places after 10 to 15 days as cross border firing subdued.

The displacement phenomenon was different in Akhnoor Block. People could not return to their houses since June 1999. Their houses were either occupied by the Army or destroyed in cross-border shelling. Incursions and counter-incursion by Indian and Pakistani Armies kept the LoC alive. The prolonged displacement and ceaseless efforts to highlight the difficulties faced by them at various times at various levels of Government yielded in the form of relief and temporary shelter w.e.f. September 1999 [...]" (Bhair, Dayal, May 2003 pp. 11-12)

"While most of the displaced people are staying temporarily with friends and relatives, several thousand of them are having to camp in buildings such as schools, a commercial centre and a disused factory." (ICRC, 1 February 2002)

#### **Displaced from ethnic clashes in the Karbi Anglong area moved towards urban areas – many have left the relief centres (January 2006)**

"They did not settle in large camps. Instead, they scattered in schools, community halls, anywhere they could find shelter near a town or police post. Try to imagine 1,000 people living in a school meant for 100 students. There were problems with the latrines and water very quickly and the general health situation became very difficult.

[...]

The violence has forced people to move to more urban areas. They have gone into towns looking for safety. The violence has forced people to move to more urban areas. They have gone into towns looking for safety.

[...]Originally many people were living in schools. However, the authorities have now constructed makeshift camps in the center of villages that were burned out. This enables people to go back to their own area and harvest their crops. The people have been very worried about missing the harvest season. They have been urged by the government to go back to their own villages. Currently, about 17,000 people are still living in camps. But it is important to remember that when people do go home, they are going back to partly burned houses or villages. These communities had little access to health care before the violence broke out. Many of them still lack care now. Even though the number of displaced has dropped, the needs have not." (MSF January 2006).

#### **Gujarat: displaced live in ghettos (December 2003)**

"Displaced Muslims today live, for the most part, in ghettoised clusters, for there is a perception that vulnerability is greater when one is physically isolated and conversely that there is some strength in numbers and increased perception of vulnerability if one is physically isolated. As

many survivors emphasized, most people try to settle in more secure places with a predominantly Muslim population.

[...]

What is significant in the rural areas is that all of the Muslim population in a village under attack was displaced. In the cities on the other hand, the integration of Hindu and Muslim communities made it difficult to displace the Muslim population." (International Initiative of Justice, pp. 54, 157)

### **Anti naxalite movement accused of systematic displacement of civilians from villages to camps (December 2005)**

"[...] We [People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL)] observed a pattern in the dislocation: when Salwa Judum meetings are called, people from neighbouring villages are asked to be present. Heavy security forces accompany the meetings. Villages that refuse to participate face repeated attacks by the combined forces of Salwa Judum, the district force and the paramilitary Naga battalion, which is stationed in the area. In addition, there are separate raids by the Naga Battalion. These raids result in looting, arson and killings in many instances. In some villages, the raids continue till the entire village is cleared and people have moved to camps while in other cases, only old people, women and children are left. Many villages are coming to camps to avoid these attacks in the first place.

"[...] Once in camps, people have no choice but to support the Salwa Judum. Some of them are forced to work as informers against members of their own and neighbouring villages and participate in attacks against them, leading to permanent divisions within villages. Individual families are sometimes being split between Judum supporters and those who wish to remain in their villages. We also came across instances where the Salwa Judum took young people away from the village and their families were unaware of their whereabouts." (PUCL, 2 December 2005)

# PHYSICAL SECURITY & FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

## Physical Security

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### Women are disproportionately affected by displacement (October 2005)

- No provisions made for women in relief camps
- Women who have suffered sexual abuse do not get attention from the government

"While the events were still unfolding it became clear that the attack was not just against the minority community but were particularly against women of the minority community as well as the women of the majority community, if they appeared errant. There are numerous recorded instances of extreme sexual violence against women during the days of mayhem. In every case of mob violence there was evidence of pre-planned targeting of women. There were gruesome testimonies of how violence against women was used as an instrument to displace people and evidences of police complicity in this carnage. Not only were women forced out of their homes and targeted in the streets but also the police helped the attackers. The report said that in the vast majority of the cases the police refused to lodge First Investigative Reports. The insensitivity and apathy towards women can be gauged from this statement of the District Collector of Panchmahals, who said, "maintaining law and order is my primary concern. It is not possible for me to look into cases of sexual violence." There are reports that an "immediate impact of the violence is the creation of female-headed households. In many cases entire families have been killed. Women testified to having witnessed several members of their family dying. They were dealing not only with the trauma of this loss, but facing a future with their life's savings and livelihood sources destroyed." Many women in the camps stated their fear of going back to their homes, where they might be targeted again.[...]

In one of the reports by National Commission for women, which is mandated as the apex body for the protection of women's rights, the life in camp is summed up as:

How long could anyone stay in the camps? The temperature was already 43 degrees. In the next few weeks it would soar to 47 or 48 degrees. There were babies, infants and newborn under the canvas. There were pregnant mothers, the old, and the ailing. Water, sanitation and privacy were in short supply. There was no privacy during waking or sleeping hours, to feed the baby or change one's clothes. The situation was mired in pathos and humiliation.[...]

The National Commission for Women reported that many of the camps "were not up to the mark" and they asked the government to carefully supervise relief. The team revealed that in the camps organised by the government had no representation of women in the organising committee. With several pregnant and lactating women and children they felt there should be adequate representation of women in these committees. They also felt that security arrangements for women and children were inadequate and both of these groups reported to feeling "extremely insecure in the present circumstances." There were no special provisions for pregnant women. The committee observed that, "sanitary towels and other personal items of clothing such as undergarments, footwear etc. also need to be provided." They also observed that there was a lack of woman doctors and gynaecologists. More importantly there were no facilities for women and girls to who have been widowed or orphaned to get any special training to earn their livelihood. No efforts were made to make women aware of the compensations that were promised to them. Although inadequate, these compensations could at least give some confidence to

women who are traumatised by their own destitution.[...] What the members of the committee were most concerned about was that, "no one seemed to have asked questions related to rehabilitation. What efforts were being made to make their homes and localities safe? Or to determine, in consultation with them, where the women without men folk or children without parents would go?"[...] The displaced women in Gujarat were thus truly "nowhere" people. Even today they remain in hostile environment and as the evidence in the Best Bakery case suggests that these women, if they seek justice, are displaced once again [...]

Even in the northeast among the displaced, women and children form the most vulnerable categories. For example, when Bodo militants attacked displaced people in Barpeta in July 1994, according to one analyst, "about 1,000 persons mostly women and children were killed." Even in the Nellie massacre of 1983 in Assam, women formed the largest group of casualty.[...] According to Gina Sangkham, a Naga women activist in Manipur, among the displaced in the Northeast reports that there are sizeable numbers of women and children but no governmental agencies are looking into their conditions. In fact the State Governments insists that there are hardly any displacement-induced problems. Even when relief and rehabilitation is organised, according to Sangkham, women are hardly ever consulted although they are particularly suitable for rehabilitation work as the onus of care is traditionally on their shoulders.[...]

So, what we see is a systemic neglect and denial of justice on part of government towards the IDPs and complete negation of human rights in general of IDPs and particularly of the women. All this is in complete contrast to various constitutional fundamental rights and international obligations granted to people which the state has to fulfill." (Kumar, 28 October 2005)

#### **Jammu & Kashmir: landmines is a mjr security concern along the Line of Control (December 2004)**

"De-mining operations are in full swing along the international border and 98 percent work is claimed over, though 20 percent mine-fields are said to be yielding problems. But no de-mining operations have been carried out along the line of control barring the Akhnoor region where too it is going at a snail's pace. The army maintains that since 1947, both Indian and Pakistani armies have heavily mined their respective territories along the Line of Control (LoC) permanently. There is no effort to de-mine these areas. They, however, claim that the civilian areas are not mined on the LoC and the civilians are not affected. Facts and figures dispute this claim. Heavily mined agricultural fields in Akhnoor where the line of control begins further up north dot the entire landscape from Hamirpur to Chaprayal in Pallanwala and Chammb sectors. Approximately 150 acres of agricultural land was affected by the mining operation since Operation Prakaram [beginning in December 2002]. Some mines, however, were emplaced in 1999 when some parts of Akhnoor's borders including the line of control were also affected. Coercive methods are now being adopted by some politicians and authorities to send the people back to their villages." (Jamwal, in Refugee Watch, December 2004, No. 23, p, 8)

#### **Reangs in Mizoram state: UN Guiding Principles on protection from displacement violated (2000)**

- Preventive measures were not taken by the State and the Central Government to stop the violence, which led to the forced displacement of the Reangs

"The Principles relating to Protection from Displacements particularly those contained in Principles 5 and 9 were completely violated in their case. In terms of the Principle 5 the State and

the Central Government were required to take all such measures which could have prevented their displacement. Effective measures were not taken by the State and the Central Government to contain the generalized violence towards the community. The Reangs under the circumstances were obliged to flee their homes. Principle 9 puts special obligation on States to protect against the displacement of indigenous minorities. The conflict between the majority Mizos and the minority Reangs had been brewing over a period of time but no special protection measures were taken by the State for their protection."  
(Saha 2000 p.11)

**In 1996, the Supreme Court of India directed the government of Arunachal Pradesh to ensure protection of the life and personal liberty of Chakma residents (2001)**

"On 9 January 1996, the Supreme Court of India, ruling in the case of *National Human Rights Commission vs State of Arunachal Pradesh and Anr*, directed the government of Arunachal Pradesh to ensure protection of the life and personal liberty of Chakmas resident in the state, and to process their applications for citizenship in accordance with law. The Supreme Court's judgement was followed by a positive decision by the Delhi High Court. In the case of *People's Union for Civil Liberties and Committee for Citizenship Rights of the Chakmas of Arunachal Pradesh vs Election Commission of India and others*, the Delhi High Court ruled in favour of registering Chakmas and Hajongs as voters in Arunachal Pradesh. However, these court directives have been ignored." (SAHRDC 6 August 2001)

**Gujarat: closure of camps forced displaced to return involuntarily or to find shelter with friends and family (January 2005)**

- Camps were shut down without giving people an alternative about where to go
- Promised financial assistance was either absent or insufficient, forcing many victims back to the scene of the crime when camps were closed

"As threats of closure persisted, CJP on 31 May 2002 filed an application in the Gujarat High Court to obtain an assurance that relief camps would not be forcibly closed and received oral assurances from the government counsel that the camps would remain open until 30 June. However, forcible closure of camps in rural areas had begun in May and camp administrators continued to be harassed and coerced to shut down the camps. Often water supply was stopped or rations reduced to make it impossible for the camp administration to provide food and water to people in the camps. The petitioners submitted a state-wide survey of displaced persons to the court asking the state to set up a monitoring committee to facilitate rehabilitation. The state claimed in court that there were 13,482 displaced person in the state for whom it supplied food grains.

[...]

In August 2002, Shah Alam camp, the largest camp in Ahmedabad, was shut down leaving people helpless about where to go.[...] UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson in September 2002 called on the Government of India to ensure that internally displaced people were not cut off from relief as a result of the closure of yet more camps. At the time, almost all of the 121 official camps were rapidly closing and people moved to unofficial camps, to live with friends and neighbours, or were destitute and lived in the open. The High Commissioner emphasized the responsibility of the state to ensure conditions which made it possible for people to return to their homes voluntarily and with dignity.[...]

Amidst allegations of serious financial irregularities by the state bureaucracy, the state government in October 2002 announced that all camps must be closed by the end of the month. One of the last to close was the Haji House in Ahmedabad. Almost one hundred of the last people staying there had pleaded that they had nowhere to go.[...]. Rehabilitation of many people in camps had remained incomplete and many found it impossible to return to areas and villages which right wing Hindu inhabitants had declared ""Muslim-free"".

Responding to concerns expressed in the 7th report of the Lok Sabha Committee on Empowerment of Women (2002) that camps were being closed down despite protests and the unwillingness of inmates to leave, the state government denied that it had closed down any camps and reported that due to its "confidence building measures like providing additional security, involving the village elders and local leaders in the peace process, convening Peace Committees meetings arranging shelters in pucca buildings during monsoon" etc, normalcy had been restored and inmates had left the camps." (Amnesty International, January 2005, 7.6.a)

"Promised financial assistance has only trickled in, forcing many victims back to the scene of the crime where their tormentors remain at large. And the government has done little to curb insidious discrimination against Muslims that has proliferated in Gujarat's marketplaces and offices since the massacres. [...]

The destruction as well as enmity and insecurity left by the communal violence in Gujarat in February and March 2002 forced more than one hundred thousand Muslims into over one hundred makeshift relief camps throughout the state, some located in Muslim graveyards. By October 2002, virtually all the camps had been closed by the state, forcing many victims to return to their neighborhoods where their security was continually threatened. Throughout this period, the state government failed to adhere to standards laid out in the U.N. Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (Guiding Principles) and to international human rights standards." (HRW July 2003, pp. 4,38)

### **Gujarat: displaced Muslim women are still victims of sexual violence (December 2003)**

- On-going sexual violence includes threats, insults, obscene gestures and actual attacks
- Women who experienced sexual violence during and after the riots remain silent about it due to the lack of security, obstruction of justice by the state, continued threat perception, and the pressure of ghettoised living

"For women the fear of physical violence is heightened by fear of sexual attacks. Having been subjected to sexual violence themselves, having seen other women from the community being violated, or knowing the extent to which sexual crimes were committed, has engendered a psychological threat perception among all women from the community. This fear has been compounded by the overtly sexualized public discourse of the Hindu Right.

BJP supporters celebrated their election victory by 'informing' women: "Now this is our government. We will make this whole area Hindu. All mothers of Muslims are fucked." (Nahida, AA32 area, Ahmedabad). These threats have also been acted upon. On-going sexual violence includes threats, insults, obscene gestures and actual attack. Violence is not only directed against adult women but also against their daughters. Mothers are warned on the street to keep their daughters inside to prevent them from being raped.

[...]

Ghettoised living means living in a permanent pressure cooker situation in which collective fear is the dominant emotion, and where even a small altercation with any member of the majority community is seen as a collective threat to physical security. Individual fear and trauma merges

with the collective fear and trauma. It becomes larger and is re-lived everyday. The lack of security, obstruction of justice by the state, continued threat perception, and the pressure of ghettoised living, has meant that women who were initially willing to talk about sexual assault are no longer ready to do so. So even where the silences around sexual violence were broken they have now been re-imposed." (International Initiative of Justice, pp.53-54)

***Read also [Justice, the victim - Gujarat state fails to protect women from violence](#), Amnesty International, January 2005***

### **Displaced witnesses to the violence are not adequately protected (September 2004)**

"Displaced witnesses and victims now live in clusters and are protected by just a few armed guards posted on the outskirts of squatter settlements. This does not ensure their safety if they go into the general community for errands or meetings, as they can be easily accosted with threats or offers of bribes. Witnesses are vulnerable, activists point out, because the Gujarat government has failed to adequately support several displaced Muslims, many of them key witnesses, who live in these resettlement colonies without electricity, water or medical facilities." (HRW, September 2004, footnote p.2)

## SUBSISTENCE NEEDS

### General

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#### **Government relief package to Kashmiri Pandits is still judged insufficient (2005)**

***The government provides a special relief package to Kashmiri Pandits, not granted to internally displaced elsewhere in the country:***

"3.51 The policy of the Government in respect of these Kashmiri migrants is based on the premise that they would return to the Valley as soon as conditions reasonably conducive for their return are created. Accordingly, the permanent rehabilitation of the migrants outside the State is not envisaged. In such a situation, the thrust of the policy has been to ensure that difficulties and hardships of the migrants are minimized and the needy families provided a reasonable amount of sustenance and support. Various State Governments/UT Administrations where Kashmiri Migrants are staying have been providing relief to Migrants in accordance with the rules in vogue in their States. Government of J&K is giving cash relief of Rs.750/- per head per month subject to a maximum of Rs.3000/- per family per month, which is reimbursed by the Central Government. Government of NCT of Delhi is giving cash relief of Rs.800/- per head per month subject to a maximum of Rs.3200/- per family per month for non-camp migrants and Rs.600/- per head per month subject to a maximum of Rs.2400/- per family per month plus basic dry ration for those living in camps. Other State Governments/UT Administrations, where Kashmiri Migrants have been staying, are providing relief to Migrants in accordance with the rules in vogue in their States. While the relief provided by J&K Government is reimbursed by the Central Government from SRE, all other State Governments/ Union territories pay such relief from their own funds.

3.52 In Jammu, where a sizeable number of migrants are staying in relief camps, the migrant families have been provided with one-room tenement accommodation. Necessary physical facilities like water, electricity, sanitation, etc. have been provided free of cost. There are 12 dispensaries within Jammu to provide medical facilities. The living conditions of the migrants in these camps are closely monitored by MHA to make improvements. In Delhi also, accommodation, water electricity, sanitation, etc. have been made available.

[...]

3.55 In 1996, the then Prime Minister announced a special package of Rs.6.60 crore for improvement of facilities in Jammu camps. The amount was utilized on the construction of one-room tenements, Sulabh type toilet complexes, drainage scheme and school buildings. A further sum of Rs.6.20 crore has been released by the Government of India for improvement of the living conditions in Jammu camps.

3.56 During his visit to J&K in August 2003, the Prime Minister announced sanction of a further amount of Rs.5.00 crore for the improvement of the facilities in camps. Out of this, the State Government has been authorized to incur an expenditure of Rs.2.30 crore for the purpose. The money released has been utilized for construction of approach roads, construction of water tanks, improvement of drainage system, sanitation and other facilities. The balance amount would be released to the State Government as per requirement.

3.57 In addition, the Prime Minister has also announced sanction of Rs.10.00 crore for construction of 500 new one room tenements (ORTS) at Purkhoo Phase-IV to accommodate Migrants presently staying in various Government/ semi-Government buildings and construction of 504 ORTs at Muthi Phase-II in replacement of the existing leaking dome type ORTs." (MHA-GOI 2004-2005 pp. 27-28)

***However, conditions are still judged as insufficient by many of the displaced in Jammu:***

"Those who live in refugee camps -- some 4,600 families -- have to make do with one-room tenements. So, we have thousands of families who for 15 years have been condemned to live in 10 by 12 feet rooms, one room for each family. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, following his visit to a camp last year, has sanctioned funds for two-room tenements.

[...]

Then there are those Pandit families that do not have the wherewithal to live in rented accommodation, having left behind all their assets in the 'Muslim only' Kashmir valley, and have not been able to secure a one-room tenement. They live in tattered tents.

Every time the issue of the plight of the Kashmiri Pandits has been raised, the Union and state governments have been quick to point out the 'assistance' provided to the 'migrants.'

The assistance is all of Rs 600 per head up to a maximum of Rs 2,400 per family. And inedible, PDS surplus food grains, what the Union home ministry's annual report eloquently describes as 'dry ration @ 9 kgs of rice and 2 kgs of atta per person and one kg of sugar per family per month to needy migrants.'

[...]

The 'non-needy migrants' are Kashmiri Pandits who were government employees. They continue to receive their salaries or pensions. But they have been deprived of benefits like promotion. Most of them are barely able to keep body and soul together.

Kashmiri Pandit children have suffered the most. According to state government officials, '10 primary schools and three high schools have been built for migrant children.' Who is to tell them that 10 primary schools and three high schools cannot meet the needs of 250,000 people?

[...]

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has recently set up an inter-ministerial group to prepare a report on the welfare of the Kashmiri Pandits. But that is small consolation for the thousands of hapless men, women and children who are convinced that nothing ever will be done to restore their lost lives." (Rediff.com, 3 February 2005)

**Thousands of internally displaced in Jammu and Kashmir have not receive government assistance (April - August 2003)**

- In general, government assistance to internally displaced from India-Pakistan hostilities was insufficient
- The camps lacked basic amenities such as regular drinking water supply and medical facilities
- Around 30,000 persons who fled fighting and insecurity along the Line of Control did not receive government assistance because they have not obtained migrant status
- In 2001, the Supreme Court ordered that the displaced should be given migratory status but as of April 2003 the order had not been effectuated

"The rumbling of discontent in camps for thousands living along the Jammu and Kashmir border who were displaced during the heightening of tensions between India and Pakistan is now set to erupt in angry protests.

Fed up of official apathy, the migrants who have spent a year and a half away from home are planning demonstrations to make the government deliver on its promise to either send them back or resettle them in safer areas, out of reach of Pakistani guns.

There are about 100,000 migrants in the Jammu region living in tents set up by the government for those who fled the border areas following escalation of tension in December 2001 after an attack on the Indian Parliament that New Delhi blamed on Pakistan-based terrorists.

Troop mobilisation on the borders and the mining of the area, which affected homes and fields, forced them migrate.

Troops have since returned to the barracks, but the de-mining process is proceeding painfully slowly.

And their frustration over the tardy progress boils over when the migrants are told the government hasn't made up its mind on whether or not to provide them food." (South Asia Monitor, 16 August 2003)

"The Government has adopted ad-hocish approach in providing basic amenities to the camp residents, ignoring the very fact of increased uncertainty at border.

[...]

The camps are lacking in the basic amenities such as regular drinking water supply and medical facilities. Even the well established camps like Devipur, Naiwala and Thandi Choie are devoid of the basic facilities despite Government's repeated assurance. The relief material supplied in the camps is not only irregular but substandard of quality [...]." (Bhair, Dayala May 2003, pp. 16-17)

"In the mid-nineties, thousands of families belonging to all communities — Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs — living in Rajouri and Poonch districts migrated to other areas. Similar migration took place from Doda district. Their movement increased after Operation Parakram. As security in the remote hamlets decreased people sought shelter here. Estimates place the number at close to 30,000.

Most of these families are poor and some even below the poverty line. Some of them camped at Belicharanna area as the administration did not provide them suitable shelter close to the city. Others camped at Reasi Akhnoor and other safer areas. But the mass neglect of these families has continued since then and they have not received a single penny as relief.

