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6.3.2. Communal violence

As noted by The Diplomat there has been a 'long-standing pattern of violence and discrimination against indigenous communities' in the CHT (see section [6.3.](#)), and there is deep mistrust between indigenous people and Bengalis in the area.[595](#) On 18 September 2024, a young Bengali man, accused of stealing a motorcycle, was beaten to death by a mob in Khagrachari Sadar, which sparked intercommunal violence between indigenous people and Bengalis in the districts of Rangamati and Khagrachari.[596](#) Over the two following days[597](#) at least four indigenous people were reportedly killed, 75 injured, and 142 properties looted, destroyed and torched, including Buddhist temples[598](#) and homes and business properties of indigenous people.[599](#) According to Minority Rights Group (MRG), indigenous families fled and took shelter in the forest.[600](#) On 19 September 2024, police reportedly opened fire against a group of indigenous students blocking the road Khagrachari-Panchari, protesting against the violence of the previous day. Police fire killed two students and injured nine.[601](#) On 20 September 2024, indigenous people held a protest march in Rangamati Sadar,[602](#) and they were attacked by Bengalis.[603](#) One indigenous person was killed, and properties of indigenous people were set on fire, including a Buddhist temple,[604](#) the CHT Regional Council's office,[605](#) and at least 50 shops.[606](#) IWGIA accused the military of launching organised attacks with Bengalis on 19–20 September 2024, targeting indigenous people. The organisation further accused the police of not intervening to protect indigenous people or their properties during communal violence,[607](#) and that Bengali settlers use incidents such as the mob beating on 18 September 2024, as 'a pretext to unleash violence against the indigenous population', often 'with the express or tacit support of the nearly 100% Bengali security personnel.' IWGIA also reported on the military searching the phones of indigenous people in Rangamati, deleting footage of the attacks, and beating those having such records.[608](#) This information could not be corroborated within the time constraints of drafting this report. In September 2024, the CHT Commission also documented a gang rape of an indigenous woman, and two attempted rapes of an indigenous woman and an eight-year old indigenous girl, by Bengalis.[609](#)

'Heavy law enforcement' was reportedly deployed in the CHT following these events,[610](#) and the local administration imposed Section 144[611](#) in Rangamati and Khagrachari[612](#) - restricting unlawful assemblies of four or more persons.[613](#) The Business Standard reported on 'a 72-hour blockade of roads and waterways' in all districts of the CHT, and disruptions of the mobile network and fixed broadband internet.[614](#) On 1 October 2024, intercommunal violence broke out again after a mob killed a teacher accused of raping an indigenous girl.[615](#) Indigenous properties were torched and vandalised.[616](#) According to the Daily Star, Section 144 was

withdrawn on 2 October 2024 'as tension eased'. Although things seemed to be 'back to normalcy' at a local bazaar in Khagrachhari, only Bengali traders were present on 3 October 2024.[617](#) Moreover, on 6 October 2024, the Buddhist community cancelled a significant annual ceremony, Kathin Chibor Dan, due to security concerns. Several Buddhist temples and statues had been vandalised, and donation boxes looted during the violence.[618](#)

On Christmas eve, 24 December 2024, 17 houses of the Christian Tripura community in Bandarban were set on fire.[619](#) The interim government condemned the attack, and the local police stated that they had arrested four suspects on 26 December 2024.[620](#) A land dispute was reportedly the motive behind the attack,[621](#) although the International CHT Commission stated that the perpetrators, allegedly connected to a former IGP, had made repeated attempts to evict Tripura families by threats, coercion and violence. It further highlighted the continuing influence of former government affiliates,[622](#) which TIB has also reported on.[623](#)

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