



Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland)
LEGAL AID BOARD

Bangladesh - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on Wednesday 27 and Thursday 28 May 2009

Does the East Bengal Communist Party have political aims or are they merely a criminal group with political pretensions; Is there evidence of the party kidnapping or falsely imprisoning minors

Under the heading 'Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBCP; Communist Party of East Bengal; Purba Bangla Sarbohara Party)' page 75 of a *UK Home Office* profile from September 2008 says

"The PBCP is a proscribed radical Maoist movement, founded in 1968 following a split in the Bangladesh Communist Party. It seeks communist revolution by violent means. PBCP cadres have reportedly been involved in acts of murder, robbery, extortion, land grabbing and abduction for ransom. According to the South Asia Terrorism Portal (accessed on 9 October 2006), the current leader is Mofakkar Chowdhury" (UK Home Office, (25 September 2008), *Country of Origin Information Report, Bangladesh*).

The *South Asia Terrorist Group* in 2009 note considering 'Objectives and Ideology' that

"The PBCP has a revolutionary agenda of capturing state power through armed struggle. It draws inspiration from the Chinese revolution. In the opinion of the PBCP, oppression by the people of the then West Pakistani was the principal reason that led to the liberation war in the territories of the then East Pakistan following which Bangladesh was formed. The PBCP is staunchly nationalist and perceives that India is a hegemon in the sub-continent, which it says is the 'principle contraction' facing Bangladesh. The PBCP is strongly opposed to the presence of feudal elements in Bangladesh. Ideologically, it is closer to the Marxist-Leninist groups of India and wishes to launch a joint movement along with progressive parties in India, particularly the Naxalites of West Bengal. The PBCP entertains the hope that China would, at some time in the future, provide significant assistance in realising its goals" (South Asia Terrorist Portal, (2009), *Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBCP)*).

Commenting on 'Activities and Financing' the same source says

"PBCP cadres have reportedly been involved in acts of murder, robbery, extortion, land grabbing and abduction for ransom. Bangladesh Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury said, on April 8, 2002, in Parliament that the PBCP was being encouraged by the Opposition to cause disturbances in some parts of the country. Speaking in the context of all outlawed parties, and that includes the PBCP, the Minister added that "Members of the outlawed parties are involved in rape, murder, dacoity, extortion, and other terrorist activities", as well as in land grabbing. Reports indicate that the PBCP primarily targets landowners and

contractors and extorts money from them. It is believed that PBCP cadres harass businessmen for finances and torture people in remote villages. The outlaws are alleged to be indulging in settling land disputes in rural areas. In the process of adjudicating disputes, PBCP cadres collect money through their strong-arm tactics from both the parties to a dispute” (ibid).

The *Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers* in May 2008 notes

“In southwest Bangladesh, factions of the banned Maoist Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) were reported to have recruited children aged 13-16 to make and plant bombs and throw grenades. Party operatives were reported to have targeted children from slum areas and families of victims of political violence for recruitment. A number of such children were reported to have been killed by police in "crossfire" in 2004 and 2005” (Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, (May 2008), *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008 – Bangladesh*).

No further information on this issue could be found among sources available to the RDC.

References

Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, (May 2008), *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008 – Bangladesh*

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

Sources Consulted

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Norwegian Refugee Council
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