

Day 5 – Greener

Necessary Information

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The issue

[The protest of Garo Tribe for their motherland.](#)

Madhupur Gahr is mainly a terraced land in Bangladesh that contain iron-rich sediments where the Garo people have been living for generations. The area of Madhupur Gahr is mainly covered with huge greenery and identified as a sub-tropical moist deciduous forest. According to the records, they paid taxes to the local landlords in the British Colonial period (Mree, 2021). Which legitimized their ownership of the lands. But during the Pakistan period in 1956, the government deny their ownership on the land and banned jum cultivation on the land and besides recognized some of the forest as reserved forest and restricted from the locals (Sanjeeb Drong et al., 2020). Also, the indigenous people who lived there were asked to leave the place and move elsewhere. As a response to this injustice, the people fought back, they showed protest. Later in the history, severe injustice, like applying military force against the unarmed people and killing the protestors also happened in the period of Bangladesh regime.

Who is it impacting most?

It is the indigenous group who lived there for a thousand years are impacting the most. They are the Garo people. They call the forest “Aa’Bima” which means the mother. And now they are fighting to save their mother from the settlers.

How close to where you live is this injustice occurring?

The place is less than 30 Km away from where my home is located.

Is any local government or organization working to intervene?

- Ministries of Environment and Forest,
- Ministry of Land,
- Department of Forests,
- Department of Environment (DoE),
- Deputy Commissioner (DC), Tangail,
- Upazilla Revenue Officer,
- Upazila Chairman,
- Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO), Modhupur, Tangail,
- Assistant Commissioner (Land), Modhupur, Tangail.
- District Forest Officer, Tangail.
- Bangladesh Border Guard
- Bangladesh Army
- Bangladesh Air force

What would be my approach.

- First of all, if I have the power or the authority to solve this problem, I would go for the “local people empowerment”, and what is that? In this formula, the forest and its environment would have been cultivated and protected by the local people who have living there for generations and adopted with the environment. In this way it would be easier to maintain the integrity and sacred nature of the forest, which is the first principle of the environmental justice and also fifth.
- Forest reservation and conservation plan would be made on the basis of relationship between the Garo people and the forest to maintain the balance among people and environment.
- Any kind of military implementation would be strictly prohibited in the area to control the activities of people, where the second and fifteenth principles are established.
- Compensation must be ensured to the victims. (Principle-9)
- The locals would be considered as one of the major stakeholders and decision makers in any kind of decision making activities. (Principle- 7)

Call to action

Facts

1. The right to land was stolen from the indigenous people.
2. They are told to evacuate the area and move elsewhere.
3. Native cultivation system has been banned.

4. Biodiversity got disturbed by the applied modern cultivation systems and invasive alien species.
5. Activities are biased by the settler people.
6. No significant compensation has been assured to the victims.
7. Natives are left out of the decision-making process.

Actions

1. Bring back the right (both human and environmental) of the indigenous people of Madhupur Garh.
2. Banned from the indigenous cultivation system should be removed.
3. Natives should get the prior priority in decision-making and conserving the forest.
4. Ensurement of proper compensation.
5. Any kind of business should vanish.
6. Practice of culture alien exotic species need to be stopped.

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Screenshots of social media post

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← Posts



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mahfuzul_islam_megh call for action on the environmental injustice in Madhupur Garh.

@turninggreenorg

@drbronner

@captainplanetfdn @friends_earth

@humanrightswatch

46 seconds ago



References

- Mree, J. (2021). Locals reject development projects in Madhupur forests *New Age*.
<https://www.newagebd.net/article/140504/locals-reject-development-projects-in-madhupur-forests>
- Sanjeeb Drong, Robaet Ferdous, Dipayan Khisa, Syed Zakir Hossain, Zobaida Nasreen Kona, Falguni Tripura, & Falguni, A. (2020). The cries of Modhupur Garh. *The daily star*.
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