

Statement on Shooting and Violence in Khagrachari District, Chittagong Hill Tracts

October 1, 2025

Jumma Net

1. Statement

Jumma Net expresses strong outrage and deep condolences regarding the alleged rape of a Marma woman by Bengali youths on September 23, 2025, in the vicinity of Guimara Upazila, Khagrachari District, Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh, and the subsequent shooting and violent response by security forces against indigenous protests on September 28. Reports indicate at least three indigenous individuals were killed and many others injured amid the protests. (Reports vary on the number of casualties; some confirm four deaths.)

This incident occurred against the backdrop of protests and road blockades against the gang rape of a Marma girl by three Bengali youths. Reports indicate clashes between government security forces and protesters, gunfire, and the burning of markets and houses by Bengali residents.

Jumma Net denounces excessive use of force against peaceful protests, collective reprisals against residents, or intimidation of victims and witnesses, regardless of the reason. We strongly urge the government, security authorities, and relevant agencies to restore order swiftly and justly and to hold the perpetrators accountable through strict legal measures.

2. Facts (Summary based on media reports)

- The incident was triggered by protests over the September 23 gang rape of a Marma girl by three Bengali youths
- On September 28, at least 3 people died in clashes and shootings by government security forces during protests in Guimara. Multiple media outlets reported this (some reports state 4 deaths)
- That same afternoon, Bengali residents set fires in and around Ramesu/Ramessu Bazaar in Guimara, burning shops and surrounding houses
- Reports indicate at least 25 injured (including military, police, and journalists)
- Bangladesh's Ministry of Home Affairs announced "three deaths from attacks by miscreants, with injuries also on the security forces side."
- Authorities reportedly established a five-member investigation committee on September 30th to simultaneously investigate the casualties and assess compensation.

3. Jumma Net's Position and Demands

(1) Independent, Impartial, and Prompt Truth-Finding

The government must strengthen the investigative committee with independence, expertise, and participation from local stakeholders, so that it can conduct a thorough, time-bound investigation that guarantees third-party impartiality (including ballistic analysis, preservation of death/injury records and scene footage, verification of phone/radio communication logs, etc.). We demand the investigation results and evidence be made public to fulfill the government's accountability.

(2) Strict Legal Accountability for Perpetrators

We demand the prompt arrest and prosecution of suspects in the collective violence incidents, as well as those involved in illegal shootings, arson, and looting, regardless of their status or affiliation, and that they undergo fair judicial proceedings under domestic law.

(3) Protecting Residents and Avoiding “Collective Punishment”

Security authorities must prioritize protecting residents and immediately cease excessive or indiscriminate use of force against protests, as well as operations leading to collective punishment of specific communities. They must fully respect the constitutionally guaranteed rights to life and physical safety (Articles 31 and 32) and freedom of peaceful assembly (Article 37).

(4) Humanitarian Assistance and Relief

Immediately provide medical assistance to the injured, compensation for damaged homes and businesses, evacuation and protective measures, and protection for victims, witnesses, and journalists.

4. International Standards and the National Legal Framework

Bangladesh is a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), requiring guarantees of the right to life, fair procedures, and freedom of expression and assembly. In Bangladesh, Article 31 (Protection of the Law), Article 32 (Freedom of Life and Person), and Article 37 (Freedom of Peaceful Assembly) of the Constitution affirm these as fundamental human rights. The actions of law enforcement authorities must comply with these norms and satisfy the principles of necessity, proportionality, and non-discrimination.

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