The people have been asking for migratory status from the authorities as that would entitle them for special privileges but the successive dispensations have refused to concede this.

Last year, in a public interest litigation, the Supreme Court had taken a strong view of the plight of these migrants and asked the State Government to give them migratory status and extend to them the benefits as provided to other displaced persons. The authorities have not followed the apex court directives though two years have passed." (The Hindu, 15 April 2003)

### **Conditions in relief camps for displaced from the Line of Control continue to be precarious, many are not assisted (August 2004)**

- Assistance is inadequate, and despite promises of improvement, many IDPs are not assisted at all

"[...] there seems no end to the travails of thousands of people uprooted from their homes along the Akhnoor frontier in Jammu and Kashmir five years ago.

[...]

The conditions prevailing in the camp are not conducive to proper living. More than six people are living in a small tent. Most of the tents leak during monsoons. Some time back the state government extended the relief package to the border migrants of Akhnoor and Nowshera up to September this year. The relief package has been extended to 6702 families of border villages of Akhnoor and 1834 families of Nowshera area of Rajouri district. The package includes cash

assistance, prescribed scale of free ration and kerosene oil and fodder for animals. Despite that many villagers were forced to sell their milch cattle due to shortage of fodder." (The Hindu, 7 July 2004)

"The residents along the Line of Control here are leading a hand-to-mouth existence as the much-promised relief and compensation has failed to reach them. The migrants are lodged in makeshift camps in the interiors and their return has been principally delayed due to fencing operations and slow de-mining operations in the belt.

Over 6,000 families had started living in these camps during the Kargil war in 1999, when Pakistan troops opened indiscriminate fire on the villages.

A majority of the families have not gone back to their houses. Their return has been delayed due to fencing along the Line of Control which has cut off a majority of the villages. In all, 21 villages have been directly hit by the migration and many of the households are in the below poverty line (BPL) category. The situation is worst in Chapriyal where 1000 acres have gone to the other side of the fence and there is no immediate solution to their problem. In Khour area, 500 families cannot cultivate their land as it lies on the other side of the fence.

Life in the camps is not so smooth at all and the situation is getting worse by the day. For instance, in Ramnagar migrant camp, 665 families are living in sub-human conditions. For example, one tent is shared by eight members of a family.

[...]

But what has further worsened the condition of the border residents is the fact they have not been given compensation since November last year. As per a government decision, relief of Rs.1,600 per family was sanctioned to each family.

The families have little avenue to earn their living as most of them earn their livelihood through agriculture. Ram Singh, a migrant from Khour area says, "We are not earning enough even to fill our stomachs. How will I teach my children?" (The Hindu, 28 August 2004)

"[...] the international NGO, Oxfam GB (Great Britain), [in August 2004] sponsored a workshop to discuss the implementation of government relief and rehabilitation for border migrants in Akhnoor area in Jammu district, near the disputed Line of Control (LoC). The migrants have reportedly not received food rations since March 2004." (COE-DMHA, 25 August 2004)

### **Humanitarian needs of Assam's internally displaced are not met (January 2006)**

- Conditions of IDP camps in Assam are very poor in terms of shelter, water and nutrition
- Conditions in relief centres for displaced Hmars are also reported to be inadequate

#### ***Conditions in relief centres hosting IDPs who fled fighting between Dimasas and Karbis reported to be deplorable:***

"The recent internecine killings, which claimed about 90 lives in Karbi Anglong district of Assam, have led to the displacement of over 44,000 tribal Karbis and Dimasas. Away from the attention of the national media, the displaced Karbis and Dimasas have been living in deplorable conditions.

[...]

The Oxford English School at Manja, Diphu, district headquarters of Karbi Anglong, housed over 2,000 displaced persons. There is not adequate space to even stand up, if it rains. The majority of the people were sleeping in the open. There is rice and dal but no firewood to prepare food. Nor have the displaced persons been given any vegetable or cash dole.

Of the 44,071 inmates, 17,971 or an overwhelming 40.78 per cent are listed as minors by the government. Yet, there is no baby food. Nor is there any special treatment for 200 women who are in advance stage of pregnancy. Sanitation and hygiene is a serious problem.

In Karbi Anglong, 32,871 inmates have been provided only 8,504 plates. It means four persons have to share a plate. To paraphrase Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi, such things including the macabre killings are bound to happen in the jungles." (Chakma, in The Tribune 1 January 2006)

***Rations have been stopped to force people out of Santhal relief camps housing:***

"Assam officials say only about half of the quarter million displaced people were still left in makeshift relief camps.

Assam government records, now available with the BBC, indicates only 33362 displaced people were left in the camps Kokrajhar district and 74123 were left in the camps in Gosaigaon district.

But many tribal leaders allege that the administration was stopping rations to force these people out of the camps.

"We have been literally chased out of the camps by the officials. They said we have to go or else we will have to starve," says Joachim Baxla, a Santhal tribal leader at Nabinagar, where only 103 families were left in the camps.

Another tribesman, Kartick Hembrom, in nearby Matiajuri said: "We are uncertain about our future. We may not get back our cultivable lands from the Bodos who occupied it after we fled the violence in 1996."" (BBC, 9 December 2005)

***Thousands of Muslims of Bengali origin chased out by the Bodo rebels in 1994 reported to live unassisted along roads:***

"Near Bijni, on the national highway, nearly 8,000 such Muslims live in huts on both sides of the road.

"We cannot go and work in the fields because the Bodos threaten us, we cannot buy lands anywhere under the new autonomy arrangements, we cannot get back our lands," says Sabeur Rehman.

"And so we stick to this narrow stretch on the highway where scores of our children die when they are hit by trucks and buses while crossing roads," he says." (BBC, 9 December 2005)

***Conditions in camps for displaced Santhals in Assam as of December 2004:***

"It's a daily struggle for survival in the camps; the only rations provided to the refugees, most of them Adivasis, is a meagre 5kg of rice each which has to last them for 10 days. There are over 42,000 minor children in these camps, many of them born in sub-human conditions and lacking even basic health care; some of them haven't still overcome the trauma of seeing their own houses burn and relatives being slaughtered in the riots." (The Hindu, 16 March 2004)

"Food: In the name of relief, district administration is providing them only rice for ten days in a month – 600 grams for each adult and 400 grams for each child. But this insufficient food aid also arrives sporadically. For their survival they are to go in search of wild roots and herbs to eat. Childrens are suffering from tremendous malnutrition and elderly looks sick due to the lack of two square meals a day.

Drinking water: There is a lack of clean drinking water. Though the government provided tube wells in some of the camps few years back, but most of these are presently not in working condition and others are in very unhygienic condition. The inmates sometimes have to go miles in search of drinking water or collect it from nearby dirty ponds.

Shelter: The displaced are living in thatched or polythene roofed huts, which are really unsafe especially during rainy season. They sleep on the ground or makeshift beds of bamboo without

mosquito net, pillow or bed cover. In a small hut 7 to 8 members of a family are staying together which is a denial of privacy [...].

Sanitation and hygiene: There is nothing –called sanitation and hygiene in and around the camps. There is no provision for bathroom and toilet. [...]

Clothing: [...] Many children, particularly during winter, died due to inadequate protection from cold and fever. Women are unwilling to go out because of lack of sufficient clothing over their bodies.

Health care: There is lack of health care facilities. Diseases such as malaria, jaundice, dysentery, diarrhoea and influenza often pose a serious threat. [...] Some government dispensaries are set up, but there is insufficient supply of even commonly available medicines like cough syrup, paracetamol, etc. Recently [...] Medicines Sans Frontieres has started the health care programme for the IDPs.

Education facility: There is very little scope for education for the encamped children. [...] In some camps the residents have had started L.P School with the help of Lutheran World Service (LWS), an NGO, with the offer of a small stipend of upees 400/- per month to a teacher in a temporary school shed. But the lack of other facilities like availability of books, inability of the parents to pay the examination fees etc. keeps the students away from the school. [...]" (Sumona Das, Refugee Watch December 2004)

#### ***Other relief camps:***

"Kochugaon relief camp secretary Pandu Soren narrated a tale of sorry plight for the refugees. "We get only rice as relief. That, too, is sufficient for only 10 days in a month. For the other 20 days, we have to collect firewood in the jungle, or try to catch fish in the rivulets."

Health facilities are almost non-existent. The Kochugaon health centre adjoining the relief camp now houses army personnel, who moved to the area after the Royal Bhutan Army launched an operation against militants in Bhutan . Obviously, it is difficult for villagers to gain access there." (Times of India 8 January 2004)

#### ***Conditions in camps as of 2001:***

"Over 200,000 IDPs now live in 78 relief camps in Kokrajhar and Bongaigaon districts of Assam. Conditions are very poor. Shelters consist of rows of temporary sheds made of polythene and aluminium sheets. People sleep on the ground on makeshift beds of bamboo; and there is a lack of clean drinking water; and diseases such as malaria, jaundice, dysentery, diarrhoea and influenza pose a serious threat. Groups of five to six people are forced to share essentials. To supplement food rations, which are adequate for at most 10 days a month, they are compelled to consume snails, insects and wild plants. Pregnant women, children, and the elderly suffer the highest health risks in the camps. Over the past couple years, camps have been attacked repeatedly, leaving several dead and dozens injured.

Displaced Bengalis in Tripura live in similar conditions." (SAHRDC 2001)

### **Call for relief to internally displaced due to ethnic clashes and security operations in Manipur (January 2006)**

[...] the State Government had assured to provide adequate relief assistance to villagers of Parbung area who had fled their homestead due to clashes between security personnel and underground activists

[...]

Informed source conveyed that State authorities are in constant touch with the Mizoram Government for provision of relief materials to Parbung area villagers most of whom had fled to the neighbouring State due to gun-fights that erupted some days back.. (Sangai Express, 21 January 2006)

The Asian Centre for Human Rights today urged the National Human Rights Commission to provide humanitarian assistance to the internally displaced persons (IDPs) of Hmar and Paite tribal communities from the Tipaimukh sub-division in Churachandpur district of Manipur.

"The condition of the internally displaced persons across the North East is deplorable. The displaced Hmar and Paite are now facing crisis of food, medicines, warm clothes and other essential commodities," ACHR Director Suhas Chakma said.

He urged the NHRC to direct the Union Home Ministry, State governments of Mizoram and Manipur to provide relief including proper shelter, food, medicine, babyfood to the displaced Hmar and Paite IDPs, ensure security of the IDPs and proper rehabilitation of those displaced within Manipur and Mizoram." (Web India 123.com, 23 January 2006)

### **Tripura: conditions in relief camps (2000-2004)**

- Local newspapers say that displaced tribal families are starving in relief camps
- Reangs in relief camps in Tripura say camp conditions are totally inadequate

#### ***January 2004, one newspaper reports of urgent needs for relief among 250 displaced tribal families:***

"Four children died on Sunday after consuming wild berries at a makeshift refugee camp run by the Autonomous District Council (ADC) in Chhawmanu as an acute food crisis and outbreak of enteric diseases gripped the interior areas of Dhalai district over the past couple of days.

Sources said 250 tribal families, who have taken shelter at an ADC-run hostel after fleeing their homes in Natinmanu panchayat under Chhawmanu police station in June last year due to threats from militants, have been forced to eat wild plants and berries to stave off hunger.

The government has so far remained aloof to their plight, they added.

On Sunday, four children — all below six years — died of enteric diseases after consuming wild berries and contaminated water. Confirming the deaths, official sources in Chhawmanu said the sick children were brought to the block hospital in a critical condition.

The government machinery has collapsed in the tribal-dominated interior villages under Chhawmanu block, bordering the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh, because of insurgency. The tribals have been forced to leave their homes or eat wild plants and berries due to the government's failure to implement development projects, including poverty alleviation schemes for the refugees.

The non-implementation of government schemes deprives the tribals of a major source of earning as labourers during the lean season between winter and spring, the sources said. They said the fair-price shops in these areas have closed down because of militancy. Officials here said the government has stopped relief measures for the refugees at the ADC-run hostel due to shortage of funds." (Yahoonews, 17 January 2004)

"The Mizoram Bru Displaced People's Forum (MBDPF) on Saturday made an appeal to the governments in Mizoram and at the Centre to undertake immediate measures for the resolutions of the Bru issue 'before it becomes too complicated'. The MBDPF, in a press release here, has also called for urgent steps to resume negotiations with the Bru National Liberation Front (BNLF) by the governments.

After their displacement from the Mizoram 35,000 Brus (Reangs) have been languishing in the six relief camps at Naisingpara, Asapara, Bhasithalpara, Kaskau, Khakchang and Hamsapara in Tripura, the MBDPF said.

These Brus are now vulnerable to epidemic and they are deprived of even adequate ration of foodstuff and the cash dole. Malnutrition, lack of drinking water facilities, sanitation measures and health-care facilities have made their lives miserable, the MBDPF said.

Even, most of these Brus are deprived of their right to franchise and the apathy of the authorities has made many of them succumb to their ailments. Many cases of miscarriage by the pregnant inmates of the relief camps sheltering these Brus, and infant death have been there, the MBDPF said. It also regretted lack of educational facilities and any employment opportunity to these displaced people." (The Assam Tribune, 6 December 2003)

"[UN Guiding] Principle 18 [on Internal Displacement] talks about making available essential food, potable water, basic shelter, essential medical services, etc. The conditions in the camps are not satisfactory as they lack basic amenities. There is no facility for education. The Central Government is meeting the expenditure in providing assistance in terms of essential food and other amenities but the same is not adequate enough considering their long stay in camps. The State Government of Tripura is also not able to provide adequate assistance as the State is currently afflicted with serious insurgency problems and ethnic conflicts. As the Reangs are not getting adequate assistance, Principle 18 stands violated to some extent." (Saha 2000 p.11)

### **Gujarat: assistance to relief camps was inadequate - closure of relief camps further threatened subsistence needs of the displaced (January 2005)**

- Conditions in relief camps were totally inadequate with reported problems of water, sanitation and shelter which led to outbreaks of diseases
- The government began a drive to close relief camps all over Gujarat by 31 May 2002, threatening the situation of displaced who will face an end to funds that provide for food and medicines

"The lack of appropriate support measures was particularly dire in view of the comprehensive economic losses suffered by the displaced Muslim population, many of whom had lost all their possessions. Sanitation and clean drinking water in the camps remained a problem which the government refused to address, making the displaced prone to disease. The lack of cover was particularly serious during the monsoon as many camps had been set up in low lying areas, exposing them to rain and water-borne diseases.[...]" (Amnesty International, January 2005, 7.6.a)

"The government has begun an all-out drive to close relief camps all over Gujarat by May 31.

[...]

While several camps in Dahod have already been closed and the others have received an ultimatum, the pressure to close down camps in Panchmahals (Godhra) is increasing.

[...]

The closure of camps also means an end to funds that provide for food and medicines. "We do not know what would happen after May 31, when all government grant to run the camps stops," says Mehmood Sheikh, who runs a camp in Halo. " (The Times of India, 2 May 2002)

"To make matters worse, the Gujarat government is threatening closure of many camps, and forcing people back into the very villages and neighborhoods where they were brutalized. If camps organizers refuse to comply, even the minimum government subsidy of Rs. 15 worth of food grains and Rs. 5 for miscellaneous expenses per person is being withdrawn. This has already happened in Dahod District where at least 5 relief camps have been forcibly shut. " (Citizens Initiative/Aman Ekta Manch/Shanti Abhiyan, 1 May 2002)

## **Health**

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### **Kashmiri Pandits face serious health problems after many years of displacement (2001-2003)**

- A health survey of displaced Kashmiri Pandits concludes that the affected population show multiple signs of deteriorating health
- The survey shows premature ageing and death, unnatural death, high incidence of serious and potentially fatal diseases and affliction with multiple disease syndromes
- In addition to stress-related problems, the situation is worsened by acclimatisation to the tropical environment, congestion, insanitary and unhygienic living conditions, inadequate medical facilities and malnutrition

"Premature ageing and premature death, unnatural death, high incidence of serious and potentially fatal diseases, affliction with multiple disease syndromes, poor medical aid, economic bankruptcy and lack of desire to live, are some of the factors that have contributed to an already high death rate among them.

Late marriages and late conception, premature menopause and reduced fertility span, diminished libido and hypo-sexuality of exile, forced celibacy and sexual deprivation, contraception, elective abortion and high divorce rate have spurred low birth rates.

According to a paper presented at a two-day conference here on September one-two, on the problems of Kashmiri Pandits, in 1993 (three years after their migration from the Valley), 108 Kashmiri Pandits died while only 42 were born. In 1995, there were 200 deaths and only five births while in 1997 the figure was 134 deaths and 85 births. The statistics were obtained after surveys conducted at various camps at Jammu where most migrants stayed in pitiable condition after their migration.

The study conducted by Dr K L Choudhary, a noted physician who himself was forced to flee from the Valley and has been living in Jammu, says there is hardly any system in the body (of a migrant) that has gone unrepresented in the wide spectrum of afflictions from which the exiled community is suffering.

"A whole community has aged prematurely. Multiple disease syndromes have overtaken most of them. Many have died prematurely, others are languishing...Common and uncommon diseases, new syndromes and unique and bizarre constellation of signs and symptoms, have all surfaced giving rise to a wide array of psychological syndromes and mental and physical diseases..." says Dr Choudhary.

The study says they (Kashmiri migrants) have been housed in tents or one-room tenements, living an "animal existence" on petty doles, bereft of basic amenities of life. Others are on the move in search of shelter and livelihood and living a nomadic existence. Health, both mental and physical, has been the greatest casualty.

[...]

"Kashmiri Pandits have scattered all over the country for survival, making it almost impossible to get their official count," a senior official of the Census Department told UNI.

A delegation of Kashmiri Pandit leaders met Deputy Prime Minister L K Advani and urged him to order a special census of the Pandits.

[...]

The trauma of forced exodus and the exposure to an alien and hostile environment are further compounded by the problems of acclimatisation, lack of basic amenities like drinking water, drainage and sewerage, absence of proper lavatory facilities, poor housing, over-crowding, extremes of climate, lack of healthcare, joblessness, idleness, depression, disease and death.

According to the survey, the multitude of these problems conspire with the compromised nutritional standards of the displaced population and snap the tenuous reserves of body and mind exploding in myriad manifestations of disease. Medical facilities are almost non-existent and the cost of investigations and treatment prohibitive. The results are devastating in terms of morbidity and mortality.

[...]

More than 40 families (in the camps) have lost one or more members to terrorist violence in the Valley and houses of 36 families and commercial establishments of 10 families have been burnt down by terrorists. There were 61 unemployed youth in the camp and two doctorates, 40 Post Graduates and 53 Graduates. There were two camp inmates of more than 40 years of age and 98 inmates between 30 and 40 years while the rest were either very old or very young.

The inmates suffer from physical and mental stress syndromes, environmental and nutritional syndromes. The stress syndromes include cardio-vascular stress, psycho-trauma, endocrine stress, musculo-skeletal stress, stress-belly (ulcers etc) and cranial stress (tension headaches and migraines).

A comparison between 400 females with menopausal symptoms after migration and an equal number who developed menopause before exile, showed that 25 women in the age group 35-40 years developed menopause after exile compared to nine before migration. In the age group 41 to 45 years, 34 developed menopause after exile as against 26 before exile.

More than 36 per cent women become infertile by the time they reach 40 years of age after migration.

An amazing 79 per cent migrants suffer from depression while 76 per cent suffer from anxiety disorders, phobias and panic attacks, eight per cent from post-trauma disorders, 11 per cent from dissociative disorders and hysterical neurosis, 20 per cent from sleep disorders and eight per cent from delusional disorders and psychosis.

Dr Chaudhary says that between 1991 and 1993, immediately after the migration, out of 11,150 patients, 96 per cent suffered from skin disease, 91 per cent from psychiatric disorders, 61 per cent from nutrition syndromes, 38 per cent from allergic syndromes, 21 per cent from ulcer dyspepsia, 11 per cent from hypertension and 12 per cent from stress diabetes.

Between 2001 and 2003, out of 5004 patients, 18 per cent suffered from skin disorders, 44 per cent from psychiatric disorders, 62 per cent from nutrition syndromes, 15 per cent from allergic syndromes, 31 per cent from ulcer dyspepsia, 18 per cent from hypertension and 15 per cent from stress diabetes. The incidence of tuberculosis, renal stones, renal failure and asthma had also increased markedly.

Nearly 36 per cent women had developed ovarian failure which was a new trend witnessed.

In 1990, 1056 people died because of heat-related diseases while 409 died in 1991, 397 in 1992, 178 in 1993 and 148 between 1997 and 2003.

Dr P K Hak, a Professor at the Srinagar Medical College, says in the study "while the incidence of the ailments the exiled community suffered traditionally has increased, a host of new diseases and syndromes, previously unknown or rare, is also afflicting them."

"Malaria has caused great morbidity among migrants because the community lacked the immunity acquired by people living in endemic areas. Overcrowding has caused a greater number of pneumonia and tuberculosis cases. Skin diseases afflict almost all. Most patients suffer from renal colics, renal stones and renal infections. Angina pectoris has got precipitated. Hypertension is common even among the youth...Stress diabetes is a new syndrome. A large number of displaced Kashmiri diabetics have no other visible factors except stress," says Dr Hak. Noted Neurologist Dr Sushil Razdan says that dozens of patients have died because of heat stroke. The incidence of neuro-cysticercosis has also increased. Older people, very young and women are the worst sufferers. " (Daily Excelsior, 3 September 2003)

"When more than 50,000 families were forced to flee the Kashmir Valley a decade ago by secessionist violence, the only wealth that most were left with was their life. Today, even that life stands threatened, for their health is failing them. The camps housing 4,100 of the 29,000 families who took refuge in Jammu, resemble the waiting rooms of a metropolitan government hospital, housing outstation patients and their several attendants.

