

**Democracy and Development Experience in
Sikkim: A Study of Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Government (1984-1994)**

**Thesis Submitted for the Award of Doctor of
Philosophy (Political Science) Under the University
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Submitted by **Buddhilal Subba**
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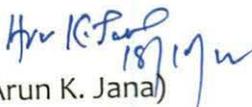
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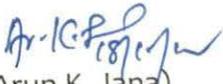
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled '*Democracy and Development Experience in Sikkim: A Study of Sikkim Sangram Parishad Government (1984-1994)*' submitted by Buddhilal Subba has been completed under my supervision. It is an original piece of work and it has not been submitted anywhere for the award of any degree. It may hence be placed for evaluation before examiners for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the University of North Bengal.


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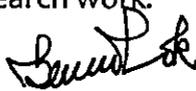
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Abbreviations

ADEC:	Annual Development Economic Conference
AFDC:	Aid to Families with Dependent Children
AIHB:	All India Handicraft Board
ARWSP:	Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme
ASKLC:	Akhil Sikkim Kirat Limboo Chumlung
BEP:	Biogas Energy Plantation
BESPDD:	Bureau of Economics and Statistics Planning and Development Department
BL:	Bhutia-Lepchas
BPL:	Below Poverty Line
CBI:	Central Bureau of Investigation
CBSE:	Central Board of Secondary Education
CIT:	Central Income Tax
CIU:	Central Industrial Units
CPI (M):	Communist Party of India (Marxist)
CRESP:	Commission for Review of Environmental and Social Policies Plans and Programmes
CRPF:	Central Reserve Police Force
CRSP:	Central Rural Sanitation Programme
CTSS:	Central Transport Subsidy Scheme
DDCP:	Diarrhoeal Disease Control Programme
DEO:	District Education Officers
DESME:	Department of Economic, Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation
DFID:	Department for International Development
DIC:	District Industrial Centres
DIET:	District Institute for Education and Training
DTYC:	Denjong Tribal Yargey Chogpa
DWCRA:	Development of Women and Children of Rural Area
EDP:	Entrepreneurship Development Programme
EHN:	Education, Health and Nutrition
EMP:	Entrepreneurs Motivation Programme
ETC:	Education Technology Cell
FCI:	Food Corporation of India
FCSD:	Food and Civil Supplies Department
FFDA:	Fish Farmers Development Agency
FHC:	Family Health Centres
FISKVIB:	Financial Industries and Sikkim Khadi and Village Industrial Board
FPP:	Family Planning Programme

FWP:	Food for Work Programme
GICI:	Government Institute of Collage Industries
GSHD:	Governance for Sustainable Human Development
HAC:	Health Awareness Camp
HACOTP:	Health Awareness Camp and Orientation Training Programme
HEA:	Health Education Activities
IAY:	Indra Awas Yojana
ICA:	Identity Cards Albums
ICDS:	Integrated Child Development Scheme
ICMR:	Indian Council of Medical Research
ICS:	Improved Chulla Scheme
IDBI:	Industrial Development Bank of India
IDD:	Iodine Deficiency Diseases
IED:	Integrated Education for Disabled
IGNOU:	Indra Gandhi National Open University
IMF:	International Monetary Fund
INC:	Indian National Congress
IPR:	Information and Public Relation
IREP:	Integrated Rural Employment Programme
IRPP:	Integrated Rural Energy Planning Programme
ISP:	Improved Seed Programme
ITI:	Industrial Training Institute
IUD:	Intra-Uterine-Devices
JAC:	Joint Action Committee
JNP:	Janata National Party
JP:	Janata Party
JSN:	Jana Siksha Nilayams
KVIC:	Khadi and Village Industries Commission
LDCS:	Less-Developed Countries
LVPU:	Low Volume Production Unit
MAPP:	Maximization of Agricultural Production Programme
MEP:	Malaria Eradication Programme
MGW:	Mission and Groom Water
MIC:	Microwave Integrated Circuit
MISA:	Maintenance of Internal Security Act
MLA:	Member of Legislative Assembly
MLT:	Muyal Liang Trust
MNP:	Minimum Needs Programme
MP:	Muyal Pronzom
MPCS:	Multi-Purposes Co-operative Societies

