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BANGLADESH: Army throws 750 Mru families off their land 31 Jan 2007

The Bangladesh army has evicted 750 [Mru](#) families from their ancestral land in the remote villages of Bandarban Hill District in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh. The evictions were to make way for an artillery training centre. The army claims that it purchased the land in 1991-2 and that the Mru failed to leave, despite several notices.

The disputed land covers 11,445 acres and houses seven tribal villages, one primary school and two churches. The Mru have consistently objected to the army's acquisition of their land.

The Mru (also known as Mro) are one of the 'Jumma' tribes of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. They practice shifting cultivation, known as 'Jhum', on the hilly slopes, and they hunt and gather in the forest.

The Mru rely on their land as their only source of survival. Since they were evicted in December 2006 they have been suffering from lack of food and struggling in the cold weather.

The military have a long and brutal history in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. They continue to have a strong presence in the region, despite the peace accord signed in 1997, which promised the withdrawal of all temporary military camps in the region. Human rights violations against the tribal population remain common.