Says Dr P K Hak, associate professor, Medical College, Srinagar, and author of a study, Kashmiri Migrants' Health Trauma, which draws upon the collective experience of displaced doctors, "While the incidence of the ailments the exiled community suffered traditionally has increased, a host of new diseases and syndromes previously unknown or rare is also afflicting them."

Blaming the disease upsurge on the migration, he adds that the problems of acclimatisation to the tropical environment, congestion, insanitary and unhygienic living conditions, inadequate medical facilities and malnutrition have exacerbated the migrants' condition.

The diseases that have made a debut among the community read like a who's who of the hitherto missing ailments in the community. Elaborates Hak, "Malaria has caused great morbidity in the community because it lacked the immunity acquired by people living in endemic areas. Overcrowding has caused a greater number of pneumonia and tuberculosis cases in the community. Skin diseases afflict almost all. Most patients flock to clinics with renal colics, renal stones and renal infections. Angina pectoris has got precipitated in a larger number of people because of the hostile conditions. Hypertension is common even in the youth."

Stress diabetes is a new syndrome. [...] A large number of displaced Kashmiri diabetics have no other visible factors except stress."

Psychological and mental disorders are epidemic in proportion. Says Dr J R Thapa, consultant neuropsychiatrist, Psychiatric Diseases Hospital, Jammu: "Reactive depression is very common in the youth. Males have overt depression. Female complaints are more somatic in nature. Older people have retarded depression. Also, borderline cases have got precipitated. It's mostly paranoid psychosis. Sensitive people have had nervous breakdowns. Even schizophrenia has got precipitated in vulnerable cases."

Adds Dr Chandramohan, head of the Psychiatric Diseases Hospital, Jammu, "People are living under constant uncertainty, which has created chronic, impending and ongoing phobias."

Neurological disorders have also increased. Says consultant neurologist Dr Sushil Razdan, "Dozens of patients have died due to heat stroke. The incidence of neurocysticercosis has also increased." Adds he, "Overall, the old, the very young and women are the worst sufferers." The repercussions have been alarming. Analyses Dr K L Chowdhury, an eminent physician, "The whole population has aged prematurely by 10-15 years--not just in physical appearance, but in the functional deficit of various organ systems." (The Indian Express, 19 June 2001)

### **Reang internally displaced in relief camps face serious health risks (May 2003)**

" [...] Reangs in the camps are passing their days in total uncertainty. While their children are growing up bereft of any education, poverty stalks every family in the camps. Worst is when dry spell sets in and malaria, gastro entities, diarrhoea, hepatitis, measles take epidemic turn claiming several lives in the camps." (The Assam Tribune, 27 May 2003)

### **Gujarat: displaced women and children suffer from serious health problems (July, December 2003):**

- Following the violence in Gujarat in February and March 2002, there were no services that acknowledged women's specific health needs
- In the relief camps, the lack of privacy prevented women from seeking treatment for many of the gynaecological problems that they were suffering from
- Displaced women suffer from a lot of problems that seem to be related to the violence women experienced and the attendant psychological and physical stress
- More than 33,000 children were forced into relief camps throughout Gujarat
- Many witnessed the atrocities committed during the riots
- The experience have had a serious impact on their health, education, and psychological well-being

"Silence has meant that women across the board have repressed their pain with immense consequences for their mental health. There has been no acknowledgement of the need to

provide treatment for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), a known consequence of such situations, and a serious public health concern. Camp volunteers, untrained in providing specialised psychiatric care, could only provide basic human emotional support. A social worker remarks that, overall, "Suicidal feelings are on the rise among the displaced," (Devan, PO12, Panchmahals). A psychiatrist also reports having come across "many women who are mentally disturbed" while an activist says she "personally witnessed the case of a woman who could not sleep for months." (Taslima, AO3 organization, Delhi, presently working in Gujarat) Many women and young girls exhibit signs of severe mental stress disorders, veering between depression and anger, and are often unable to do even basic household tasks.

[...]

In the days following the carnage there were no services that acknowledged women's specific health needs. In the relief camps, the lack of privacy prevented women from seeking treatment for many of the gynaecological problems that they were suffering from. Many women had to give birth in the camps, assisted largely by local volunteers, without the requisite facilities, expertise or environment. Women at the camps, as well as those in curfew-bound areas, were not in a position to seek specialised health services at all. According to a fact-finding report by the Medico Friends Circle, [...] made available to the IIJ team, several cases of polymenorrhea (shortened menstrual cycles), dysmenorrhoea (painful menses) and menstrual irregularity were encountered among women in the camps. The onset of these problems seemed to be related to the violence women had experienced and the attendant psychological and physical stress. Several women also reported chronic vaginal discharge (vaginal infections). Yet so long after the worst violence, the IIJ team found no evidence of medical help being made available to women to help them deal with the long-term effects of their problems." (International Initiative of Justice, December 2003, pp.64, 67)

"Following the violence in Gujarat in February and March 2002, more than 33,000 children were forced into relief camps throughout Gujarat, representing one-third of the total displaced population. [...] In addition to being raped and burned, children also bore witness to the brutal crimes against their loved ones. Human Rights Watch spoke to several children who have yet to fully resume their education and have received no psychological counseling.[...] Many suffered severe burn injuries that still cover their arms, legs, and in some cases, their entire bodies.

[...]

Soon after the violence, principals of English-medium schools in Gujarat were threatened with violence by VHP members if they did not expel Muslim students from their institutions. According to one report, parents were told by school officials to remove their children from these schools on the grounds that their safety could not be guaranteed.[...] These tactics are helping to ensure that Muslim children are increasingly confined to *madrassas*, or Muslim-run religious schools, where education is imparted in Hindi or Urdu-limiting severely the students' career prospects[...] and effectively requiring them to have a religious rather than secular education. Simultaneously, *sangh parivar*-run schools throughout Gujarat and other parts of India continue to impress upon Hindu children a message of religious intolerance.[...]The end result could be toxic to relations between communities for generations to come.

In addition to the enormous impact on their health, education, and psychological well-being, children in relief camps also struggled with issues of identity. According to one study:

The impact of living like refugees in camps in subhuman conditions for months together increased the feeling of discrimination experienced by children at a time when most Hindu families they knew were safe in their homes. "We feel like outsiders, people who are not wanted," one child said. The carnage impacted the children's sense of self-worth and created immense confusion in their minds about their identity: Are we insiders or outsiders, Indians or Pakistanis, citizens or criminals? Commonly used terms such as "We" and "They," "Us" and "Them" indicated the sharp divide between communities.[...]

Dr. Satchit Balsari, a research associate at the Program on Humanitarian Crises at the Francois-Xavier Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights, Harvard University, made repeated visits

to Gujarat between August and October 2002 to assess the mental health and education status of children affected by the violence. Balsari met with over one hundred children in relief camps in Ahmedabad and Panchmahals district. A child psychologist from Delhi accompanied Balsari during his visits to Gujarat. Together they worked with children and facilitated the expression of their emotions through art. Invariably the children's drawings were replete with images of bombs, guns, swords, burning homes and mosques, and mutilated bodies.[...] " (HRW July 2003, p. 50)

## **Food and nutrition**

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### **Assam: food shortages reported from conflict area (October 2005)**

"Survivors who have fled the fighting desperately need "food, medicine, drinking water and physical security," Suhas Chakma, director of the Asian Centre of Human Rights, said. Their situation has been made worse by rains and the constant threat of further attacks. Insecurity and indefinite curfews have forced village markets to close down, leading to food shortages in the area." (BBC, 22 October 2005)

### **Gujarat: many displaced face a food crisis (December 2003)**

- The premature closure of relief camps and the lack of employment have forced many violence-affected families into a food crisis
- The Gujarat government issued relief ration cards to the riot affected, but the allocated amounts were grossly inadequate
- Reports by women activists mention that women have cut back on their daily diets, sometimes eating only one meal a day

"In a situation where livelihood options for the entire community have been almost entirely destroyed, providing adequate nutrition for the family has been an issue of serious concern for the women survivors. The premature closure of relief camps and the lack of employment have forced many violence-affected families into a food crisis. Though the Gujarat government issued relief ration cards to the riot affected several women survivors reported that the allocated amounts were grossly inadequate. For those displaced, these cards were of little value help as the rations had to be collected from the original ration shop in the neighbourhoods to which they were unable to return. Reports by women activists mention that women have cut back on their daily diets, sometimes eating only one meal a day. This is hardly surprising as it is well established that even under "normal" circumstances in India, women in the family eat the least in terms of quantity and nutritious value. In a crisis situation they are bound to be the worst affected with serious long-term health consequences." (International Initiative of Justice, December 2003, p. 67)

## Shelter

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### **Hindu Pandits in Jammu and Delhi are sheltered in camps where they live in one-room tenements or community halls (September 2003)**

- In New Delhi entire families live in separate enclosures created by cloth and cardboard
- Other accommodation whether in tents, tenements or government buildings is insufficient and use of sub-standards material in construction has made these accommodations unsafe
- A large number of families live in Government quarters in Jammu but are not given other assistance or subsidies

"A study conducted among 2345 inmates of a camp at 'Muthi' on the outskirts of Jammu revealed that they live in 498 one-room tenements of 10 Ft by 10 Ft in size. As many as 41 families having more than seven members each, stayed in one room tenement each.

[...]

A survey conducted at migrant camps in Delhi revealed that families lived in separate enclosures in a single hall partitioned by cloth and cardboard. At the community centers at Hauz Rani and Bapu Dham, two of the camps where the migrants stayed, enclosures were made with the help of cloth and cardboard for each family. In Delhi, fifteen camps were sponsored by Delhi Administration in community halls.

In Jammu where most of the Pandits stayed after migration, eighteen camps were set up at Muthi, Purkhoo, Mishriwala and Nagrota on the outskirts of Jammu. A large number of migrant families were housed in Government quarters at various places in the city these people were not given camp facilities which includes Government assistance and subsidies." (Daily Excelsior, 8 September 2003)

"Eighteen camps have been set by the administration for the displaced people in the Jammu region. Such camps are located in Jammu. Largest camps of the uprooted people are at Purkhoo, Mishriwala and Nagrota. A large number of displaced families have been accommodated in government quarters at Top Sherkhania, Janipura, Sarwal and Reasi. These people have not been given camp – status which involves government assistance and subsidies. In Delhi, there are fifteen camps sponsored by Delhi administration in community halls spread across the city. The transit camps are located in Mar colony and Lajpat Nagar. Condition inside the camps is far from satisfactory. In quite a few camps in Jammu, the tents are generally in torn condition. The accommodation whether in tents, tenements or government buildings is very insufficient causing great inconvenience. Use of sub-standards material in construction has made these accommodations quite unsafe." (Mishra 2000 Sect.III)

### **Housing situation to be improved in camp for Kashmiri Pandits in Jammu (March 2005)**

"Jammu: Over 504 families of displaced Kashmiri Pandits received a Shivratri gift when the Revenue and Rehabilitation Minister, Mr Hakim Mohd. Yasin, laid the foundation stone of Rs

seven crore project for the construction of two-room tenements at Muthi camp, Phase-two, today. Though the project was pending for the last several years forcing the displaced families to live in subhuman conditions in makeshift small and shanty rooms, the foundation stone for the project was welcomed by the Kashmiri migrants. Mr Yasin said the entire project of the construction of two-room tenements would be completed in several phases. However, president, All State Kashmiri Pandit Conference, A.N. Vaishnavi, said both the state and the Central Governments had maintained an 'intriguing silence' over the fate of the announcement made by the Prime Minister, Mr Manmohan Singh, that two-room flats would be constructed for the displaced families in Jammu, Udhampur, Kathua, Delhi and other places. He said the announcement was made in November last and so far no follow-up action on the project was visible. Meanwhile, the state government hoped to see the cluster of flats at Sheikhpora in Budgam district of Kashmir completed by the end of next month so that those families of displaced people who were willing to return to the valley were rehabilitated as early as possible. Mr Yasin said about 1300 families had given in writing that they were willing to return to Kashmir."

# ACCESS TO EDUCATION

## General

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### **Assam: more than 10,000 children without schools after fighting between Karbis and Dimasas (December 2005)**

- The fighting between Karbis and Dimasas during fall 2005 placed an estimated 10,000 children in relief camps while schools were used as emergency shelter
- Resources to start schools in the relief camps were inadequate

"Thousands of tribal children displaced by running ethnic clashes in India's northeastern state of Assam have been forced to abandon schools and stay in makeshift shelters to face a future cloaked in uncertainty.

A turf war between the majority Karbi and the Dimasa tribes since October has racked the Karbi Anglong district of Assam, 320 km east of the state's main city of Guwahati, leaving at least 100 [people](#) dead and displacing more than 50,000.

[...]

According to official estimates, there could be some 10,000 children in about 38 relief camps set up by the government with schools and hospital premises acting as makeshift shelters.

A majority of the children in the makeshift shelters are suffering from trauma with symptoms like grim flashbacks, wild mood swings, bouts of depression, insomnia and anxiety.

"Some of them are so scared they do not even dare to go alone to answer nature's call," said Moromi Rongphar, mother of two. "At night, many children were heard talking in their sleep about the attacks."

"Children are the worst sufferers with their education badly affected by the recent clashes. Most schools are still closed," Karbi Anglong district magistrate G.D. Tripathi told IANS.

"The situation is still fluid and people are reluctant to go back to their villages, fearing fresh attacks."

Like Rongpi, thousands of other children's education has been cut short by the ongoing clashes. "I was due to sit for my board examinations (Class 10) scheduled in February. But I don't have a [single](#) book as militants burnt down our house," said Romi Ingty.

The authorities have introduced 'teaching-learning' exercises in the relief camps by mobilising teachers and community leaders.

"Some teachers from among those displaced were being motivated to impart education to the children in the relief camps. We are providing some books although we know such efforts cannot be like classroom teaching," Tripathi said." (Indo-Asian News Service, 9 December 2005)

## **An overview of education available for internally displaced from Jammu and Kashmir (September 2003)**

- Children's and youth's education have been severely affected by the displacement
- The State Government has opened twelve camp schools and three colleges for internally displaced in Jammu
- Several other arrangements also exist in order to provide education for internally displaced Kashmiri Pandits

" [...] there has been profound affect on their studies due to frequent closure of the schools and shifting of schools from village to migrants camp and back. Their studies are badly affected by lack of facilities and uncongenial environment in the camps." (Bhair, Dayal, May 2003 p. 16)

"While some Kashmiri Pandit students have received preferential admission to educational institutions, in general their educational needs have not been fully met. There is need for specific commitment and government action to meet the needs of IDP students." (Saha 2000 p.28)

"To Provide educational facilities to the migrants in Jammu, the State Government has opened twelve camp schools and three colleges.

### **Delhi**

In Delhi, facilities have been provided or admission of migrant studentds in various schools and colleges being run by the Delhi administration., MCD, NDMC, Central Schools, etc. However, no reservation has been made for admission to various schools and colleges. Besides this, migrant students are also being admitted to Polytechnics and Engineering Colleges affiliated to Delhi University subject to eligibility. In case of Polytechnics, seat in each discipline on co-educational Polytechnic where intake capacity is more than fifty and in the case of women Polytechnics, the requirement of the intake capacity of 50 has also been waived. In the case of Government Industrial Training Institutes [...], one per cent of the seats are allocated to wards of Kashmiri migrants.

In addition, book bank facility and tuition fee reimbursement is also given.

### **Maharashtra**

Maharashtra Government has made reservation of seats for children of citizens displaced from J&K due to terrorist violence and children of officers belonging to I.A.S., I.P.S. and other officers and staff belonging to military and paramilitary forces transferred to J&K to deal with terrorist activities in the State, in technical institutions in the filed [sic] of Engineering, Pharmacy, Architecture, etc., both at the degree and diploma levels. For this purpose, every diploma/degree level institution (whether Government aided or not) is permitted to create one extra seat for each course over and above the normal capacity of the institution and these seats cannot be allotted to students of any other category. However, no relaxation in eligibility conditions as prescribed by the concerned authority has been made. The domicile restriction has been removed for Kashmiri migrant students. Admission in general educational courses is also being provided subject to normal eligibility conditions being fulfilled.

### **Madhya Pradesh**

One seat has been reserved for Kashmiri migrants in each technical institution viz. Engineering, Polytechnics and [Industrial Training Institutes]. For general education there is no restriction in the State.

## **Punjab**

School education is free in the State.

## **Uttar Pradesh**

Admissions to engineering and other technological courses in the State institutions are made through Combined Entrance Test in which the Kashmiri migrant students can appear.

## **Gujarat**

In Gujarat, there is no domicile restriction for Kashmiri migrant students and admissions to general educational courses and other courses are available as per general eligibility conditions. Migration of medical students is also being accepted subject to approval of Medical Council of India.

## **Rajasthan**

Kashmiri migrant students have been made eligible for admission to Engineering Colleges. Domicile restriction has been removed. Admission to general educational courses is also available subject to general eligibility conditions. Migration of medical students is also being accepted subject to approval of Medical [sic] Council of India." (ORF, Sep 2003, Statement on Education)

### **Displaced children from the Line of Control have to travel more than 30 kilometres after authorities moved schools back to their villages of origin (August 2004)**

"To add to their woes, the authorities have moved the make shift schools near the camps to the native villages near the Line of Control and now the school children have to travel more than 30 km to reach it.

This has resulted in parents withdrawing their kids from the schools. Savitri has withdrawn her girl studying in Class IX as she says, "I cannot afford to pay Rs.16 every day for her bus expenses." A number of non-governmental organisations active in the area have registered their protest over the decision of the government. Aditi Kapoor of OXFAM a relief agency active in the belt said, "It is simply inhuman to shift the schools to the border areas as people just cannot go there. The priority should have been to first rehabilitate the families and take the schools along."" (The Hindu, 28 August 2004)

### **Displaced Nagas in Manipur see their education opportunities threatened (January 2002)**

- Displaced Naga students have been demanding the transfer of examination centres out of security fears
- The entering of displaced students in other schools has been limited due to problems such as odd timing for admission, difference in syllabus, difference in examination patterns, juridical limitations, etc

"The student community forms one of the most affected amongst the displaced persons in the backdrop of the recent events. Writing to the Chief Minister of Nagaland state, the All Naga Students Association, Manipur Dated 11th September 2001, cites "Life has been made very

insecure and uncertain for the minority Nagas at Imphal due to numerous threats and coercion... In this hostile environment of psychological trauma, the mental health of the students are put into extreme risk to continue with their studies." The affected students community have been demanding the transfer of examination centers to the more secure hill districts, which have been met with extreme uncooperative attitude of the officials in the department of Education. Many of the students are harassed and traumatized over the various complication faced by them, such as seeking readmission to different institutions, inaccessibility to get their enrolment or transfer documents for making alternative choices for place of studies, lack of adequate courses in the hill area institutions, etc. The parents of these victimized students along with students organization such as All Naga students Manipur (ANSAM) have taken steps to look for alternatives such as seeking admissions for schools and university in neighbouring Nagaland state. ANSAM has also approach Nagaland state Government, Nagaland Board of school Education, Nagaland University, etc, to provide affiliation to the schools and colleges for the contiguous Naga dominated areas under the administration of Manipur. However, due to various formalities involved and problems such as odd timing for admission, difference in syllabus, difference in examination patterns, juridical limitations, etc, have continued to limit the free access to learning and threatened the future of many thousand students. The dangerous potent of untimely attendance to the fears of the students and youth can cause further repercussions." (NPMHR, 5 January 2002)

### **The effect on children's education in Gujarat (January 2005)**

- In the aftermath of the violence, school attendance fell due to destitution, discrimination, security concerns and trauma
- Muslim parents remain afraid to send their children back to their old schools
- Children's education certificates were destroyed together with other personal belongings when their homes were looted or set on fire
- Under financial constraint, many children have dropped out all together to become child laborers

"School attendance fell because of its cost, the bias of school staff and students and fear of parents for children's safety and the need for many children to take up work to support families and children's traumas. Muslim students were attacked both at school and in Hindu neighbourhoods they have to pass through. Girls who were subjected to sexual assault feared to go out or if they did attend school has to face contempt or ridicule for having been ""shamed""." (Amnesty International, January 2005, 7.6.c)

"Muslim parents are afraid to send their children back to their old schools. According to Martin Macwan, head of the NGO Navsarjan, "Muslim children are not going back to their old schools largely because of insecurity. Children don't feel safe in schools with no Muslim population. The opposite is also true. In Juhapura, Ahmedabad, a majority Muslim area, there are no Hindu students."

[...]

children's education certificates were destroyed together with other personal belongings when their homes were looted or set on fire. The government did little to replace these certificates or facilitate the resumption of Muslim children's education following the violence. Under financial constraint, many children have dropped out all together to become child laborers. [...] The education of girls, already of low priority, is being given even less importance in dire financial times.

[...]

Soon after the violence, principals of English-medium schools in Gujarat were threatened with violence by VHP members if they did not expel Muslim students from their institutions. According to one report, parents were told by school officials to remove their children from these schools on the grounds that their safety could not be guaranteed.[...] These tactics are helping to ensure that Muslim children are increasingly confined to *madrasas*, or Muslim-run religious schools, where education is imparted in Hindi or Urdu-limiting severely the students' career prospects[...] and effectively requiring them to have a religious rather than secular education. Simultaneously, *sangh parivar*-run schools throughout Gujarat and other parts of India continue to impress upon Hindu children a message of religious intolerance.[...]The end result could be toxic to relations between communities for generations to come" (HRW July 2003, p. 50)

# ISSUES OF SELF-RELIANCE AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

## Employment

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### **Displaced Kashmiri youths face exclusion from local employment opportunities (January 2005)**

- Despite higher grades, the Kashmiri State government allegedly excluded displaced students from employment
- The state government is saying that it has launched an employment package to promote work possibilities for Kashmiri Pandits

"At Purkhoo and Muthi besides the camp inmates the Principles of the two institutes also putforth the problems being faced by the displaced students in camp schools.