MRSP:	Massive Rural Sanitation Programme
NABARD:	National Bank for Agriculture and Development
NCERT:	National Council for Educational Research and Training
NEFS:	National Equity Fund Scheme
NFE:	Non-Formal Education
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organisation
NMEP:	National Malaria Eradication Programme
NPCB:	National Programme for the Control of Blindness
NREP:	National Rural Employment Programme
NRTS:	Nationalised Road Transport Service
NSCL:	National Small Industries Corporation Limited
NSDP:	Net State Domestic Product
NSER:	New and Renewable Energy Source Cell
NSICL:	National Small Industries Corporation Limited
NSP:	Naya Sikkim Party
NSS:	National Social Service
NSSS:	National Service Schemes and Statistics
OBC:	Other Backward Classes
OECD:	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPP:	Oilseed Production Programme
OTP:	Orientation Training Programme
PDS:	Public Distribution System
PHC:	Primary Health Sub-Centres
PI:	Polytechnic Institute
PPP:	Plant Protection Programme
RATP:	Rural Artesian Training Programme
RDD:	Rural Development Department
REC:	Rural Electrification Corporation
REP:	Rural Electrification Programme
RE:	Rural Electrification
RFLP:	Rural Functional Literacy Programme
RFWPS:	Rural Fuel Wood Plantation Scheme
RLEGP:	Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme
RMRT:	Rangjyong Mutanchi Rong Tarzum
RPS:	Rajya Praja Sammelan
RWD:	Rural Work Department
RWSS:	Rural Water Supply Scheme
SAA:	Supply Aids and Appliances
SAP:	Sikkim Armed Police
SC[R]:	Sikkim Congress [Revolutionary]

SCP:	Special Component Plan
SC:	Sikkim Congress
SDP:	Social Defence Programme
SE:	Solar Energy
SHDR:	Sikkim Human Development Report
SIDICO:	Sikkim Industrial Development and Investment Co-operation
SIE:	State Institute of Education
SIHNS:	Sikkim Institute of Higher Nginma Studies
SISI:	Small Industrial Services Institute
SIS:	System Important scheme
SITCO:	Sikkim Time Corporation
SJC:	Sikkim Prajatantra Congress
SJP:	Sikkim Janata Parishad
SLA:	Sikkim Legislative Assembly
SLYC:	Sikkim Lho-men Youth Council
SNP:	Sikkim National Party
SNT:	Sikkim Nationalised Transport
SPC:	Sikkim Prajatantra Congress
SP:	Sahodaya Programme
SRDA:	State Rural Development Agency
SRIT:	Sikkim Research Institute of Tibetology
SSC:	Sikkim State Congress
SSC:	Sikkim State Council
SSCLC:	Sikkim Schedule Caste League Congress
SSC:	Sikkim State Congress
SSHS:	State Social Housing Scheme
SSI:	Small Scale Industries
SSIU:	Small Scale Industrial Unit
SSP:	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
SSS:	Social Security Spending
SSTS:	Sikkim State Transport Service
STNM:	Sir Tashi Namgyal Memorial
STWA:	Sikkim Tribal Welfare Association
SUC:	Sikkim United Council
SWC:	Sikkim Womens' Council
SWS:	Single Window Scheme
TCP:	Tuberculosis Control Programme
TD:	Transmission and Distribution
TMB:	Tata Mercedes Benz
TMGE:	Technology Mission and Groom Water

TNA:	Tashi Namgyal Academy
TNSS:	Tashi Namgyal Secondary School
TRYSE:	Training of Rural Youths for Self-Employment
TSP:	Tribal Sub-Plan
TTI:	Teachers' Training Institute
UNDP:	United Nation Development Programme
UNESCO:	United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNO:	United Nations Organization
VEC:	Vocational Education Courses
VLO:	Village Level Officers
VTTC:	Village Teachers Training Course
WE:	Wind Energy

