to non-permanent residents were not cancelled and instead outsiders were given new leases in violation of the Accord. Voter lists for the CHT were not prepared only with permanent residents but included outsiders. The provision to provide employment to permanent residents of the CHT with priority for Jumma people in all forms of civil service in the CHT was also not followed. The above are some of the unimplemented provisions that particularly deserve attention.

It is a matter of great hope that the grand alliance led by the Awami League came to power in the general election held in December 2008. The Awami League had promised in its election manifesto that it would fully implement the CHT Accord. However, almost two years have passed and the present government is yet to take effective steps to implement the CHT Accord.

Hence, no basic changes have been achieved during the tenure of the present government. Rather, there has been hardly any positive development in the overall situation in the CHT. Expansion of settlements and forcible land grabbing by the Bengali settlers with the support of military and civil administration continue unabated in all the three districts of CHT.

As a result, though more than 13 years have passed after signing of the Accord, most of the provisions, especially the main issues of the Accord, such as preservation of tribal-inhabited characteristics of CHT region, effective enforcement of the three HDCs and CHT Regional Council Act, resolution of land disputes through Land Commission, rehabilitation of returnee Jumma refugees and internally displaced Jumma families, withdrawal of temporary camps of security forces and military administration, preparing voter list only with the permanent residents of CHT, rehabilitation of the Bengali settlers outside CHT, etc., have either been partially implemented or left unimplemented.

Many powerful influences are standing in the way of implementation of the CHT Accord. Of these, the most important is the government's lack of strong political commitment for implementation of the Accord. Since its signing, the successive governments showed little sincerity or goodwill in implementing the Accord.

Another obstacle to the CHT Accord implementation process is the anti-accord role played by the military forces deployed in the CHT as well as government employees at the level of the three hill districts as well as the sub-district level. They in general do not wish for the CHT Accord to be implemented. A form of military administration under the name of "Operation Uttoron" continues to this day in the CHT. Though some of the military officers deployed in the CHT do support the Accord, other powerful quarters can still be seen to be active in opposing it.

Yet another obstacle to implementation of the Accord is the presence of fundamentalist and extreme communalist organisations in CHT. These fundamentalist organisations have been assisting the Bengali settlers in carrying out communal attacks on Jumma peoples in order to prevent implementation of the Accord.

The role of the CHT Affairs Ministry (MOCHTA) has also not been positive with regard to implementation of the CHT Accord. The idiosyncratic mindset of the bureaucrats of the CHT Ministry deeply affected by a chauvinistic mentality is largely responsible for the total non-cooperation for implementation of the Accord. Almost all the officers and employees at the MoCHTA continue to be non-indigenous persons who have only superficial exposure and understanding of the complexities of the region.

Under the circumstances, chaos and confusion reign supreme in the region instead of peace and normalcy. It will not be possible to implement the CHT Accord fully and properly unless these obstacles are removed. Implementation of the CHT Accord is the only way to achieve a lasting political solution to the CHT issue.

In order to resolve the CHT problem through political and peaceful means and to establish the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of indigenous peoples of the region, the implementation of the CHT Peace Accord is key. Without proper and speedy implementation of the CHT Peace Accord, good governance and rule of law in the CHT will remain elusive.

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