An unemployed youth at Mishriwala while narrating the woes of the community alleged that State Government has closed the doors of employment for the community youth despite having the better percentage of marks than the students of Valley who qualified their examinations after mass copying during the turmoil period.

Expressing concern over the plight of displaced students an activist of PK at Purkhoo said that the students of majority community are being taken on national tours while no such provision has been kept for the displaced students." (The Daily Excelsior, 21 January 2002)

### ***The unemployment rate among Kashmiri Pandits has remained high and an employment package has been launched by the state government:***

"Many are surprised as to why the action plan [for return and rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits] has not made any headway. There are reports that while the migrants are concerned about their security on return to the troubled Valley of Kashmir, there is also a feeling that many of the ruling leaders are having reservations on the return of these migrants [...]. They point out that it was about four years ago that the government of the state had secured applications from the unemployed Kashmiri migrant youth. About 15,000 unemployed educated youth had submitted their applications for government jobs, but so far not a single migrant has got any job in the Valley, although over the past five years about a lakh of new recruitments have been made." (Organiser, 23 January 2005)

"Asserting that problems being faced by displaced Kashmiri Pandits would be solved on war footing, the state government said a special employment package was on the cards for their youths.

[...]

[Jammu & Kashmir Revenue Minister ] Yasin said a survey would be conducted to identify poor migrant families whose dependent members are both married and unemployed.

The state government also sought some relaxation in rules in Centrally-sponsored schemes for extending benefits of education scholarships and other social welfare schemes to the children of camp-dwellers.

"First priority in the package will be given to those who are still putting up in the Valley, followed by those migrants who are voluntarily willing to return to the Valley," Yasin said and added those

who are willing to return would be provided adequate accommodation in secure clusters. He said the package will form part of the overall Prime Minister's rehabilitation plan for Kashmiri migrants." (Express India, 22 December 2004)

**Jammu: during displacement, government relief was insufficient to meet the basic needs and employment possibilities were scarce (May 2003)**

- Cash relief was reportedly insufficient to meet the basic day to day needs of an average family
- The Jammu district has limited employment generating resources
- Large parts of the agricultural land was either mined or occupied by the army

"The ration and meager cash relief was insufficient to meet the basic day to day needs of an average family. The emigrants were living on Government's assistance as they were left with no other option. The Jammu district has limited employment generating resources.

[...]

The sudden influx of border people to Jammu town further disturbed the fragile economic matrix of the city. The people were compelled to work on minimum wages to sustain themselves. This economic exploitation resulted into resentment among internally displaced people.

[...]

In Samba block the spectrum of displacement is different. Here certain villages on the LoC are inhabited by people who migrated from Pakistan after 1971 Indo-Pak war. These landless people were devoid of any permanent source of income. Later, they were permitted to cultivate the land evacuated by the Muslim community during 1947, without the right of "Hakook" (ownership). However, the right of ownership was granted only in the year 2000 [...]. Lately, the Supreme Court's verdict on "Resettlement Act: Jammu and Kashmir" created panic among them [...]. This intermittent displacement since independence and uncertainty over the permanent source of income has added to their miseries [...].

Beside this the standing crop could not be harvested as a large chunk of land of these people have [been] either mined or occupied by the Army for operational purpose [...]. This had adversely impacted on their income and on national economy as well." (Bhair, Dayal, May 2003 pp. 12-13)

**Internally displaced in Assam are unable to find work (December 2004)**

"The majority [of internally displaced in relief camps in Assam] cannot return home because they used to live in the so-called forest areas. There is no sufficient vacant land which could be used to settle these IDPs. The authorities are simply unable to help the displaced, virtually mostly farmers, to find any alternative land. Most of the camps are situated in remote and abandoned areas with no scope for self-employment. The lack of livelihood has forced many inmates to migrate to other cities and even to neighbouring country like Bhutan." (Sumona Das, Refugee Watch, December 2004)

**Displaced Nagas employed with Manipur's government organized to address job insecurity (January 2002)**

"The displaced Nagas who are employed with the state government of Manipur have organized themselves into Naga Employees Federation to pressure the Government administration to look into their problems. The state government employees and their families who are stationed at

Imphal due to the communication, economic and professional needs constitute a large section of the displaced persons. The General Body Meeting of the Naga Employees Federations held on 13th August 2001 at Senapati has endorsed the resolution of the previous meeting (4&5th August 2001) which reads- "The Federation shall submit a representation to the Chief secretary and other concern authority incorporating the following points; a) Protection of service of the employee who are displaced b) to make payment of salaries of Naga employees through the districts, irrespective of their present place of postings c) to make alternative administrative posting arrangement for all Naga Employees in the four hill districts of Chandel, Tamenglong, Ukhrul and Senapati". (NPMHR, 5 January 2002)

### **Gujarat: displaced Muslim women face economic destitution (January 2005)**

- Many women lost the only family breadwinner, and are today destitute
- In most cases economic destitution is coupled with experiences with violence as well as the trauma of displacement and re-location

"Women's sense of vulnerability has been enhanced by their loss of livelihood which was exacerbated by the economic boycott. Widows were often not trained or accustomed to work outside their homes and earn a living. Most women who had worked before the violence found it impossible to continue or resume work. Many women had to give up home industries because they were injured or had to leave the locations in which their wares had earlier been sold or were afraid to leave the camps. Women daily wage earners were dismissed either because their employers supported the economic boycott of Muslims or because they feared repercussions if they ignored it. No retraining facilities or financial support were provided for women who had lost their work in the caring professions such as nurses, teachers and domestic workers. Most could not leave the camps or homes on account of safety concerns or lost their work due to the economic boycott.

[...]

Lack of earnings has meant inability to buy basic necessities leading to hunger and malnourishment. But even those who had the means to go out and buy daily necessities often risked their life in doing so in a hostile environment. Curfew was sometimes lifted for women but no security was provided to make it safe for them to leave camps or homes. Though relief rations cards were issued by the state government to victims, rations were grossly inadequate and moreover rations had to be collected from the original rations shops in the very areas which they had fled and dared not return to. Economic hardships for many families have meant that women victims would cut back on their own food intake to assure their children's nutrition, with serious implications for their own health." (Amnesty International, January 2005, 7.6.c)

"Many women lost the only family breadwinner, and are today destitute. Many have never worked outside the home before, have no marketable skills, no job experience, and fear the outside world. Economic destitution has made them entirely dependent either on charity from community patriarchs or on the goodwill of NGOs. On several occasions, women burst into tears in front of their children while explaining to the IIJ team that they had no way to feed them the next day (women from PV10). In most cases economic destitution is coupled with the scars of violence, trauma of displacement and re-location, and the sole burden of managing children and a household. This is compounded by the fact that they face an uncertain future.

[...]

Many women have been forced to flee their homes and live in new alien situations where their traditional support systems – family, neighbourhood, extended kin networks – do not exist. Here they find themselves coping not only with trauma and loneliness, but also struggling with unfamiliar surroundings and the new demands of daily living. Even where they have returned to their original homes their neighbours have changed beyond recognition. Hostility is a daily visitor.

The combination of threats, actual incidents of violence and internalised fear pressure daily lives tremendously. Women described to the IJ team how these factors add a burden to already difficult material and psychological conditions.

[...]

The economic boycott has also affected Muslim women as consumers. Many women told the IJ team that they are forced to travel long distances to get basic supplies as Hindu shopkeepers in their area would not sell anything to them. The IJ team in Ahmedabad met some women in the AA2 area visit. These women were from a group of 45 widows from AA1 and AA7 area who were settled in AA2. The women said that it took them the whole day, every day, to collect food against their ration cards. The cards can only be used in designated ration shops in the original residential areas from where the women have now been displaced, and they are is a long distance away from the current houses assigned to them by the PO1.

These women are also entirely dependent on others in the community to help them with the daunting procedural requirements for getting relief and compensation and for managing bank accounts – tasks that many have never had to handle." (International Initiative of Justice, December 2003, p. 65-66)

## **Participation in Elections**

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### **Special polling booths were set up in relief camps for internally displaced (March-May 2004)**

- Polling boots were set up in relief camps both in Jammu & Kashmir and in Assam

"About 40 per cent Kashmiri migrant voters cast their ballot at special polling stations for Srinagar, Badgam Constituency here today. The Election Commission has set up four special polling stations for the migrants from the Srinagar Constituency to enable them to take part in the democratic process.

[...]

However, some migrants alleged that despite filling up the M Forms in time their names did not figure in voters lists." (The Daily Excelsior, 26 April 2004)

#### ***In Assam:***

"As in the two previous Lok Sabha elections and the Assembly elections of 2001, the authorities have decided to hold polling in temporary polling stations in the relief camps. Nagen Ram Kahar, who heads the refugees' committee of the Jaypur relief camp, told The Hindu that an election officer had visited the camp last week to demonstrate the use of electronic voting machines." (The Hindu 16 March 2004)

### **Tripura: For the first time, the Election Commission decided that internally displaced could vote by postal ballots for local elections (April 2004)**

- Only 4,200 displaced voted during the last election to Mizoram Assembly as it was impossible to travel to the polling booths

- For the first time in the North-East region, the Election Commission allowed displaced persons to cast their votes through postal ballots

"The Election Commission has granted postal ballot facility for Reang migrants who after being evacuated from southern Mizoram are staying as refugees in North Tripura.

The commission declared them "notified class of voters" of Mizoram on Sunday and asked the Mizoram Government to issue postal ballot papers to them. About 31,000 Bru voters left Mizoram and took shelter in Tripura following ethnic clashes in October 1997.

Many could not cast their votes in the last election to Mizoram Assembly. Only 4,266 people cast their votes in the election as most of them could not be present at polling booths on time as they were staying in far-off places." (Deccan Herald, 24 March 2004)

"[...] the Election Commission's (EC) decision allowing the Reang or BRU refugees sheltered in six North Tripura camps since 1997, to cast their votes through postal ballots for the April 20 Lok Sabha polls in Mizoram

[...]

For the first time in the NE region, the EC took such a decision allowing the displaced persons to cast their votes through postal ballots. The EC had recently included the names of Chakma and Hajong refugees in the electoral list of Arunachal Pradesh, which is being vehemently protested by the All Arunachal Pradesh Students' Union (AAPSU)."(NENA, 7 April 2004)

***Election Commission decision on voting procedures during national elections 2004 for Kashmiri and Bru internally displaced: [\[internet\]](#)***

**Tripura: Reang displaced boycotted the elections – said the Mizoram Government must include 16,000 voters in their lists (April 2004)**

"Despite the Election Commission's (EC) decision allowing the Reang or BRU refugees sheltered in six North Tripura camps since 1997, to cast their votes through postal ballots for the April 20 Lok Sabha polls in Mizoram, the refugees will boycott the polls if the names of over 16,000 eligible voters were not included in the electoral rolls of Mizoram.

[...]

Nearly all the 35,000 displaced BRUs, have decided not to participate in the April 20 Lok Sabha polls unless the names of the eligible voters were not included in the rolls of Mizoram, Mizoram Bru Displaced People's Forum (MBDPF) leaders have said. Mizoram has only one Lok Sabha seat.

The MBDPF leaders said during the enumeration of voters in July 1993 at the six north Tripura relief camps by the Mizoram Government, names of 15,884 Reangs were enlisted, but after the so-called 'scrutiny' in Aizawl only 4,266 names were enlisted in the final electoral rolls. They urged the Election Commission of India to defer the Mizoram LS polls and conduct a summary revision of electoral rolls to include the names of eligible voters from among the refugees. The EC in a recent notification has asked the Reangs to apply for the postal ballot paper in the prescribed form by April 10. All migrant electors can post their application forms and drop their postal ballot papers in the 'special letter boxes' which would be available at the offices of the six assistant returning officers in North Tripura, the EC said.

A Tripura Election Department official said the EC, following the demands of the Reang tribal refugees, has asked the Mizoram Government to take appropriate steps so that the tribal refugees could exercise their electoral franchise through postal ballots.

Some of the tribal refugees also exercised their franchise for the 40-seat Mizoram assembly election on November 20 last year after the EC had set up some polling stations along the Tripura-Mizoram border. The Tripura Government at that time arranged transportation for the refugee voters." (NENA, 7 April 2004)

***In January 2005 the Supreme Court issued notice to the Election Commission regarding the restoration of the voting rights of the Reangs:***

"The Supreme Court has issued show-cause notices the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Mizoram and Tripura governments asking them why they have not taken steps to rehabilitate the Reang community in Mizoram.

A Division Bench, headed by Chief Justice of India Justice R C Lahoti, while hearing a petition filed by Akhil Bharatiya Kalyan Ashram, a wing of the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh fighting for the cause of the tribals in India, also issued notice to the Election Commission regarding the restoration of the community's voting rights." (Rediff.com, 13 January 2005)

# DOCUMENTATION NEEDS AND CITIZENSHIP

## General

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### Special ID cards for Pandits (2003)

- The Ministry of Home Affairs has requested states to provide identity cards to displaced Kashmiri Pandits
- This will benefit at least 50,000 displaced persons, who were not registered as "migrants" when they left the Kashmir Valley after 1990

"Ministry of Home Affairs has requested the various States/UTs to provide identity cards to Kashmiri migrants staying in their respective States [...]" (ORF Sep. 2003, Statement Indicating Kashmiri Migrant Families Living Within and Outside J&K)"

"Faced with persistent demands from the Kashmiri Pandits, the Central government has agreed to consider issuing special identity cards to the displaced members of the community who left the Valley after 1990 and were not registered as migrants.

The move is expected to benefit at least 50,000 displaced persons, who moved out of the Valley after 1990 when the registration of migrants was stopped.

"If the bonafides of the Kashmiri migrants are proved, they could be considered for registration in Jammu and the Government of the National Capital Territory of Delhi could accordingly be intimated for issue of identity cards," the Ministry said in a communique to the Kashmiri Samiti, a frontline organisation of the community." (May 26 2003, The Hindu)

### Rehabilitation of displaced in Gujarat complicated by the destruction of personal documents (April 2002)

"The process of rehabilitation has been further complicated by the destruction or loss of personal documents during the violence. Many relief camp residents told Human Rights Watch that their identification, education, and even medical certificates had been destroyed during the burning and looting of their homes. At the time of Human Rights Watch's visit, no system was in place to systematically document the numbers and identities of those residing in relief camps." (HRW, April 2002, p.59)

# ISSUES OF FAMILY UNITY, IDENTITY AND CULTURE

## General

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### **Gujarat: children in relief camps felt discriminated against and struggled with issues of identity (2003)**

"Soon after the violence, principals of English-medium schools in Gujarat were threatened with violence by VHP members if they did not expel Muslim students from their institutions. According to one report, parents were told by school officials to remove their children from these schools on the grounds that their safety could not be guaranteed.[...] These tactics are helping to ensure that Muslim children are increasingly confined to *madrasas*, or Muslim-run religious schools, where education is imparted in Hindi or Urdu-limiting severely the students' career prospects[...] and effectively requiring them to have a religious rather than secular education. Simultaneously, *sangh parivar*-run schools throughout Gujarat and other parts of India continue to impress upon Hindu children a message of religious intolerance.[...]The end result could be toxic to relations between communities for generations to come.

In addition to the enormous impact on their health, education, and psychological well-being, children in relief camps also struggled with issues of identity. According to one study:

The impact of living like refugees in camps in subhuman conditions for months together increased the feeling of discrimination experienced by children at a time when most Hindu families they knew were safe in their homes. "We feel like outsiders, people who are not wanted," one child said. The carnage impacted the children's sense of self-worth and created immense confusion in their minds about their identity: Are we insiders or outsiders, Indians or Pakistanis, citizens or criminals? Commonly used terms such as "We" and "They," "Us" and "Them" indicated the sharp divide between communities.[...] " (HRW July 2003, p. 50)

# PROPERTY ISSUES

## General

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### **Legal measures have been taken to protect property of Kashmiri Pandits in exile (2005)**

"3.53 In order to provide further relief to the migrants, the State Government has enacted the J&K Migrants Immovable Property (Preservation, Protection and Restraint of Distress Sales) Act, 1997 aimed at preventing distress sale of immovable property by the migrants. The State Government has also enacted the J&K Migrants (Stay of Proceedings) Act, 1997 to stop undue harassment of migrants due to litigation in absentia.

3.54 Under the Jammu & Kashmir Migrants' Immovable Property (Preservation, Protection and Restraint on Distress Sales) Act, 1997, the migrants' houses, which have been unauthorisedly occupied by the civilians, necessary notices have been issued to them by the Deputy Commissioners concerned in the capacity of Custodian of migrant property. As far as the houses occupied by the security forces are concerned, rent is reimbursed under SRE." (MHA-GOI, 2004-2005, p.27)

### **Jammu: internally displaced demand land at safer places (May 2003)**

"The most common and basic demands of the people residing in the camps is residential plots at safer place near established towns. The government has not acceded the demands on following grounds:

- that it is a temporary displacement;
- that they already have permanent houses and sufficient land too;
- that the cash-crunch government cannot purchase and allot any land.

As such there is no government land in the periphery of the towns. Moreover increase in population would add more pressure on the already limited resources. " (Bhair, Dayal, May 2003 p.19)

### **Compensation refused to more than 70,000 people displaced along the border of Bangladesh (December 2005)**

"The Union government has refused to provide funds for the rehabilitation of those who were displaced due to the laying of a fence along the Tripura-Bangladesh border. This has led to resentment among state government officials and the affected people.

In a recent communiqué Secretary, Border Management, D Shankaran informed the Tripura government that the Centre has no provision for granting funds to the displaced and asked the state to manage from its own resources." (Deccan Herald, 4 December 2005)

***The request for compensation was made in March 2005 after more than 10,000 families had been displaced:***

"The Centre has deputed a team of three officials to determine the amount of funds required to compensate over 10,000 families displaced by the erection of a barbed wire fence along Tripura's 856-km-long border with Bangladesh.

During his daylong visit to the state on January 30, the state government urged Union home minister Shivraj Patil to immediately compensate the 40,000 people who had been displaced. The Centre deputed the joint secretary (border management) in the Union home ministry, H.S. Brahma, and Planning Commission members B.N. Joginda and Saida Shahida, to make an assessment of the compensation required.

The officials arrived here yesterday and held a series of meetings with secretary-level officers of the state government. The implementation of centrally-sponsored schemes and utilisation of funds also came up for discussions.

Sources said the officials would visit the border areas in West and South Tripura to assess the situation.

The state government had approached the Union home ministry in December for Rs 93 crore to compensate the displaced people.

The central team will verify the authenticity of the claim, the sources said, adding that though the state had demanded Rs 93 crore, additional funds would be required later.

"More than 10,000 families have been displaced so far after the erection of a fence on a 235-km stretch of the border. When the entire length is fenced, more people are sure to be displaced, which will mean that more funds will be needed," a source said." (The Telegraph, 13 March 2005)

**Insufficient government rehabilitation for Gujarat's IDPs obstructed their return (May 2002)**

- Prospects for return of displaced were very bleak due to violence and a lack of government rehabilitation measures
- In many camps, displaced complained about an under-valuation of property lost

"The refugees' hopes of returning home grow dimmer as the violence continues and the government's half-hearted rehabilitation measures fail to provide any real support. Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's efforts to reassure the riot-affected people during his visit to Gujarat on April 4 came rather late - 35 days after the violence began. His promises regarding relief and rehabilitation have not yet been implemented properly by the State government. The only time Chief Minister Narendra Modi visited a relief camp housing Muslims was when he trailed the Prime Minister.

During his visit, the Prime Minister promised the following rehabilitation measures to the more than 1.5 lakh [150,000] refugees:

[...]

Housing compensation in the rural areas would be Rs.15,000 for those whose homes have been partially damaged and Rs.50,000 for those whose homes have been completely destroyed. In the urban areas, the Central government would bear the cost of reconstruction on the basis of an estimate made after a comprehensive survey.

[...]

In every camp in Ahmedabad, people complained about the under-valuation of property lost. "Most of the people have got cheques for Rs.2,000 to 3,000. No one here has received more than Rs.14,000 as compensation, which is only a fraction of the actual value of their houses and belongings," said a camp organiser at Vatva. In rural Gujarat, the situation is no better. At

Bamanwad village in Panchmahal district, Ganibhai Khatri's house was razed to the ground. He received only Rs.23,075 as compensation, instead of the Rs.50,000 promised by the Prime Minister. In this village the houses of around 27 Muslim families were burned. Yet, only seven families have received compensation. The government has not even recognised the presence of the relief camp in the village. Hindu neighbours of those in the camp have been helping them with food for the past two months." (Frontline, vol.19 issue 10, 11-24 May 2002)

## PATTERNS OF RETURN AND RESETTLEMENT

### Return

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**More than 1,300 Kashmiri Pandit families, mainly in Jammu, have registered with the state government of Jammu and Kashmir and are awaiting conducive conditons for return (February 2005)**

- Most of the Pandits who have shown willingness to return are living in Muthi, Purkhoo and Udampur migrant camps in Jammu region

"The efforts to woo Kashmiri Pandits back to the Valley have received a boost with over 1,000 displaced families expressing their willingness to return to their homeland ahead of Parliamentary elections.

"1,100 Pandit families have given in black and white that they want to return voluntarily and no one has forced them to do so," Jammu and Kashmir Revenue and Rehabilitation Minister Hakeem Mohammad Yaseen told reporters here.

Dubbing it as a major achievement of the coalition government, Yaseen said it was for the first time that such a large number of displaced families have decided to return which will encourage others, who left the Valley after eruption of militancy in 1990, to do the same.

"We will be providing all sorts of relief to the Pandits who intend to return to their homes in Kashmir," he said on Saturday evening.