Glossary

Adhiar	: A person engaged to cultivate on condition of rendering half of the produce to the primary holder.
Batishey Chor	: Thirty-Two thieves.
Beyul Demojong	: Hidden land of treasures in Bhutia language.
Bustiwallas	: A landholder who has been settled with land in the rural areas.
Chakurays	: Agricultural labourers.
Chang/Tsong	: Sikkimese Limboos in Bhutia Language.
Charinangmoos	: In the statement of Yap Yongda it means pro-national as well as loyal of the Palace.
Chogyal	: Righteous or Temporal King in Tibetan Language.
Chu-Ta	: Water Horse Year.
Darbar	: Royal Court, Nowadays the word is interpreted as royal abode, which is wrong. Correct word for royal abode is Rajmahal.
Denjong	: Valley of rice in Bhutia Language.
Deshbechuwa	: Sellers of the country.
Elakha	: A region or precisely a group of revenue blocks equivalent to a Tehsil.
Jharlangi	: kind of forced labour introduced by the British India Company in Sikkim during Chogyal period.
Jongpan	: District Administrative Officer during Namgyal dynasty
Kalobhari	: Literary means black load
Kalon	: Term used to designate Minister during Namgyal Dynasty
Karbari	: Revenue collector assisting the Mandol.
Kazi	: A Parsi word 'Quazi' meaning munsif, magistrate or equivalent.
Khuruwa	: It means prolong waiting of any items
Kutiyar	: A person engaged to cultivate on condition of rendering a stipulated amount of crops or cash to the primary holder.
Lahalmor	: Royal decrees
Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum	: The threesome of Bhutia, Lepcha and Limboò in Tibetan terminology.
Lhoree	: Sikkimese Bhutias in Tibetan terminology.
Limbuwan	: Land of Limboos that existed before the emergence of modern Sikkim and Nepal (an area encompassing between

Teesta River of present Sikkim in the east to Arun River of present Nepal in the west and the Great Himalayas in the north to Indian plains).

Mang	: Deity Limboo version
Manghim	: worshipping place of Tribal Limboos
Menree	: Sikkimese Lepchas in Tibetan terminology.
Mondals	: Village Headmen/ Commission agents for revenue collection.
Mundhum	: Oral myth or mythology of Limboo
Muyal Liang	: Sikkim in Lepcha language
Pakhurays	: A tenant who has to work as a labour in the field of a landowner for a small piece of land given for his livelihood.
Renjong	: beautiful in Lepcha language.
Sammang	: Divinity in Limboo version
Sammangiyang	: Retinue of divinities in Limboo version
Sikkim Forkaochu	: I shall return Sikkim in Nepali language.
Sukhim	: New house in Limboo language.
Tageraningw?aphuma	: Almighty Goddess in Limboo philosophy
Theebo:ng Yakthung	: Ten Limboo Chieftains
Thikadars	: Nepali word used for contractors.
Thum	: district in Limboo version
Tsongree	: Terminology used in the Treaty of 'Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum' to call Sikkimese Limboos.
Tumyanghang	: most respectable and elderly people in the Limboo society
Yakthungba	: Limboo in the Limboo version

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

The research work entitled '*Democracy and Development Experience in Sikkim: A Study of Sikkim Sangram Parishad Government (1984-1994)*' is an attempt to look at what happened to Sikkim in terms of democracy and development under the regime of Sikkim Sangram Parishad (hereafter SSP) led by Nar Bahadur Bhandari. The central focus of the study is to examine whether democracy existed and development took place in Sikkim under Bhandari led SSP regime. In the thesis, we firstly focus on the emergence and growth of the SSP in the state. We examine the various issues raised and promises made by the party in its election manifestoes of 1984 and 1989. Then we examine whether the SSP led government was able to protect the rights and interests of the linguistic and religious minorities of Sikkim; the Limboos, Lepchas and Bhutias, and ensure good governance and social justice to the people of Sikkim during a decade of its rule. It also examines the various policies of the SSP led government towards Agriculture, Industry, Education and other sectors and its achievements in these fronts. Finally, it analyses the policies and programmes of the SSP in relation to welfare, poverty alleviation and rural development in the state.

Democracy as a form of government has its origin in Greek experimentations with the '*polis*' which was established on the principle of '*rule by the people*' (Eapen, 2004, pp. 415-418). At that point of time, democracy involved periodic meetings held by the citizenry to discuss the problems of the '*polis*' and arrive on a solution by voting directly on alternatives. So, it was a sort of political system practiced by the Greek people in the '*Polis*' in granting the right of direct political participation in decision-making in the small city-state of Greece. But ever since its inception, the term '*democracy*' has changed its meaning from a '*way of political life*' to '*a form of government*' down the ages with the change of time and circumstances. So, in the present context, in a democratic form of government, sovereign power resides in the hands of the people. They make

decisions, amend and execute laws, formulate and implement policies and control the government either directly or indirectly through their representatives.