Most of the Pandits who have shown willingness to return are living in Muthi, Purkhoo and Udampur migrant camps in Jammu region.

Yaseen said the list of all the 1,100 Pandit families have been forwarded to Union home ministry for consent.

"We hope the return of Pandits will start soon. We will be settling them wherever they wish to stay. We have started constructing the safe zones in Sheikhpura Budgam in central Kashmir where initially 220 families would be settled," he said." (Times of India, 8 February 2004)

"As many as 1,300 Kashmiri migrant families have registered themselves for returning to their homes in the valley.

This was stated here today by Revenue Minister Hakeem Yaseen while presiding over a meeting of the apex committee for redress of grievances of the migrants.

He said that conditions were becoming more conducive for the safe return of the migrants. He urged the Kashmiri Pandit organisations to motivate them to return to the valley where incentives would be provided to them.

The minister sought a consensus for the dignified and safe return of the Kashmiri Pandit migrants and said it was the resolve of the government to do so.

Mr Yaseen said that the amnesty announced by the state government for surrendering fake ration cards and registration certificates by the migrants had helped in saving crores of rupees that were being used for improvement of the migrant camps.

Those who participated in the meeting were unanimous that cluster colonies should be constructed in the areas previously dominated by Kashmiri Pandits in the valley.

It was decided to update the revenue record and preparation of inventories of immovable property of the dislocated Kashmiri Pandits and making it available on the website and also check fake sale of their properties in their absence." (Times of India, 15 February 2005)

### **Return of Kashmiri Pandits to the Kashmir Valley delayed again due to threats by militant groups (September 2005)**

- Separatist militants have threatened to start a new wave of violence if the Kashmiri Pandits return
- Despite official return plans, improved housing is being constructed in settlements for internally displaced in Jammu - showing that plans of return are not imminent
- Security is felt as the main obstacle to return for the displaced Kashmiri Pandits

"Notwithstanding terrorist threats, Jammu and Kashmir government is going ahead with plans to rehabilitate displaced Kashmiri pandits in their homeland as the first batch of migrants is all set to return here within two months. 'First batch of 350 families of pandits living in different camps at Jammu and Udhampur is returning to Kashmir in October,' state Revenue and Rehabilitation minister Hakim Mohammad Yaseen said." (Hindustan Times, 21 August 2005)

### ***Separatist militants have threatened to start waves of attacks if the Kashmiri Pandits return:***

"Separatist militants fighting Indian rule in the country's only Muslim-majority state said on Friday they would not allow minority Hindus who fled the the region after the revolt broke out 16 years ago to return. Kashmir's moderate separatist leaders and officials said this month they were making plans to help thousands of Kashmiri Hindus - known as 'pandits' - to return due to a peace process between India and Pakistan, which have fought two wars over the region. 'They (Hindus) deserted the majority community during the time of crisis and indulged in anti-movement activities,' said a joint statement by al Nasireen, al Arifeen, Save Kashmir Movement and Farzandan-e-Milat. 'They will not be allowed to return unless they apologise and offer penance for their acts,' said the statement faxed to media organisations said. The four groups have claimed a series of attacks across the region over the past few years." (Reuters, 22 July 2005)

"Plan of the Mufti-led coalition government for the return of the Kashmiri Pandits to their homeland in the Kashmir valley is likely to be delayed as the Centre is learnt to have advised the state government to be cautious in the matter.

The state government had planned to carry the first batch of the migrants back to the valley next month [October 2005] and has constructed clusters for them at three places around Srinagar and the Anantnag districts.

It is learnt that brakes have now been applied on the proposed move at least for some time as four terrorist outfits had threatened if Pandits returned to the valley.

[...]

Although a few lakh Pandits had moved out of the valley, but only 1500 families so far have approached the government for return. Cluster accommodation for them was being constructed at Sheikhpura, Kshir Bhawani and Mattan. The Mufti was taking personal interest in the construction of flats for Pandits." (The Tribune, 14 September 2005)

***Despite return plans, improved housing is being constructed in settlements for internally displaced in Jammu:***

"Srinagar: Political noises about the return of Pandits to Valley may be getting shriller in J-K, the truth is that the government is doing the opposite. Work has started on 5,242 two-room tenements in Jammu, incurring a cost of about Rs 200 crore, to house the migrants. The construction work alone will take three years, according to Relief Commissioner B A Runiyal. Does this mean government does not believe its own return rhetoric? 'No, that is not the case,' says Mehbooba Mufti. 'It is just that the Pandits in Jammu are living in inhuman conditions and government needs to do something about it,' she says. The return of Pandits, Mehbooba concedes, is going to be a long haul. 'It (return) is not going to happen within six months. Migrants will, conditions allowing, return in phases,' she says. On the other hand, the impression given out by the state government is that return of migrants is round the corner. Two-room sets at Shiekhpora, Mattan and one-room units at Kherbhawani in Kashmir Valley are far smaller in number. Being built at a cost of over Rs 40 crore, these houses are being constructed to accommodate the returning Pandits

[...]

The government says it had received 1,600 applications from Pandits who want to return to the Valley and that the first batch of 350 migrants will return in October. The Jammu and Kashmir All Migrants' Coordination Committee even brushed aside the threat by a group of four militants organisations - Al-Nasireen, Al Arifeen, Save Kashmir Movement and Farzandan-e-Millat - and expressed its resolve to return. But according to Mehbooba, the government is not in the mood to force the return. 'Returns, if they are voluntary, are welcome,' she says, adding, 'It is a sensitive matter. As such, the whole process has to be low-profile.' Runiyal says the construction of tenements in Jammu was a temporary measure, even when he estimated the completion in about three years. 'When Prime Minister Manmohan Singh saw the pathetic condition of the migrants, he called for improvement in their living conditions,' he says. The construction of more than 5,000 sets in Jammu is, however, seen as putting the return of migrants in doubt. The impression at the local level is that the government, rhetoric apart, is not interested in any pro-active push for Pandits' return and wants the process to start on its own, 'in a natural fashion'. The members of the community are looking forward to celebrate the festival of Anant Chaturdasi at a temple in South Kashmir after 15 years" (Indian Express, 19 September 2005).

***Security is felt as the main obstacle to return for the displaced Kashmiri Pandits:***

"Representatives of Kashmiri Pandits have made it clear that they cannot return without the consent of majority Muslim community and the selected security zones being set up by the government may prove dangerous for them. A 37-member coordination committee of migrant Pandits, which is on a fact-finding mission to the Kashmir Valley, on Thursday visited Budgam and inspected a colony at Sheikhpora being constructed for them. They also interacted with the locals and exchanged views on their possible return." (The Hindu, 30 June 2005)

**Uncertainty regarding number of displaced families having returned to their villages along the international border and Line of Control (March 2005)**

***The information below states that most of the displaced have returned to their homes. However, one source has informed the Global IDP Project that many move to transit camps awaiting demining of their fields and repair of their houses. These returnees should be considered internally displaced until they have been able to return to their homes in line with [Guiding Principles 28 and 29](#).***

"The Jammu and Kashmir government is working on the return of over 100,000 people who fled their homes along the border due to stepped up shelling by Pakistani forces, officials said.

The government move comes in the wake of an assessment showing there had been a discernable fall in Pakistani shelling in areas close to the border in the Jammu region.

The government is exploring the possibility of making fields cultivable again after the removal of thousands of mines laid by Indian forces during last year's standoff with Pakistan." (Indo-Asian News Service, 6 November 2003 - no internet link available)

***By March 2004, most of the displaced were reported to have returned home:***

"Thousands of migrants who previously lived near the disputed Line of Control (LoC) in Indian-controlled Kashmir (IcK) are reportedly returning to their homes as a November 2003 ceasefire continues to hold between India and Pakistan. The two countries held their initial round of talks last week and have agreed to hold meetings over the next 6 months on a "roadmap" to peace. Many migrants moved out from the area since the 1989 separatist revolution in IcK. IcK Relief and Rehabilitation Minister Hakim Yasin said that the situation has improved substantially along the LoC and claimed that 31,621 out of 39,527 families have returned to their homes. Since humanitarian information is tightly controlled in IcK, it is difficult to independently verify the figures.

[...]

Meanwhile, militant violence continued in IcK as The Statesman reported that militants have begun targeting female Indian Army medical officers that have started work in more remote areas of the region." (COE-DMHA, 5 March 2004)

"The situation has improved substantially in the border areas close to the Line of Control and people have voluntarily returned home after the ceasefire, said Hakim Yasin, the state's relief and rehabilitation minister. 'Of the 39,527 migrant families, 31,621 families have so far returned to their homes in the border areas,' the minister said." (The Indian Express, 5 March 2004)

***However, information is conflicting as less than ten percent of the amount for relief and rehabilitation of the internally displaced has been allocated and that many still remain in relief camps:***

"[...] even after the demobilisation of forces along the Line of Control, in sharp contrast to the farmers along the Indo-Pak International Border, a majority of the residents could not return. This

was because a large area remained under mines near the Line of Control and de-mining process was quite slow. Residents say that most of the houses have been destroyed in this sector and fields have become absolutely barren due to the high toxicity in the soil due to heavy bombardment." (The Hindu, 7 July 2004)

"Speaker Legislative Assembly Mr. Tara Chand reviewed the rehabilitation and relief measures for the border migrants at a high level meeting of officers here today.

The Speaker asked the Financial Commissioner, Home and Divisional Commissioner Jammu to speed up the relief measures for which the Central Government has already provided funds. These include tractorisation of un-cultivable land that was left out for some years due to border disturbance in various villages of Akhnoor Tehsil.

The matter of release of Rs 78 crore relief package for border migrants came up for discussion, out of which Rs 7 crore have already been released by the centre, the Speaker impressed upon the concerned officers to peruse the case vigorously for obtaining the pending amount at the earliest so that the pending rehabilitation process is completed. Mr Tara Chand said that several other relief works which include allotment of plots at safer places, payment for purchase of oxen for ploughing purposes house-holds and extension of cash relief for another six months for those who are not able to start their farming activities due to some technicalities would also be undertaken with the same financial assistance of central government.

It is recalled that the Centre had already sanctioned Rs. 7 crore under the rehabilitation programme for Akhnoor border migrants out of the Rs. 78 crore proposal sent by the state government. Balance amount to the tune of Rs. 71 crore has been agreed by the Centre to release in phased manner." (J&K Government, 12 March 2005)

See also " *More than two years after ceasefire with Pakistan, thousands of internally displaced from border areas along the Line of Control (LoC) are still waiting for rehabilitation assistance (2005)* "

### **The South-Asia earthquake has delayed the reintegration of conflict-induced IDPs along the Line of Control (January 2006)**

"Speaker Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Mr. Tara Chand has stated that relief package of border migrants shall be implemented in letter and spirit. He said that the implementation of package has got delayed due to recent earthquake in the State wherein a large number of people were killed and thousands rendered homeless and entire state administration remained busy in dealing with the situation.

[...]

Mr. Tara Chand said that the efforts are afoot to sanction cash relief and free ration in favour of such families whose land falling across the ditch on zero line and those who could not use their land due to other reasons, till they are able to cultivate the land. He said that the government is committed to solve the problems of border people who have suffered the agony of migration from their homes due to border disturbances after the Kargil conflict.

The Speaker apprised the gathering that an amount of Rs. 20 crore has already been spent on various reconstruction and rehabilitation works out of total package of Rs. 78 crore sanctioned by the Central Government which contains repair of roads, lanes and drains, government buildings, restoration of other basic facilities, cash relief on account of tractorization of land, purchase of household articles, ox pairs, allotment of plots at safer places and construction of shelters thereon. He said that the matter has been discussed with the Chief Minister, Mr. Ghulam Nabi

Azad who has assured that rest of the package shall be implemented very soon and most probably, the Chief Minister would himself visit to the people of border areas to take stock of their problems personally, said Mr. Tara Chand." (J & K Government, DIPR, 6 January 2006)

**Assam: displaced Santhals quote fear of renewed violence upon return and lack of assistance as main reasons for not returning to their villages (January 2004)**

- A total of 6,130 families have returned to their villages from relief camps in Gossaigaon in the past four years
- The remaining displaced Santhals fear attacks from militants and prefer to stay in relief camps
- Another reason for why the displaced do not return is that many of the displaced have not received a promised house-building grant which they need in order to restart their lives

"While camp inmates said they were afraid to go back to their villages for fear of facing attacks from militants once again, a police official at Sapkatha said the inmates did not want to return mainly because they were getting free rice at the relief camps.

"Our camp is too close to the forests. We are scared that the militants may still come down from the hills in Bhutan and launch attack on us if we go back," headmaster of Sapkatha camp school Moshe Tudu said. He hoped, however, that the operations against militants in Bhutan would improve the situation.

Another reason why the inmates had not been able to go back was that many of them had not received the house building grant of Rs 10,000 per family which the Assam government had promised to them. A total of 6,130 families had gone back to their villages from the relief camps in Gossaigaon in the past four years. The state government had spent more than Rs 6 crore on their rehabilitation, subdivisional information officer Gagan Narzary said.

"We can still revive our cultivation and go back to normal life if we can go back to our villages," he said. Near both Kochugaon and Sapkatha camps, there were permanent army posts for protection ever since the camps had started. Militant groups had taken an active part in the riots." (The Times of India, 8 January)

**Assam: Fighting between the Karbi and Kuki tribes in Assam delayed the return of over 4,000 Khasi-Pnars who fled Karbi militancy in November (December 2003)**

- The return of more than 4,000 Khasi-Pnar people staying in camps in Meghalaya was delayed due to general insecurity and threats by militants
- By the end of January 2004, most of the displaced considered the security situation as adequate for return

"Fresh ethnic violence between the Karbi and Kuki in Assam's Karbi Anglong district has halted the process of rehabilitation of over 4000 displaced Khasi-Pnar people now staying in camps in Meghalaya's Jaintia hills for the last three weeks following threats of militants there, reports PTI.

"Since there is a problem going on, they (displaced Khasi-Pnars) want to be here (in Meghalaya) for some more time," Deputy Commissioner of Jaintia Hills district L Kharkongor told PTI here over phone adding only 34 people have so far returned to their villages in Block-I and Block-II areas.

After staying in camps for over three weeks, the Khasi-Pnar people, who fled their home from Karbi Anglong area of Assam after being threatened and harassed by two Karbi militants, started returning to their villages from Monday last following security arrangements." (Assam Tribune, 5 December 2003)

"Sense of insecurity prevails in the disputed areas of Block-I with many Khasi-Pnar refugees who had returned to their villages coming back to Sahsniang refugee camp expressing their lack of confidence in the role of the Assam Police. Informing this to *The Shillong Times*, General Secretary of Labang-Nongphyllut-Pangam-Raliang Council (LNPRC) M M Thaiang said around 70 refugees had gone to their villages in Block-I but most of them had to return to Sahsniang after finding that the situation was not right for their resettlement.

***By the end of January, most of the displaced considered the security situation as adequate for return:***

"[...] most of the 4,000 Khasi-Pnar tribals are now back in their homes in the villages in central Assam's Karbi Anglong district.

[...]

After over three weeks of their stay in the make-shift camps in the village, they started returning home since early December. While the displaced villagers were somehow provided with shelter in the put-up camps, they reportedly faced a lot of hardship initially as there were hardly any basic amenities. Their living conditions improved following a 12-hour bandh called recently by a group of as many as 12 social organisations in the four districts of Meghalaya—Ri-Bhoi, East and West Khasi Hills and Jaintia Hills—in support of their demands. The demands include, inter alia, arrangement of adequate relief measures for the uprooted Khasi-Pnar people, and the erection of Meghalaya police post at Psiar village at Block-I area in Karbi Anglong district.

[...]

At one point of time, even Assam Health Minister Bhumidhar Barman and his junior colleague ERS Ronghang, together with Meghalaya Chief Minister DD Lapang and Home Minister RG Lyngdoh had to visit the areas where ethnic conflict erupted, to restore confidence in the minds of the Khasi-Pnar people. It is only then that they agreed to leave for their destination." (The Assam Tribune 29 January 2004)

**The Mizoram state government and rebel group have reached agreement on repatriation of Reangs from Tripura to Mizoram (April 2005)**

- The Mizoram government and the Bru National Liberation Front (BNLF) have signed an agreement on issues related to repatriation and rehabilitation of the internally displaced
- The Mizoram government has previously argued that the Reangs are outsiders and hence have no right to claim that they are permanent settlers
- The Chief Minister of Mizoram argues that "Reangs were not original residents of Mizoram and that only 16,000 of the refugees has a valid claim to reside in the state
- Meanwhile, the Reangs are believed to be increasingly joining the insurgent groups to wage war against the Mizos
- The Indian Government and the National Human Rights Commission have on several occasions called on the Mizoram and Tripura state governments to assure the immediate and safe return of the Reangs

***After years of dispute, the parties reportedly now agree on issues related to the repatriation and rehabilitation of the internally displaced Reangs:***

"The government of the northeastern state of Mizoram and the rebel Bru National Liberation Front (BNLF) yesterday signed a peace agreement that will help facilitate the return of thousands of Bru tribals from relief camps in neighboring Tripura state. The agreement was reached after a 13th round of talks between the two sides, in which the BNLF agreed to lay down arms and assimilate into the civilian population. The BNLF has also agreed not to recruit new members or assist any other insurgent groups. In return, the government agreed to take back verified ethnic Brus originally from Mizoram from the Tripura refugee camps. The Bru returnees will be rehabilitated at a camp no longer than 3 months and be provided with long-term rehabilitation.

[...]

According to officials, the rebels have agreed to relinquish their demand for an autonomous district council in return for strong development work in Bru-dominated districts in Mizoram." (COE-DMHA, 27 April 2005)

"This comes in the wake of 12 round of talks which discussed the main issue of Bru (Reang) refugee repatriation from six camps in North Tripura.

[...]

BNLF supremo Surjyamani Reang said the main issue from their side highlighted in the meeting was the accommodation of Bru refugees staying in Tripura camps at resettlement centres and provision of ration for an year.

[...]

The Union government has also sanctioned a rehabilitation package of Rs 28.63 crore for the resettlement of the refugees. Surjyamani Reang said the Bru Liberation Front of Mizoram in nexus with an influential outfit of Tripura is putting heat on the BNLF to scuttle the peace process." (Deccan Herald, 31 March 2005)

"The Mizoram government sought Rs 77 crore for repatriation of Bru refugees as well as the Bru militants who had taken up arms against the state government.

[Union Home Minister ] Mr Patil made a commitment to give Rs 28.65 crore for taking back the Reang tribes and asked the government to settle the issue as soon as possible." (Deccan Herald, 2 February 2005)

***Previously, a main hindrance for reaching an agreement was the refusal by the Mizoram government to recognize all the internally displaced as citizens of Mizoram:***

"Mizoram human rights groups estimate that some 41,000 Reangs, a tribal group from Mizoram that has been displaced due to a sectarian conflict, presently are being sheltered in 6 camps in North Tripura; conditions in such camps are poor and the Tripura government has asked the central Government to allot funds for their care. Reang leaders in the camps say that their community would return to Mizoram if they were granted an autonomous district council, allotted a set number of seats in the Mizoram Assembly, and granted financial assistance for resettlement. The Mizoram government rejected these demands and maintained that only 16,000 of the refugees had a valid claim to reside in the state." (U.S. DOS 2001, Section 2 d)

"Despite continuing efforts of the Tripura government the question of repatriation has made no progress as official representatives of Mizoram persisted with their stand that all those registered as refugees in the camps did not really belong to Mizoram. Both the Tripura government and the Centre have been trying to 'push back' all the Reang people to Mizoram. After a series of discussions held by the officials of the Union home ministry failed to make any progress, Union Home Minister L K Advani held a tripartite meeting involving the governments of Mizoram and Tripura. The meeting resolved that the government of Mizoram would start taking back the

refugees from October. But the process remains paralysed as Mizoram has been using one pretext or the other to keep the repatriation in abeyance." (Deccan Herald, 17 August 2003)

"The Mizoram Government had sent a delegation led by the State Home Minister, in October, 1997 to persuade the Reangs living in camps in Tripura to return. A programme of repatriation was also chalked out with Tripura Government. "However barring 3000 Reangs most of the Reangs refused to return to Mizoram even after the Government promised to provide adequate security by deploying Central Paramilitary Forces in the area. The State Home Minister also stated that President of the Bru Students Union on March 9,1998 warned all the Reangs who had not left the state to leave the state by March 22,1998 or face excommunication by the community or even death.

The Union Home Minister Mr. L.K. Advani during his visit to North East on September, 1998 stated that " the Mizoram Government must take back every Reang tribal now housed in relief camps in Tripura for whom the Centre is bearing the expenses and there was no question of taking back selectively. He rejected the Chief Minister Mr. Lal Thanhawla's assertion that he would take back only those Reang tribals whose names were in Mizoram electoral rolls." (Saha 2000 p.7-8)

#### ***Observations of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC):***

"[On 7 August 2000] Union Home Minister, Shri L.K. Advani held a meeting with Chief Minister, Tripura, Shri Manik Sarkar and the Mizoram Home Minister, Shri Tawnluia to discuss the problem of repatriation of displaced Reangs from Mizoram who are settled in camps inside Tripura. Union Home Secretary, Additional Secretary (Home), Chief Secretary, Tripura and Joint Secretary (North East) in the Union Home Ministry were also present. It was noted that the National Human Right Commission had in October 1999 after discussions with the State Governments of Mizoram and Tripura and the representatives of Ministry of Home Affairs and after the visits to the camps, had made the following observations.

i. The Reangs living in refugee camps in Kanchanpur sub-division of Tripura are lawful inhabitants of Mizoram and the Government of Mizoram is obliged to take them back in accordance with the agreement made with the Union Home Minister in November, 1997. The Government of Mizoram should take all necessary steps in impart a sense of confidence and security to the refugees who fled from Mizoram in the wake of some ethnic tension in September-October, 1997. Dispute, if any, regarding the number of refugees, can be resolved by joint verification at the camps by a committee comprising the representatives of Government of Tripura and Mizoram and the Ministry of Home Affairs who would consult fully with a representative of the Reang refugees.

ii. The Government of India is requested to play active role on priority basis to arrange repatriation of the Reangs to Mizoram in accordance with the decision taken in the meeting of Union Home Minister in November,1997. The Ministry of Home Affairs is further requested to impart urgent and special attention to the safety and security of the Reangs returning to their villages in Mizoram.

iii. The Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, State Government of Mizoram and Tripura shall keep the Commission informed of the progress made in the matter at regular intervals of atleast once in two months.

2. It was noted that there were 311511 [sic: 31,511] displaced Reangs(6956 families) in these Camps in Tripura. Government of Tripura informed that they had sent the full details of the displaced persons to District authorities in Mizoram for verification.

3. Representatives of the Government of Mizoram agreed that they had received the list on 7 July, 2000 and the process of verification is on.

4. It was urged by the Union Home Minister that the verification should be expedited and the process of repatriation commenced at the earliest.

After discussions, the following decisions were taken:-

- i. The first phase of repatriation of 16000 displaced persons verified by the Government of Mizoram who have been displaced from Mizoram would be completed by 30 October, 2000.
- ii. In the second phase, there would be further verification of balance person left in the camps and thereafter, such of those who were found to have been displaced from Mizoram would be repatriated back by 31 December, 2000.
- iii. Simultaneously tripartite talks would be held between Government of India, Government of Mizoram and Reang representatives to bring about a settlement of outstanding issues and an end to violence. (MHA- Gol, 7 August 2000)

#### **Gujarat: unprotected and fearing for their lives, the displaced were unwilling to return (April 2002 - April 2004)**

- The forcible closure of camps in Gujarat was contrary to the Guiding Principle no. 15
- Displaced in Gujarat, largely unprotected by the police and authorities, have been unable and unwilling to return
- By October 2002, virtually all the camps had been closed by the state, forcing many victims to return to their neighborhoods where their security was continually threatened
- The closure of camps meant an end to funds that provide for food and medicines
- Rehabilitation assistance has been minimal and for many non-existent
- Impunity for attacks against Muslims and periodic episodes of violence have also made it impossible for many families to return to their homes - many remained displaced as of December 2003

"The destruction as well as enmity and insecurity left by the communal violence in Gujarat in February and March 2002 forced more than one hundred thousand Muslims into over one hundred makeshift relief camps throughout the state, some located in Muslim graveyards. By October 2002, virtually all the camps had been closed by the state, forcing many victims to return to their neighborhoods where their security was continually threatened. Throughout this period, the state government failed to adhere to standards laid out in the U.N. Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (Guiding Principles) and to international human rights standards.

[...]

In January 2003, Human Rights Watch visited Shah-e-Alam camp, the largest camp in Ahmedabad. Though the camp area, which is situated in a dargah (a traditional meeting ground for Hindus and Muslims), seemed largely uninhabited at the time of our visit; at the height of the violence approximately 12,500 people resided there. According to one of its managers, the camp was closed on August 23, 2002, two months after the government ended its official support. Between March and June the government provided 300 grams of flour, 100 grams of rice, 50 grams of dal, 50 grams of milk powder, 50 grams of oil, and five rupees per person per day. Apart from this five rupee allotment per person per day the camp received no additional financial support from the government. Instead, money was collected from local community members or by placing advertisements in newspapers.

[...]

By June 2002, 8,500 people had left Shah-e-Alam camp. Many went to relatives' homes, some to rental homes, while others out of necessity returned to their homes in Naroda Patia, Naroda Gam, and elsewhere. At the time of the camp's closure in August, 4,000 people remained. A Muslim charity repaired some 700 homes and constructed approximately sixty-five homes in various Ahmedabad neighborhoods. When asked whether the government provided financial

support to run the camps (as opposed to the limited subsidies to victims described above) the manager told Human Rights Watch: "Forget money, they didn't even give us protection. We kept asking for help with rehabilitation, even to [Prime Minister] Vajpayee when he came, but nobody did anything." Some of those who lost family members have been able to construct or buy homes in Muslim majority areas. The remainder have for the most part returned to Naroda Patia. "They returned because they own property there and have been unable to sell it for the price at which it was bought.

[...]

The forcible closure of the camps in circumstances in which it was foreseeable that some camp residents would have no option but to return to unsafe conditions is contrary to Guiding Principle 15(d)-the "right to be protected against forcible return to or resettlement in any place where their life, safety, liberty and/or health would be at risk"-and violates the right to choose one's own residence under article 12(1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Furthermore, the closure of the camps without an offer of adequate alternative shelter is a clear violation of article 11(1) of the International Covenant of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)-"the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing.

[...]

Ongoing impunity for attacks against Muslims (see Chapter IV) and periodic episodes of violence have also made it impossible for many families to return to their homes where their assailants roam freely in their neighborhoods. " (HRW July 2003, pp. 38-41)

"The problems associated with the Naroda Patia and Gulbarg Society investigations, including the harassment of witnesses, are also found in other parts of the state. During their visit to Gujarat to determine the feasibility of holding early elections, members of India's Election Commission documented similar patterns from almost all of the twelve districts that they covered. According to the Election Commission report:

Everywhere there were complaints of culprits of the violence still moving around scot-free including some prominent political persons and those on bail. These persons threaten the displaced affected persons to withdraw cases against them, failing which they would not be allowed to return to their homes. In Dhakor (Kheda District), the team was told by a delegation, in the presence of senior police officers and the district administration authorities, that the culprits had been identified before the police but no arrests had taken place and the main culprits continued to threaten the villagers to withdraw their FIRs. The team has cited many other such cases from almost all the 12 districts covered by them." (HRW July 2003, p. 21)

"Till the time of writing of this report many Muslims are still unable to return to their homes. Indeed, without a sense of security it is virtually impossible for survivors to go back to places where they witnessed friends and relatives being slaughtered and burned alive." (International Initiative of Justice, pp. 55-56)

"Of the 95 Muslim families in Panwad village (about 80 km south of here), who were attacked by a mob of tribals during the riots two years back, about 30 have still not returned.

Though the Islamic Relief Committee has built new houses in place of the ones which were burnt down, many feel safer living in Chotaudepur, about 20 km away, and commuting to Panwad." (Times of India, 12 April 2004)

**Gujarat: the Muslim community is under pressure not to press charges against their attackers before they are allowed to return (December 2003)**

- Those who have managed to return to their homes have done so under conditions of economic boycott and "compromise"
- The most important "compromise" condition is the withdrawal of legal cases against Hindus

"Those who have managed to return to their homes have done so under conditions of economic boycott and "compromise." There are many "compromise" villages and neighbourhoods in Gujarat today. Essentially "compromise" refers to an entire set of conditions under which displaced Muslims are being allowed to re-enter their original villages and neighbourhoods, without overt threat of physical harm. The most important "compromise" condition is of course, the withdrawal of legal cases against Hindus. But there is also an agreement that Muslims will live not as free citizens exercising their cultural and religious rights, but as second-class citizens according to terms determined by the Hindus. In some cases, this means cultural conditions such as lowering the volume of the *azaan* from the Mosque. In other cases it means the closure of all neighbourhood beef shops (beef here means buffalo meat, since cow slaughter is banned in Gujarat and many other states of India). For poor Muslims this means a complete change of customary diet since mutton (goat meat) is generally too expensive. These "compromise" agreements are both verbal and in many cases written. But even after having compromised there is no guarantee that the Muslims will be left free to live life as they did before.

In Jhalod in Dahod district, the following conditions were put forth before the community as early as 3rd March, 2002 when the violence was at its peak:[...]

1. No Muslim boy should come out of the house after 10 pm.
2. No *azaan* to be recited on the microphone in the *Masjid*.
3. Close Muslim student hostels.
4. Close slaughter houses on the highway.
5. When Hindu bands cross the *Masjid* (mosque) they will not stop playing.
6. No Muslim children should stand and watch a Hindu *barat* (wedding procession).

According to Urmila and Prakash, both Hindus from BV41 area in Baroda, who saved several Muslim families in their neighbourhood during the pogrom:

An entire new language has been created in Gujarat. The new word is "compro." Muslims will be allowed to come back only once they do "compro"— take back their complaints. Very few people have come back to this area. Out of 150 houses, people from about 20 have returned. Others have tried to go back, but Bajrang Dal cadres go there and don't let them. Yesterday the few people who have returned came to our house again because they were afraid. At 1am last night the BJP [election] victory procession came to our area. Now with the BJP government coming back to power there is no question of the Muslims returning to their homes. They will not dare.

In BV5 and BV6 [administrative districts], the Muslims have agreed to compromise in order to live there. The basic condition is that they drop all charges and discontinue court proceedings. The Muslim community has no choice but to agree because they are entirely dependent on the village for their livelihood and survival. In BV9 there has been a written compromise on stamp paper in the presence of senior district administration officials including the Collector, DSP [District Superintendent of Police], DDO [District Development Officer], TDO [Tribal Development Officer],

and *mamlatdaar*. Nearly the entire Muslim community has signed this paper, with just a few exceptions. Now the “compromised” families are living in the village and doing their business. (Harish, paralegal worker, BO1 organization, Anand).

Kazi from BV17 in Anand district testified that most of the 32 pogrom affected families in his village have gone back except for five or six families who have filed complaints. But even those who have been allowed back are not living like they did before. Although they have not been directly forbidden from returning to the village, they are being told they are not welcome indirectly. The shops they used to rent are not being leased to them again and there is constant tension that something will happen again.

[...]

In BV14 the Muslim community is under pressure to compromise if they want to be rehabilitated in their village. So far there is no compromise and the Muslims are still resisting. But as a result the Muslims have been forbidden to enter the village, operate businesses, or seek a means of livelihood within the village. Most families from this village are currently living in BV37 and BV38. Four to five families are living on the outskirts of BV14. Only three people have returned to BV14. They are the ones who have not filed any pogrom related cases.

[...]

In some cases individual District Collectors, *mamlatdaars*, and other district administration officials claim to have “helped” or “facilitated” people’s return to their villages. Testimonies before the IJ team, however, found that this “help” consisted largely of negotiating ‘compromises’ discussed above. In a few cases the ‘help’ seemed to consist of little beyond verbal assurances of safety and the attempt to hold village” (International Initiative of Justice, December 2003, p. 55-57)

## Resettlement and Rehabilitation

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### **Rights groups accuses the Government of India of discriminatory treatment of IDPs (January 2006)**

- The Indian government is accused of discriminating against displaced of tribal origin

"At the peak of the Bodo armed movement, Assam accounted for nearly more than half of India's population of internally displaced," says Sanjib Baruah of the Centre for Policy Research in Delhi.

"The Hindu pandits from Kashmir perhaps made up nearly the other half. But while the displacement in Kashmir got national attention, and those displaced were looked after, the displaced in Assam were never even talked about and that's a shame." (BBC, 9 December 2006)

"Among the displaced, the Kashmiri Pandits are the favourites of New Delhi. Not that their conditions are ideal but better than most others. They have been living in accommodation

provided by the government. While a displaced Kashmiri Pandit from Jammu and Kashmir receives Rs 750 per person per month, an adult Bru receives only Rs. 2.67 paise a day i.e. Rs 80 per month.

The standard of living of the Kashmiri Pandits is not so high in Jammu than in remote Kanchanpur sub-division in Tripura to warrant such blatant discrimination. The prices of essential commodities across India are the same and they are often more expensive in remote areas. The displaced Karbis and Dimasas have not been even provided Rs 80 per day as cash dole.

On November 18, 2004, the Central Government agreed in principle to release Rs 150 crore to set up the two-room sets for about 56,380 Kashmiri migrant Pandits living in different camps in Jammu.

In comparison, the Assam government has even failed to provide Rs 10 crore for 23,742 displaced families who were displaced after the Bodo-Adivasi ethnic violence during 1996-1998. After a meeting between the armed opposition group, the Adivasi Cobra Military of Assam and the Chief Secretary of Assam on June 9, 2004, the state government agreed to release Rs 10 crore based on the proposal submitted by Health Minister Dr Bhumidhar Barman as the Chairman of the Cabinet Sub-Committee on rehabilitation of IDPs.

In October 2004, the government once again promised to release Rs 10 crore for their rehabilitation. The majority of the people have still not been rehabilitated.

Even the conditions of the border migrants, who were forced to flee their homes along the India-Pakistan border in Jammu and Kashmir, have been deplorable. Though 45,000 of them have returned to their ancestral villages and have enjoyed peace on the Line of Actual Control in the Jammu sector following the enforcement of the ceasefire with Pakistan, over 12,000 people, including women and children, continue to spend days in penury and misery at camps at the Devipur in the Akhnoor sector.

Those who returned to their villages were reportedly not provided cash assistance to repair the houses. Those living in the camps alleged that promises of allotting small plots and financial assistance for building houses in safer areas were never fulfilled.

On March 2, 2004, the Chairman of Border Migrant Action Committee, Chajju Ram of Nikkian village in Khour Block of Akhnoor Tehsil in Jammu District succumbed to the injuries he received from the police on February 27, 2004 during a lathi-charge on the protestors demanding rehabilitation." (Chakma, in the Tribune, 1 January 2006)

### **The Jammu and Kashmir Government has launched an Action Plan for the return and rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits (April 2005)**

- The Jammu and Kashmir government is working on a relief and rehabilitation plan for 125,000 displaced Kashmiri Pandits to the Kashmir Valley.
- The Action Plan, which for the most part is not yet implemented, envisages return and rehabilitation in areas with a sizeable Kashmiri Pandit population and where security is already provided

"3.84 In order to enable safe and honourable return of migrants to their native places in the Valley, the State Government constituted an Apex level Committee under the chairmanship of Revenue, Relief and Rehabilitation Minister to look into all aspect of this problem and suggest solutions. A Sub-Committee headed by Financial Commissioner (Planning & Development) was asked to prepare a plan for the return of the migrants.

3.85 The Sub-Committee finalized an Action Plan for the return and rehabilitation of Kashmiri migrants involving a total amount of Rs.2,589.73 crore to enable approximately 1.25 lakh Kashmiri migrants persons at presently residing in Jammu, Delhi and other States/Union Territories to return to the Valley. The Action Plan envisages rehabilitation grant per family @ Rs.1.50 lakh; grant for repair of houses @ Rs.1 lakh for houses intact and Rs.3 lakh for houses damaged; grant for household goods @ Rs.0.50 lakh and furniture @ Rs.0.50 lakh; interest free loan @ Rs.1-2 lakh per person; compensation for loss of income from agriculture upto Rs.1.50 lakh per family; interest free loan of Rs.1.50 lakh per family for investment in agricultural operations and sustenance of Rs.2,000 per month for one year.

3.86 The National Conference Government had, in October 1999, approved the above Action Plan. To begin with, the State Government identified 166 houses forming 15 clusters in Srinagar and Badgam Districts, which were considered safe for the return of the owners of these houses. The list of these clusters was published in the newspapers and steps were taken to identify the families and find their willingness to return to their homes. About 50 families who were registered with the Relief Organisation, Jammu were contacted personally to give their consent for return to the Valley on the basis of the package announced by the Government. Interaction meetings with some of these families were also held, but none of the families agreed to return to the Valley.

3.87 The new State Government has indicated that it has identified the shrines in Mattan and Kheer Bhavani where the Kashmiri migrants displaced from these places could be settled temporarily by developing two model clusters (containing temporary shelters), until such time they can repair their existing residential houses. Ministry of Finance has provided a grant of Rs.10 crore to the State Government for the reconstruction/renovation of houses and shrines at Kheer Bhavani and Mattan. Govt. of J&K has also proposed construction of flats at Budgam and Anantnag for the rehabilitation of Kashmiri migrants. The central Govt. has approved the construction of 200 flats at Budgam on an experimental basis and has released a sum of Rs. 4 crore as advance in March, 2004." (GOI 2002-2003, Chapter III, pp. 27-28)

"As per the latest proposal to set up cluster colonies for migrant families, the government claims that 1,100 migrant families have already been identified for return to the Valley. But whether this project, estimated at Rs. 55 crore and hoped to be funded by the Centre, turns out to be the proverbial case of a slip between cup and lip is yet to be seen. The Mufti government is more than optimistic and was seen as initiating a serious step towards the endeavour since at one of the meetings with Advani in Delhi, the rehabilitation proposal also came in for discussion.

[...]

In striking contrast is the scepticism of the relief commissioner, Jammu, RK Thussu. He says that the actual rehabilitation proposal began in 2000, when it was conceived as a composite, integrated project based on the recommendations of the former financial commissioner, ML Kaul. However, the Centre asked the state government to envisage the project (estimated at Rs. 2,500 crore) in phases, in view of the huge costs involved. It was considered too high a demand for the Centre to meet. Following the failure of this proposal, yet another Rs. 43 crore project, which envisaged the setting up of clusters and repair of houses, was formulated by the then divisional commissioner, Srinagar, in 2001 and sent to the Centre for approval. It was probably also approved by the Centre. However, the project remained in limbo until the new government took over.

The coalition government decided to pursue the proposal and go ahead with the project since the 'safe and dignified return of Kashmiri Pandits' was also part of its joint common minimum programme. But Thussu is categorical that no money has been released by the Centre so far and that the project stands frozen as of today. Regarding the employment package by the state government, he states there is nothing concrete to offer the migrants. It is merely that the government has maintained that in all appointments, migrants should also be given due consideration." (Communalism Combat, January 2004)

"The state government has submitted a fresh proposal seeking Rs 45 crore from centre for renovation and repairs of the migrant pandits' left-out property in Kashmir.

This follows the proposal received by the government from pandits to return to the valley and settle in their own houses provided they are renovated and repaired besides other facilities are also provided.

Minister of revenue, relief and rehabilitation Hakeem Mohommad Yasin told KTNS that the government has received some proposals from migrant pandits who want to return to their ancestral houses. "But most of the houses are in dilapidated state. They need immediate repairs and renovation. So we have agreed that we will make these houses fit for living and renovate it as per the needs", he said.

Projected estimates worked out by the revenue department has put the cost of the renovation of migrant property at Rs 45 crore. This includes repairs and renovation of left-out houses and providing other facilities. Accordingly a project report was made which was submitted to the central government for clearance.

"The centre has agreed to provide the financial assistance to us so that we can go ahead with the renovation of migrant pandits property in Kashmir. Though, we have not received anything so far, the centre has agreed in principle to provide assistance. As and when we will receive the money, we will start work on this project immediately", Hakeem said.

The financial package of Rs 45 crore excludes the Rs 20 crore granted for the construction of safe houses at Sheikhpura in Budgam district. The fresh assistance also excludes the financial package approved under the centre's action plan of Rs 2589.73 crore for the relief and rehabilitation of Kashmiri pandit families living in exile.

[...]

It may be recalled that Kashmiri Pandits, who left the valley following the inception of militancy, have disposed off around 85 percent of their property here including their residential houses, agricultural and non agricultural land. This information was divulged after the revenue department conducted a survey in this regard.

"We cannot do anything to the property which has been sold. We will renovate the unsold houses and other property which are still in possession of the displaced pandits ", clarified Hakeem." (Times of India, 12 February 2005)

"CHIEF Minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed [of Jammu and Kashmir] has said that his government is taking concrete steps for the return of Kashmiri Pandits and does not believe in lip sympathy only. He said at various places in the Valley residential accommodations are being constructed for the migrant families where these would be rehabilitated.

[...]

The Chief Miniter said the government has received 2000 written applications from migrant Pandit families expressing their desire to return to Kashmir. He said 200 residential quarters are under construction at Sheikhpura, Budgam and would be completed by May 15 this year. Similar

accommodation is being raised at Khirbhawani, Mattan and Kupwara and also explored at Indira Nagar and Ganpatyar in Srinagar city.

He said the migrant families who return to Kashmir would be provided one job per family. He said alongside this, the community members who stayed back in Valley during the turmoil would have to be made comfortable." (Indian Express, 9 April 2005)

**More than two years after ceasefire with Pakistan, thousands of internally displaced from border areas along the Line of Control (LoC) are still waiting for rehabilitation assistance (2005)**

- At least 60,000 displaced persons were still displaced from border areas along the Line of Control by the end of 2004 and at least 30,000 people remain displaced as of the end of 2005
- They are still waiting for relief and rehabilitation measures
- A rehabilitation package was finally adopted in August 2005, four years after the state government submitted the request

"[...] the conditions of the 60,000 displaced persons from border areas remained deplorable. [16] The State government had taken a few measures to resettle them. Chairman of Border Migrant Action Committee, Chajju Ram of Nikkian village in Khour block of tehsil Akhnoor in Jammu district died on 2 March 2004 after being beaten up on 27 February 2004 at Kot Ghari while protesting against the lack of their rehabilitation." (ACHR, Human Rights Report 2005, Jammu and Kashmir)

***The state government has on several occasions promised that rehabilitation assistance for repair of houses will be granted to all the remaining internally displaced from the Line of Control:***

"Speaker J&K Legislative Assembly, Tara Chand today assured the border migrants of Akhnoor tehsil that all possible assistance for their proper rehabilitation on account of their damaged houses and relief on account of tractorization of their land and cash relief.

He was addressing a series of public meetings in various border villages of Khour Block which included Hamirpur, Sainth, Badwal, Gigerial, Pallanwala, Dhar, Khour, Plattan, Panjtoot and Chaprial today.

He informed the gatherings that the state government has been making all out efforts to get a comprehensive relief package for the border migrants who have suffered a lot due to shelling from across the border. He hoped that some package would be announced by the Prime Minister during his forthcoming visit to the state, he added." (Times of India, 13 November 2004)

"Speaker Legislative Assembly, Mr. Tara Chand today visited various far-flung areas of border located at zero line in Chhamb sector and took stock of the situation of the areas where people could not return even after normalcy at the border. He also reviewed the progress of development works under execution in the affected areas under border migrant rehabilitation programme.

The areas visited by the Speaker include Samoa Chaprial, Panjtoot, Khui Millan, Palanwala, Gigerial. A group of media persons and all district officers also accompanied him.

He distributed 183 cheques amounting to Rs.42.42 lakh to the people of village Budhwal for repair of houses under rehabilitation programme. He assured the people that all families whose names figuring in supplementary and variation list would be covered under this programme.

Addressing the gathering at Planwala, Speaker said that 6072 families are still living in the migrant camps as they could not return to their homes even after peace on the border as their house have been totally damaged and their land is not cultivable. He said that efforts are on to send all the families to their homes soon. Their land mostly located across the ditch could not be used for cultivation due to some technicalities. The army has been asked to tractorize the land and hand over to the people under Sadhvabna programme so that the people could undertake the routine activities, he added.

Responding to the queries of the people, the Speaker said that Rs. 7 crore have been released by the Central Government under rehabilitation programme and efforts are on to get the balance amount of Rs. 71 crore released which will cover all the affected left over villages. Entire damaged infrastructure would be developed and areas will have new facelift. This also include purchase of oxen, repair of houses, allotment of plots at safer places, tractorization of land, repair of school and hospital buildings, clean drinking water supply and other related issues, the Speaker added." (The official website of the Jammu & Kashmir Government, 13 March 2005)

***A rehabilitation package was finally adopted in August 2005, four years after the state government submitted the request:***

"The Centre has cleared a Rs 78 cr relief package for the border migrants involving allotment of plots of 5 marlas and compensation among nearly 6070 families of 21 villages in Chhamb and Akhnoor constituencies of district Jammu.

[...]

The sources in the Congress party said that the package was cleared in a Cabinet meeting held in the Union capital late last evening. Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh and Home Minister Shivraj Patil gave their nod to the package after the issue was strongly projected by Mr Azad. The State Government had sent the package to the Union Government about four years back. It had demanded the package for constructing alternative shelters at safer places, away from firing range near Akhnoor and Jourian for the border migrants.

[...]

Member Parliament Madan Lal Sharma, who hails from Akhnoor told the Excelsior that Mrs Gandhi is likely to visit Akhnoor tentatively on September 22 to distribute relief and land allotment papers among the border migrants in a function to be organised by Pradesh Congress Committee. Mr Sharma said the package got materialised with the constant and sincere efforts of Speaker Tara Chand, MLA Akhnoor, Sham Sharma besides himself. Meanwhile, Speaker Tara Chand has extended gratitude to Dr Singh, Mrs Gandhi, Mr Patil and Mr Azad for their support to the border migrants who were struggling for this package for the last more than five years. He pointed out that the previous NDA Government had rejected this package but due to the initiative of Mr Azad it was released. Responding to a question, the Speaker said that land for the plots has already been identified by the State Government. A component of Rs 8 cr compensation for land has been kept besides Rs 10 cr for raising infrastructure. Each family besides a plot would get Rs 50,000 cash relief and Rs 10,000 for house-hold items. A compensation of Rs 10,000 will be given for the cattle lost in shelling. He disclosed that Rs 7 cr was earlier released for repair of damaged houses by the Government." (Daily Excelsior, 10 August 2005)

**Tripura: 10,000 internally displaced demand rehabilitation (May 2005)**

"Hundreds of displaced Tripura villagers, who have been leading painstaking lives under the open sky for the last seven years, came out on Friday with demands of rehabilitation. They assembled

before Raj Bhawan and submitted an 11-points memorandum to the Governor Mr Dinesh Nandan Sahay.

All of them were displaced due to tribal insurgency from nearby villages of Agartala at different phases and are now camping alongside roads in makeshift houses. Around 10,000 people from 1576 families in the area have been staying in camps from 1997. Rajkumar Das, a middle aged refugee of Yujalkishorenagar area, told Deccan Herald that pre-monsoon shower and storms affected the refugees severely this year, forcing them to come out onto the streets.

[...]

At present, over a lakh non-tribals in the state have been evacuated following militant atrocities and violence during the last decade. Non-tribals threatened to bring the matter to the notice of the President if the governor fails to address their problem." (Deccan Herald, 22 May 2005)

### **Assam: internally displaced face difficulties upon return from relief camps (April 2003)**

- Returning families face severe economic and social problems
- The state government is making progress on allocation of land to returning families
- The government has requested the Lutheran World Service-India to implement a rehabilitation project

"LWSI has been approached by the District Commissioner (as well as the Sub Divisional Officer for Gossaigaon sub-division) to assist in rehabilitating those families who have returned to their own lands, by providing a variety of support – infrastructure (roads), housing, drinking water, education and livelihood. LWSI's Emergency Officer discussed the matter with government authorities during a recent visit to Assam, and further in-depth assessments were conducted by LWSI in late April.

There are requests coming from the riot victims and the government officials for rehabilitation that **LWSI should intervene substantially and without delay**, to address the severe economic and social problem being faced by the affected communities in the current situation. The families are pushed in to the current situation mainly due to their prolonged camp life with minimum support from outside. The government allocation of new land is in progress. LWSI plan to start the intervention where people resettled and extend to others as they move in to a permanent settlement.

Villages will be **selected** from the following list of recently rehabilitated villages and also from the existing camps, who are being rehabilitated into new areas within Kokrajhar district, based on further field investigations.

#### *Gossaigaon Subdivision*

Previous Relief Camp	Rehabilitated Village	Community	Total Families
Sapkata Adivasi	Matiapara No. 1	Santhal	138
	Matiapara 2	Santhal	83
	Sapkata 2	Santhal	59
	Ramdeo	Santhal	178
	Barasara	Santhal	157
	Bhorpur	Santhal	119
	Lalpur	Santhal	39
	Nayanagar	Santhal	110
Gurufela Adivasi	Kanupara 2	Santhal	170

	Kursumari	Santhal	110
Balegaon Adivasi	Ramdeo	Santhal	170
	Jirampur	Santhal	99
	Arinagar	Santhal	90
	Haltugaon	Santhal	33
	Balagaon Main	Santhal	110
Kasiabari Boro	Bhorpur	Boro	53
	Burasara	Boro	128
	Sindrihora	Boro	36
	Ramdeo	Boro	143
Jambugiri Boro	Bhorpur	Boro	54
	Jambugiri	Rava	69
	Gaonsulka	Boro	95
	Jiaguri	Boro	172

*Kokrajhar Sub-division*

Athiabari Santhal	Athiabari	Santhal	77
	Longatula	Santhal	77
	Sarjomtola	Santhal	26
Harnaguri Boro Camp	Hornaguri	Boro	105
TOTAL			2476

[[link to internal document](#)]" (LWS-I, Appeal 2003)

**Assam: Local organisations transport 4000 Santhal internally displaced from relief camps to villages after government fails to assist them (February 2005)**

"About 4,000 Adivasi inmates of a relief camp in lower Assam's Kokrajhar district were today shifted to 12 forest villages of the district by the All-Adivasi Students' Association of Assam (AASAA) and Adivasi Cobra Militants of Assam(ACMA).

These inmates were put up in the Sapkata relief camp under Gossaigaon sub-division of the district where they had been staying in sub-human conditions since 1996 after they were displaced during riots between the Adivasis and the Bodos.

The chief organiser of AASAA, Basco Chermaco, told *The Hindu* over phone that the inmates of the relief camps were shifted in 19 trucks that were arranged by the student body and the Adivasi militant outfit, which has currently entered into a ceasefire agreement with the State Government. There were 32,000 inmates in the Sapkata relief camp.

Mr. Chermaco said that the two Adivasi organisations undertook the initiative to shift the inmates as the State Government went back on its promises to rehabilitate them." (The Hindu, 16 February 2005)

### **The government granted relief package to displaced from the anti-Bihari riots in Assam (December 2003)**

"The Centre has decided to grant a relief package to the Assam Government for rehabilitating the displaced Hindi-speaking population in the recent anti-Bihari violence that rocked the State last month.

The Union Minister for Development of North East, C.P. Thakur, said the Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, had cleared the proposal to provide relief to those whose houses and shops had been burnt.

Dr. Thakur said the District Magistrates in Assam had been directed to make an estimate of the losses and forward it to the Centre for reimbursement. He said more than 18,000 people had taken shelter in about 40 camps and they would be rehabilitated at places of their choice." (The Hindu, 2 December 2003)

### **Gujarat: internally displaced face discrimination and inadequate rehabilitation measures (January 2005)**

- While adequate compensation and detailed rehabilitation packages enabled victims of the earthquake in 2001 to rebuild their lives themselves, no such comprehensive measures were taken in 2002
- No physical and psychological rehabilitation was provided by the state
- Widows are particularly vulnerable, it has been reported that several have experienced that their requests for compensation have not even been answered
- The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) concludes that relief and rehabilitation measures were inadequate

"The NHRC [the National Human Rights Commission] recommended that ""adequate compensation be provided for those who have suffered. This will require an augmentation of the funds allocated thus far, through cooperative arrangements involving both the State and Central Governments"".[...] It also recommended involving other domestic and international agencies and programs as well as private sector participation in relief and rehabilitation. Further, the NHRC said: ""The role of NGOs should be encouraged and be an intrinsic part of the overall effort to restore normalcy, as was the case in the coordinated effort after the earthquake. The Gujarat Disaster Management Authority, which was deeply engaged in the post-earthquake measures, should be requested to assist in the present circumstances as well"".

Under pressure from civil rights groups, individuals and media, the state government announced some ""aid, assistance and relief"" measures. However, as the International Initiative for Justice in Gujarat has pointed out, the state used the terms ""assistance"" rather than ""compensation"" indicating that the state considered these payments not as a right or entitlement of the victims but as charitable measures.[...] The state reportedly explicitly refused foreign aid to supplement state funding for relief and rehabilitation.

On 4 April 2002, then Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee announced during his visit to Gujarat the allocation of 150 *crores* of rupees (US \$32.6million) for the rehabilitation of victims but no official accounts are available on how the money was spent or how many people received assistance.[...] Supplementary measures were to be taken by state financial and development corporations. The Chief Minister announced that Rs two *lakhs* (about US \$4,350) would be paid in assistance to relatives of those killed in the Godhra incident and Rs 1 *lakh* (US \$ 2,175) to relatives of those killed in the later violence.

[...]

While compensation can never fully make up for loss of life, dignity, livelihood, sense of security and property of the victims, the state of Gujarat has made no effort to set up a mechanism whereby losses can be objectively assessed as a first step to providing adequate compensation. To avoid arbitrary assessments of property loss, the NHRC urged that the state government set up “credible mechanisms for assessing damages done to homes and items of property” to ensure just and speedy compensation disbursement and also suggested that national finance institutions be involved to facilitate special loans to the needy.[...]

In practice, compensation payments were grossly inadequate and arbitrary and bore no relation to actual losses or damage and left many displaced persons in acute destitution; nor were independent assessments undertaken. Though 50,000 rupees were to be given for the loss of homes, in practice this has not been done. According to the report of a non-governmental organisation, *Disha* of Wadali Camp in Dahod, most people received house compensation of only 200 to 500 rupees. At least 25 per cent of victims have received no compensation, and less than 10 per cent have received compensation of more than 30,000 rupees for the loss of their homes. Many people deposing before the Nanavati Shah Commission complained about the inadequate amounts of compensation received by them. Mehrunissa Sheikh from Madhavpura, showed the Commission a cheque of 100 rupees which she had received for her house which was destroyed in the violence and which a government officer had assessed as worth 300,000 rupees. Justice Shah said, “It should shame both those who receive and those who award such compensation”.[...] The amounts of compensation did not enable the recipients to rebuild their homes. “In many cases one cannot even buy a door for the house from the compensation amount paid”, concluded a civil liberties group.[...]

The process of claiming compensation was not adjusted to the particular situation of the victims, making compensation or “assistance”, while theoretically available, slow, insufficient and difficult to obtain for victim survivors. Many victims were too traumatized to fulfil the legal requirements in relevant forms and claims or lacked the will and ability to document and pursue their claims. Many ownership records were not clear, had been left behind, were destroyed or had not been adequately recorded in the first place, making claims impossible to substantiate. Much of the agricultural property was undocumented and made compensation claims for loss or damage virtually impossible. According to reports victims in some cases had to bribe officials to take note of their claims.[...]

[...]

Widows were in a particularly vulnerable situation as they were often overwhelmed by the responsibilities they had to shoulder and often were bereft of all means of livelihood. The International Initiative for Justice in Gujarat reported that in one locality they came across a dozen widows whose houses, possessions and crops had been destroyed and whose applications for a widow's pensions (500 rupees a month; US \$11) had not been answered. Compensation for the deaths of their husbands, if paid at all, had often been received by male relatives and did not benefit the widows.

The PUCL Vadodara reported that for women in the relief camps the issue of compensation had become a source of particular indignation and anger. Many reported suffering losses of several hundreds of thousands of rupees and being offered cheques of 10,000 rupees which they had refused on principle. Other women had accepted this as they were too desperate to refuse.

[...]

While adequate compensation and detailed rehabilitation packages enabled victims of the earthquake in 2001 to rebuild their lives themselves, no such comprehensive measures were taken in 2002. The government rejected responsibility for rehabilitation of the victims outright. During a meeting with a large delegation of representatives of the Muslim community, the Chief Minister rejected the demands of violence affected victims for resettlement in alternate

resettlement sites and refused funds for rebuilding ransacked shrines despite clear NHRC recommendations in this regard.[...] Consequently, no survey of needs was conducted. After privately run relief camps were closed, no alternative housing was provided forcing those once again displaced to seek refuge with relatives or move into rented accommodation, provided they could pay for it. No physical and psychological rehabilitation was provided by the state.

The BJP-VHP call for a boycott of Muslims further aggravated this situation. Leaflets circulated even before, but especially after, February 2002 called for a systematic economic boycott of Muslims, urging Hindus not to buy from Muslims or to sell to them, not to use their services of any kind, not to employ them or be employed by them, with the clearly expressed objective to drive them from the state. It has been strictly enforced, with people who ignore the boycott call being threatened by right wing groups. Without work, many Muslim families have sunk into penury. Then Attorney General, Soli Sorabjee, while criticising the Modi government's reluctance to take necessary steps to restore confidence of the minority, reportedly particularly criticised its support for the social and economic boycott of minorities.[...]" (Amnesty International, January 2005, 7.6.c)

"The Commission has taken note of the package of relief and rehabilitation measures announced by the State Government, including the contribution from the Prime Minister's Relief Fund. It has also noted that disbursement of assistance is "still under progress. " The Commission is concerned that difficulties have arisen in obtaining death and ownership certificates and has referred to this matter earlier in these Proceedings. Delays have also occurred in assessing damages and paying compensation at an appropriate level. The Commission is aware of the immense amount of work that must be done to ensure proper relief and rehabilitation to those who have suffered. It would, however, urge that procedures be streamlined and expedited to deal with the issues mentioned above. Further, as long as inmates stay in the camps, there is need to ensure that this painful interlude in their lives is redeemed, in part at least, by the provision of work and training, by the maintenance of appropriate nutritional standards, by medical and psychiatric care adequate to the demands of the situation. Particular care should also be taken of the needs of widows, victims of gender-related crimes, and orphans. Further, while a number of special schemes have been announced for the victims of the violence, as indeed they should have been, this should not imply that they should not be eligible for the existing range of anti-poverty and employment schemes. In other words, there should be a convergence of Government schemes for their care.

(iii) The Commission has noted the measures being taken to re-settle the victims. Various reports indicate, however, that compensation for damaged property is often being arbitrarily set at unreasonably low amounts and that pressure is being put on victims that they can return to their homes only if they drop the cases they have filed or if they alter the FIRs that they have lodged. It is important to ensure that conditions are created for the return of victims in dignity and safety to their former locations. Only if they are unwilling to return to their original dwelling sites should alternative sites be developed for them. The response of the State Government of 12 April 2002 does not indicate whether it has acted upon the Commission's recommendation that HUDCO, HDFC and international funding agencies be approached to assist in the work for rehabilitation. The Commission would like a further response to this." (NHRC 31 May 2002)

**Gujarat: authorities have failed to provide housing for displaced people upon return (December 2003)**

- The state government has failed to secure housing for displaced families
- Displaced families have moved in with surviving family members or stay in rented accommodation
- The few re-building efforts that are taking place are implemented by NGOs and local leaders within the affected community
- Many stay in Muslim majority areas in nearby towns during night and return to their village during the day

"But while the State has been unable to secure the safe return of survivors to their homes, it has also completely failed to either build or provide alternative housing. Affected families have been left with few options. Some have moved in with surviving family members. Others stay in rented accommodation. But with an economic boycott preventing Muslims from securing a regular income, their tenancy is constantly under threat,

[...]

Some victims resort to what most abandoned refugees do the world over - collecting old sheets of plastic, adding a little mud and calling it home,

[...]

Some Muslim migrant labourers have gone back to their respective states. Those with the means to pay for their forced re-location have left for the Southern States, and to Hyderabad city in particular. But many Muslims are still homeless. None of these large numbers of internal refugees have been economically rehabilitated—they have no jobs or no businesses in their new location—and in the current atmosphere of economic boycott, they have little hope of finding any viable work. Their small compensation amounts can only look after daily needs and rent for a short period of time. Once this compensation money runs out, they are looking at complete destitution and starvation of entire families.

[...]

Effective housing rehabilitation would have required large-scale re-construction of burnt and damaged homes in the survivors' original place of residence and alternative housing in new locations for those unable to return. In neither case has the government stepped forward. It has not even provided survivors with resources so that they can initiate their own re-building efforts. The few re-building efforts that the IIJ team saw evidence of were undertaken entirely by NGOs and local leaders within the affected community. In PV5, for example, out of 49 Muslim families in the village, only seven remain. The rest who have been living in makeshift shelters in PV39 needed permanent shelters. Community leaders approached two Muslim NGOs to build houses. PO7 gave money for the land and PO8 has now given money for construction.

So acute is the continuing perception of being under threat that even NGOs and community leaders are wary of constructing new houses for fear that they may get damaged again.

[...]

In some cases, the government instead of housing displaced people has used the pogrom as an excuse to acquire land.

[...]

In addition to those who have been permanently displaced, a large number of Muslim families have now been compelled to maintain two shelters. Many are living in a permanent state of insecurity, where constant threats (verbal and physical) and periodic incidents of violence (like the burning of houses and business establishments) make it impossible for them to risk staying in their villages at night. So they live in the relative safety of Muslim majority areas in nearby towns, and return to their village during the day to keep an eye on the land, assets and property that may have survived the pogrom. In a situation where livelihoods have been destroyed, the pressure of constant travel and the burden of maintaining two shelters is crippling." (International Initiative of Justice, December 2003, p. 57)

### **Women and children facing trauma due to violence did not receive any follow up (January 2005)**

- The government rehabilitation policy for traumatized women due to sexual violence has been grossly inadequate
- Women's sense of vulnerability has been enhanced by their loss of livelihood which was exacerbated by the economic boycott and they have not received any assistance in resuming their jobs
- The trauma experienced by children who had been exposed to or witnessed violence was not addressed except in some cases by NGOs offering group counselling

"Neither the physical, psychological or economic rehabilitation needs of women survivors have been addressed by the state of Gujarat. Women's physical health needs, including the restoration of their reproductive and sexual health after being subjected to sexual abuse, were ignored. No attention has been paid to sexually transmitted diseases, injuries suffered in gang rapes, pregnancies and abortion. In relief camps, lack of privacy and medical care led many women to initially ignore such needs. MFC found many of the physical effects of the violence suffered by women victims of violence, including disrupted menstrual cycles, pain and vaginal infections apparently caused by the stress and trauma experienced which may have been aggravated by remaining untreated.[...]

[...]

Local observers have pointed out that "'overarching fear has become part and parcel of life for women'" for which no counselling was available.(315) This fear relates to fear of the future, for themselves, their families and community and includes the fear of sexual assault, sometimes further sexual assault, and abuse as well as fear for the safety of family members, including children. The government rehabilitation policy, in itself grossly inadequate, had no specific provisions for women victims of sexual violence such as safe spaces to which women could withdraw and recover. Women who were able to remain in their homes or to return to villages after agreeing to "'compromises'" may also daily face humiliation when they meet men in public who had forced them or their relatives to walk naked or who had raped them.

Doctors who had volunteered to work with victims in the relief camps told an MFC team [Medico Friends Circle, a voluntary organization of Indian health professionals] in April 2002 that post traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, and other mental health problems were widespread, leading to withdrawal, sleep disturbances, nightmares and somatic complaints and would require long-term counselling and support. A study conducted by two doctors of B.J. Medical College Ahmedabad, found that 113 of 300 women who had been exposed to the violence had symptoms of disorder.[...]

The vast majority of women victims with mental problems caused by the violence did not receive adequate and systematic counselling. The MFC in its May 2002 report stated that ""there is no acknowledgment of the need to provide treatment for post traumatic stress disorder ... the only emotional support is provided by camp volunteers with no training or support for this work. ... Medical professional and camp volunteers had strikingly different attitudes to people's mental health needs. The MOs [medical officers] providing medical care at camps consistently undermined the importance of dealing with psychological trauma. Any sign that people were returning to a routine was taken as proof that they were not traumatized."" In fact, the MFC found not only indifference but open disdain for displaced people amongst public health officers. The report quoted a senior government health administrator as saying, ""camp inmates do not have the brains to understand that they are suffering from stress and mental trauma"".

The Government of Gujarat claimed that 40 counselors had visited the camps regularly and worked with 3,824 children, 3,107 adolescents, 4,305 adult women and 4,635 aged persons. It stated that "a total of 17,285 persons were covered in trauma counselling and treatment." [...]

No retraining facilities or financial support were provided for women who had lost their work in the caring professions such as nurses, teachers and domestic workers. Most could not leave the camps or homes on account of safety concerns or lost their work due to the economic boycott. [...]

The trauma experienced by children who had been exposed to or witnessed violence was not addressed except in some cases by NGOs offering group counselling.[...] ." (Amnesty International, January 2005, 7.6.c)

### **Opportunities for livelihood for returning displaced Muslims is boycotted by local authorities (December 2003)**

- There are allegations of widespread discrimination against returning Muslims
- Displaced Muslims have lost access to their previous occupation
- Those who have attempted to return are frequently denied access to their previous jobs
- Many have seen a take-over of their occupations and businesses by the majority population
- The ghettoisation has also meant shrinking financial possibilities for the Muslim community

#### ***There are allegations of widespread discrimination against returning Muslims:***

"An economic and social boycott of the community was openly encouraged and continues in many parts of Gujarat to date. Agricultural land holdings of Muslims, small and large, have been taken over by dominant community and caste groups. The livelihoods of Muslims have been snatched away, and there is a clear-cut and ongoing design to economically cripple the community and drive out the community." (ALRC, 12 March 2003)

"For the Muslims in rural areas who own some lands, a vital means of economic rehabilitation is to return to their villages, take control of this land and begin cultivation. But in case after case they have been denied the right to return. Even in villages where they have been allowed to return under the humiliating "compromise" conditions discussed earlier, the IJ team heard many instances of Muslims still being terrorized. Many were unable to cultivate their lands, were denied the right to use common canals or bore wells for irrigation, or were simply forced to leave their land fallow in the face of threats of physical violence.

[...]

Muslims working in schools, factories, small industry and business establishments – some of them for decades—are also being denied work. The IIJ team heard numerous examples of textile factory workers, construction workers, steel furniture workers, mechanics, and teachers who were fired after years of service as part of the economic boycott. In each case, the excuses differ but the end result is the same. The few Hindus who have tried to stand by their Muslim colleagues have met a similar fate.

[...]

The IIJ team heard many testimonies of the ways in which the forcible exit of Muslims is being accompanied by a take-over of their occupations and businesses by Hindus. This phenomenon can be seen in transport businesses, cassette shops, petty vending on hand carts and other small businesses.

[...]

Ghettoisation thus takes place at various levels and has meant the shrinking of all kinds of spaces. It not only determines the areas in which people can live, but also affects the overall economic situation of the community as its logic dictates where jobs can be taken and what kinds of jobs are available. In the case of trades, it means relying on an already impoverished community with less buying power which leads to a cycle of further deprivation for the community as a whole. This also means a shrinking of the sense of belonging, security and dignity." (International Initiative of Justice, December 2003, pp. 59-61)

## **NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES**

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### **National and international responses to conflict-induced internal displacement in India (January 2005)**

The prime responsibility for assistance to internally displaced lies with the Ministry of Home Affairs. During 2003 and 2004 the federal state budget included funding for relief and rehabilitation to internally displaced in Jammu and Kashmir, Kashmiri Pandits elsewhere in India and the North East (GOI, Annual Report 2003-2004; GOI, Notes on demands for grants 2005-2006). During 2005, a rehabilitation package has also been adopted for the rehabilitation of internally displaced along the Line of Control (LoC) in response to a request from the state government which was sent more than four years ago (Daily Excelsior, 10 August 2005).

However, the overall response to the internal displacement situation is criticised for being inconsistent and ad-hoc, based on requests for support from state governments. In fact, India has no national IDP policy, and the responsibility for IDP assistance and protection is frequently delegated to the state governments. The lack of credible information on numbers and subsistence needs of the displaced in India leaves thousands unassisted and unaccounted for (USCR January 2000; IPCS, Routray, 17 January 2004).

One of the main criticisms against the current national response to internal displacement is that it favours some groups as opposed to others. For example, the government's response to displaced Kashmiri Pandits has been much more generous than the response to displaced elsewhere in the country, especially compared to the internally displaced of tribal origin. According to a local rights group, while a displaced Kashmiri Pandit from Jammu and Kashmir receives 750 rupees per person per month, an adult Bru receives only 80 rupees. Also, while the Indian government has allocated funding to improve conditions in relief camps for Kashmiri Pandits in Jammu, it has not funded such activities elsewhere in the country (The Tribune, 1 January 2006). Despite of the assistance being allocated to them, living conditions in Kashmiri Pandit settlements are still poor and the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has on several occasions stated that compensation to the Pandit community is inadequate (The Tribune, January 2006; ACHR, October 2003).

Some assistance has been provided to relief camps for internally displaced from the international border and the LoC, but on a much lower scale than to Kashmiri Pandits. Most of the displaced from the international border have returned home after a ceasefire between Pakistan and India was concluded in November 2003, but thousands of families displaced from the LoC are still in need of rehabilitation assistance. The state government of Jammu and Kashmir has repeatedly promised that such assistance will be given, but in the meantime the families are still living under deplorable conditions in relief camps (The official website of the Jammu & Kashmir Government, 13 March 2005; Times of India, 13 November 2004).

In the Northeast, where most of the displaced are from indigenous groups, the government has largely delegated the protection and assistance responsibility to state and local authorities. The low priority accorded the plight of IDPs and the limited resources provided by the central government for them have largely resulted in substandard conditions for these populations (Cohen 2000, The Case of India). Internally displaced Santhals, Bodos and Reangs in relief camps in Assam and Tripura receive some food and medical aid through funding from the Ministry of Home Affairs, although the level of assistance is reported to be far from sufficient. There have been reports of starvation and disease in relief camps both in both states. There is no

information on efforts to resettle and provide land to those who can not return to their home areas. The internally displaced in Assam have been given some cash rehabilitation assistance in order to be able to move out of the relief camps, but the amount is insufficient in most cases, thus the beneficiaries tend to remain internally displaced.

The Indian government has been accused of failing to adhere to standards laid out in the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and to international human rights standards in its response to displacement in Kashmir and Gujarat (AI, January 2005; HRW July 2003, p.38; ORF September 2003). In Gujarat, human rights organisations blame local authorities as well as the state government for failing to address the needs of the displaced altogether, despite promises made by the government with regard to rehabilitation (IIJ, December 2003; HRW, July 2003, September 2004; AI January 2005). Also, the government has ignored the rights of thousands of people displaced due to the building of a fence along the Bangladesh border designed to curb illegal immigration and activities by insurgent groups believed to be hiding on the Bangladeshi side of the border. In Tripura alone, 70,000 people have been evicted due to the building of the fence, but have reportedly been refused any compensation from the Indian government (Deccan Herald, 4 December 2005).

In a positive development, during national elections in 2004, the government took several measures to enable internally displaced voters to participate. The Electoral Commission ordered that displaced Kashmiri and Reang citizens could vote in their home states by submitting postal ballots. Newspapers also reported that polling booths were put up in relief camps for displaced people in Assam (The Hindu, 16 March 2004; Deccan Herald, 24 March 2004; India EC, 2004).

Only anecdotal information has been found about the support of local NGOs to internally displaced, although it is likely that thousands of internally displaced survive thanks to the assistance they get from these organizations. In March 2005, civil society organizations working in Assam formed an umbrella organization called the Peoples' Committee for Peace Initiative in Assam. The organization was active in calling for attention to the crisis of displacement unfolding in Assam during the last months of 2005 and co-ordinating assistance to the affected population (PCPIA, 21 October 2005). Also, Several Kashmiri Pandit organisations advocates and lobby for an improvement to their situation.

Among awareness raising initiatives, it should be mentioned that the Calcutta Research Group (CRG) - a network of academics, lawyers, journalists and gender specialists in the South Asian region - has translated the Guiding Principles into Assamese and made available a toolkit for addressing internal displacement in the region. CRG also organizes annual courses on forced migration and has edited a book on internal displacement in South Asia and the relevance of the UN's Guiding Principles in co-operation with the Brookings Project on Internal Displacement. The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has occasionally appealed for an improvement in the situation for IDPs in India. A local rights group, the Asian Centre for Human Rights, is also actively putting a spotlight on the deplorable situation facing displaced in relief camps and the need to develop a national IDP policy.

### **International response**

India receives 60 percent of its aid from multilateral donors and decided in 2003 to stop receiving bilateral assistance from all but six countries, including the United States, the United Kingdom, and Russia (HRW World Report 2004).

India frequently denies international humanitarian actors access to internally displaced populations, arguing that local governments take full care of the affected people. Most of the North-East, for example, is off-limits to foreigners (GOI, 4 November 2003; GOI, 21 July 2000; USCR, January 2000, p.4).

The UN Country Team in India is headed by the Resident Co-ordinator and consists of the following organizations: [APCTT](#), [FAO](#), [IFC](#), [ILO](#), [IME](#), [WSP](#), [UNODC](#), [UNDP](#), [UNAIDS](#), [UNESCO](#), [UNFPA](#), [UNHCR](#), [UNIC](#), [UNICEF](#), [UNIDO](#), [UNV](#), [UNIFEM](#), [WFP](#), [WHO](#) and the [WorldBank](#).

The international community has largely failed to address issues of internal displacement in India. One exception was the case of Gujarat where the then United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, called on the Government of India to provide assistance for internally displaced after the riots (UN, 4 September 2002). However, this call was not followed up by any international initiative and Amnesty International accuses the UN and other international aid agencies of failing either to put sufficient pressure on the state to provide relief to thousands of internally displaced victims, many of them women and children, or of providing adequate assistance themselves. Governments around the world by and large ignored the humanitarian crisis in Gujarat, providing no relief to the thousands of displaced persons in the state (AI, January 2005, 7.6.a).

Kashmir has received some attention and funding from international organizations. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has granted a loan of USD 243 million for Indian-controlled Kashmir, including assistance to the internally displaced population, while the EU in 2003 granted EUR 1.95 million in humanitarian aid for vulnerable groups affected by conflict in Jammu and Kashmir (COE-DMHA, 19 March 2004; EU, 30 June 2003).

UNHCR has acknowledged that it faces a major challenge of dealing with the growth in the number of internally displaced persons, but it also maintains that the responsibility lies with the government and the civil society:

"The issue of growing number of IDPs has become a bigger problem than refugees for India. While the refugee problems seem to become less acute over the years, the problem related to IDPs is growing." (PTI, 30 August 2003)

Some international NGOs work in relief camps for internally displaced in Assam, such as the Médecins Sans Frontières ([MSF](#)) and the [Lutheran World Service-India](#). In Jammu and Kashmir, [ICRC](#), MSF and [OXFAM](#) have also assisted internally displaced.

In 2001, the Global IDP Project- Norwegian Refugee Council organized a [workshop](#) on the Guiding Principles in co-operation with the Center for Refugee Studies, Javdapur University.

## **Policy and Recommendations**

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### **Amnesty International urges Indian authorities to provide adequate assistance and rehabilitation to internally displaced in Gujarat (January 2005)**

"Amnesty International urges the government to draw up clear and concrete statutory provisions for the setting up and running of relief camps including strict guidelines that such camps may not be closed unless peace is fully restored in the affected areas, and relief and rehabilitation measures are fully implemented enabling the displaced to return to secure and dignified lives. Nobody should be expelled against their will. Until the voluntary closure of camps, all the food, clothing, health and security needs of the people in the camps should be fully met by the state.

The Government of India should ensure that it respects its obligations under international law to provide appropriate and adequate reparation to all victims of human rights abuses and their families. This should include the provision of rehabilitation services to victims and their families. Compensation and rehabilitation for victims of the 2002 violence, where incomplete or inadequate, should be urgently dealt with to enable these victims to rebuild their lives." (Amnesty International, January 2005, 7.6.c)

### **Recommendations from New Delhi Conference on internally displaced Kashmiri Pandits (September 2003)**

- A conference on the issue of internally displaced Kashmiri Pandits in New Delhi in September 2003 concluded that central and state government assistance was inadequate
- One of the immediate objectives adopted was to ensure that the displaced families living in camps and temporary accommodations should be able to live in human conditions of habitation, occupation, education and health care
- The conference recommended a countrywide census of the displaced Kashmiri Pandit population to assess the magnitude of displacement and socio-economic conditions
- It was also recommended to set up a committee comprising representatives of National Minority Commission, National Human Rights Commission and Kashmiri Pandits, the majority community and State Government to determine the time, condition and pace of the return of displaced persons

"A THREE-PRONGED APPROACH TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEMS OF KASHMIRI PANDITS WERE AGREED UP ON:

**Long term:** Return of displaced Kashmiri Pandits to Kashmir. .

**Medium term:** To ensure that those Kashmiri Pandits still living in the Valley are not compelled to leave.

**Short-term and Immediate:** To ensure that the displaced families now living in various camps and in other temporary accommodations are able to live in human conditions of habitation, occupation, education and health care.

### **STEPS RECOMMENDED FOR ACHIEVING THESE OBJECTIVES**

1. Set up a high-power committee comprising representatives of National Minority Commission, National Human Rights Commission and Kashmiri Pandits, the majority community and State Government to determine the time, condition and pace of the return of displaced persons.
2. Conduct a countrywide census of the displaced Kashmiri Pandit population by the National Minorities Commission to assess the magnitude of displacement and socio-economic conditions.
3. Conduct a comprehensive health survey of displaced population living in camps. The survey should be completed in three months and the reports should be made public.
4. Regularise salary structures and provide other benefits that accrue to other government employees of the State to the displaced Kashmiri Pandit staff.
5. Create a comprehensive employment scheme for 20,000 youth from the Kashmiri Pandit community.
6. Provide reservations in educational, technical and professional colleges in various States, Universities and Institutions.
7. Institute National scholarships for talented students of displaced community.

8. Construct habitable two-room apartments for the displaced families as a temporary measure.
9. Provide better medical facilities like hospitals, pathological labs et al at the camps.
10. Repair and rebuild Hindu shrines and properties in Kashmir valley.
11. Set up a custodian of properties to take charge of abandoned shrines and properties of displaced Kashmiri Pandits and undertake renovation and repairs.
12. Set up a commission to address all aspects of the problems including distress sale and illegal encroachment of the properties and land of displaced Kashmiri Pandits.
13. Raise the migrant monthly cash compensation to Rs. 6000.
14. Provide interest free loans and other financial aid to farmers and traders amongst the displaced Kashmiri Pandits.
15. Create a Cultural Centre for protection of valuable manuscripts, sculptures, architecture and books.
16. Awards and scholarship should be instituted for Kashmiri Hindus writing books in Kashmiri language.
17. Provide grants and aids to educational and other welfare institutions of Kashmiri Pandits.
18. Provide immediate employment opportunities and security to Kashmiri Pandits who continue to stay in the valley.
19. Involve Non Governmental Organisations to initiate dialogue with Kashmiri civil society leaders, religious and other prominent personalities of the Muslim community about creating conditions for permanent return of the displaced Pandits.
20. Organise neighborhood dialogue amongst displaced persons and others living in the same village and localities." (ORF, Recommendations Sep. 2003)

### **The Asia Centre for Human Rights calls for a national IDP Policy**

"The Government of India has been debating for the adoption of a National Rehabilitation Policy for the persons displaced by development projects. However, there are no such policies on the conflict-induced IDPs. This despite the fact that there is large number of displaced persons across the conflict-afflicted states.

The Government of India must develop a policy for providing humanitarian assistance and access to essential food and potable water, basic shelter and housing, appropriate clothing and essential medical services and sanitation to the conflict induced internally displaced persons. There is a need to develop early warning mechanisms to prevent such conflicts.

The proper rehabilitation of conflict induced displaced people must form the centre of peace building programmes in these areas. Otherwise, these displaced persons are most likely to become easy targets of recruitment by the insurgent groups. The human and material costs of addressing the insurgencies have always been exponentially high." (Chakma, in the Tribune, 1 January 2006)

### **Call for a database on internal displacement in the North-East (January 2004)**

- The state governments avoid projecting figures on displacement
- Head counting of the people who find their way to the relief camps does take place, but there is no effort to assess the number of people fleeing outside camps

- The situation is further complicated by the lack of an IDP policy on part of the Union Government
- The absence of accurate data affects the validity of current research on the various conflicts in the region
- The creation and maintaining a database on displacement in the North-East would be an important initial step in understanding the gravity of the situation

"Compared to the gravity of the problem, attempts to map the internal wars in terms of the impact of militancy, inter-ethnic or even intra-ethnic clashes on the livelihood aspect of people remain limited. The state governments display a tendency to shy away from projecting figures, lest it will reflect on their (in)capability to handle the situation. No estimate is available on the recent flight of the Hindi-speaking people from the northeast, particularly from Assam. Even years after the Bodo-Santhal clashes in the districts of lower Assam, neither the government nor the private agencies possess accurate data on the number of people displaced from their original villages. A standard and perhaps convenient practice has been to adopt a head counting of the people who ultimately find their way to the relief camps. However, such approach closes its eyes on the population who choose to migrate out of the locale of violence to the urban centres of the state and mingle with the general populace.

The lack of effort on part of the government has also been a reason for the circulation of seemingly inaccurate displacement figures. The information on IDP by the Norwegian Refugee Council, made available through its database on the 'Global Displacement Figures: 2000-2003' is a useful compilation in that it lists IDP figures under two special categories: Lowest and the Highest estimates of IDPs found in sources. According to the database, in the year 2003, the lowest estimate of IDPs in Assam is 87,000 Santhals, where as the highest estimate touches the 200,000 mark. Separately, for the same year, the lowest estimate of displaced Bengali population in Tripura is 28,000 (state government data) whereas the highest estimate is to the tune of 150,000, a figure that circulates among the local media.

The root of the problem, however, is not the sourcing of the figures, which remain grossly fabricated, promoted as they are either by various parties having a stake in the conflict situation, or even by ignorant news agencies lies in the absence of a correct estimate of the IDP situation in the region.

Of late, there has been considerable research activity on various aspects of conflict in the region. However, all such analysis, in the absence of accurate data, run into the danger of reinforcing stereotypes. The situation is further complicated by the lack of an IDP policy on part of the Union Government. As a result, concerns of the displaced lot are subjected to the whims and the fancies of the concerned state governments.

No doubt, the nature, frequency and extent of the causes of internal displacement in the region are too varied to be monitored and recorded systematically. However creating and maintaining a database on IDP in the northeast is an important initial step in understanding the gravity of the situation." (IPCS, Routray, 17 January 2004)

### **The International Crisis Group recommends return of Kashmiri Pandits to the Kashmir Valley (2002)**

"India should also encourage the return of Kashmiri Pandits to their homes in the valley. Some have continued to live in their own homes in Srinagar through the *Tahrik*. Kashmiri Muslim neighbours have protected the property of most who left. No significant sub-population or party in

Kashmir opposes the return of Pandits, although many are doubtful this will happen. It would, however, facilitate healing and peace in Kashmir, and at a minimum, the government should devise incentive packages to make a return to the valley economically viable for Pandit families. " (ICG, 21 Nov. 2002, p. 26)

## **References to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement**

### **Known references to the Guiding Principles (as of May 2005)**

- Training on the Guiding Principles

### **Reference to the Guiding Principles in the national legislation**

None

### **Other references to the Guiding Principles**

None

### **Training on the Guiding Principles**

NRC training workshop: The Global IDP Project of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) together with the Centre for Refugee Studies of Jadavpur University (Calcutta) held a training workshop on the Guiding Principles in the city of Calcutta, India. The workshop was part of a global NRC effort to disseminate and explain the Guiding Principles to representatives of governments, NGOs, the UN agencies and the displaced themselves, in order to ensure better protection and assistance to internally displaced persons.

Date: 28-30 November 2001

Documents: Norwegian Refugee Council, Workshop on the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement: Calcutta, India 28-30 November 2001

[Link to document](#)

### **Documents/books**

Banerjee/ Chaudhury/ Das: Internal Displacement in South Asia, The Relevance of the UN's Guiding Principles (Sage Publications, India, 2005)

### **The Indian Government sees no role for the international community on the issue of protection and assistance to IDPs (2000)**

- The Indian Government argues that international attention to IDPs has to remain within the bounds of the concept of national sovereignty and that
- international actors have no role in displacement caused by development projects
- The Government also argues that the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement do not have intergovernmental approval

"The Secretary General has, in his report, referred to the guiding principles on Internal Displacement as 'legal' principles. We must again point out that these principles were not negotiated in an inter-governmental process but drafted by a team of technical experts and NGOs. This process does not qualify them to be referred to as 'legal' principles.

[...]

We would, in conclusion, refer to the Guiding Principles for Humanitarian Assistance which have been so clearly outlined in section 1 of the annex to resolution 46/182. These notably are those of humanity, neutrality and impartiality, with full respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity of States. They also state that humanitarian assistance should be provided with the consent of the affected country and on the basis of an appeal made by it. These principles are valid, time-tested and their continued application would contribute towards success in relieving pain and suffering." (Government of India, Statement to the UN General Assembly, 25 November 2002)

"...the primary duty and responsibility of protecting and assisting the IDPs is that of the State concerned. International action with regard to IDP should remain within the bounds of the concept of sovereignty, which should not be diluted in any manner. [...] Within countries, the law of the land has to prevail, and what is important is to ensure that these laws reflect a high level of protection for the human rights of all persons. With regard to displacement occurring on account of development projects, my delegation is of the view that in democratic societies, such decisions are made by the elected representatives of the people. We do not believe that external agencies have a role in this." (Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations Office – Geneva April 2000 p.5-6)

"International action must be at the request of the governments concerned. We do not share the opinion [...] that some governments might not have the capacity or be willing to discharge their responsibilities. No evidence has been presented for this sweeping charge. [...] There are also the Guidelines on IDPs, prepared by the SG's Representative, which do not have intergovernmental approval; however, it is these that the UN system seems to find most attractive." (Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations Office – New York July 2000 p.1-3)

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