As a popular form of government democracy has been opted in most of the countries to suit various purposes. The ancient Greek concept of active participation of citizenry in the political and administrative affairs of the state led to Roman Republicanism during the Renaissance. In the classical sense, democracy was interpreted to mean rule by the masses; poor, ignorant and unqualified, who use the power for their economic interest against the propertied class, which would cause concern among that elite (Zehra, 1991, p. 16). The nature and limits of political authority, law, duty and rights became a preoccupation of European political thought and set milestone of modern liberal theory in the works of Bodin, Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau, which justified the sovereign power of the state. In Marxism, a state based on the interests of the proletarian class and led by the leadership of a single revolutionary party was regarded as the right path to democracy. Under Fascism, democracy was claimed to be '*an organised, centralised and authoritarian democracy*'. Hitler claimed for '*real democracy*' during his regime under Nazism. In modern times, the concept of democracy is moving towards a realisable one, '*representative democracy*'.

Democracy has gained its popularity to such an extent that more than 115 countries have established some form of democratic governance. Of these, 81 countries have made the transition only in the last decade. Among 128 developing countries, at least 51 made serious attempts to establish democratic system. But less than half of these countries maintained stable democracies. Among these, some of them have experienced highly democratic systems and other authoritarian regimes. The countries like Bahamas, Barbados, Botswana, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cyprus, the Dominican Republic, Fiji, Gambia, Guyana, India, Jamaica, Malta, Mauritius, Papua New Guinea, Venezuela and Western Samoa have maintained highly democratic systems. Sri Lanka, Trinidad and Tobago and Zimbabwe also have experienced highly democratic systems but due to political

turmoil, move toward a one-party system in between 1980s and 1990s. While, Brazil, Burma, Chile, El Salvador, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Lebanon, Madagascar, Malaysia, Nigeria, Panama, Peru, the Philippines, Somalia, Suriname, Turkey and Uruguay have established democratic systems, but experienced either historic declines or emergence of authoritarian regime. There are third group of countries such as Argentina, Bolivia, Cameroon, Congo, Cuba, Ecuador, Indonesia, the Korea Republic, Lesotho, Laos, Pakistan and Sierra Leone which experienced episodes of democratic rule within authoritarian setting. In the countries where stability of democracies was maintained there was a high level of socio-economic development (Zehra, 1991, pp. 55-75).

There are attempts to establish democracies in most of the developing countries but in some of the countries, democracy could not succeed. Its decline ultimately led to the establishment of authoritarian regimes. Democracy failed to ensure political stability in most of the countries which adversely hindered economic development and internal as well as external security of the nation. Such backdrop of democracy had invited severe criticism from the scholars who favour authoritarian regime for economic development and maintenance of national security. Thomas (1996, pp. 1-23) perceives democracy as being weak and ineffective in dealing with various threats from external enemies and domestic dissidents that are likely to destabilize the country. In countries like Pakistan, Thailand, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Indonesia, Nepal, Singapore, Philippines, Taiwan and South Korea attempt has been made to establish democracy over the last few decades but in the name of national security and economic stability, authoritarian regimes have started taking its root. Even the Indian democracy is severely criticised of being '*urban biased*' working towards protecting the interests of elite classes (Eapen, 2004, pp. 415-418). It is argued that development has mostly been at the cost of the already voiceless, indigenous people, poor and women who have always faced the worst brunt of change. It is further argued that income distribution in recent democracies like Russian Federation and much of Latin American countries witnessed rise of inequality after the establishment of

democracies. Some of the scholars are of the opinion that lack of accountability and checks and balances have also led to many democracies degenerating into havens of corruption, where the powerful are always winners.

The failure of democracy in ensuring economic development in most of the countries led to the debate between democracy and development in the past 50 years and growth of two schools of thought. One school of thought deems democracy necessary for development. While the other argues that development is the precondition of democracy. The advocates of democracy argue that '*democracy promotes development or economic growth*' and go to the extent saying that 'the motivations of citizens to work and invest, the effective allocation of resources in the marketplace and profit-maximizing private activity can all be maintained in a climate of liberty, free-flowing information and secured control of property'. Democracy can limit state intervention in the economy and encourage stable and long-run economic growth. Friedman believes that the two freedoms are mutually reinforcing. According to this view, political rights foster economic rights. In other words '*more democracy*' tends to thereby stimulate '*economic growth*'. Barro (1996, pp. 1-24), argues that the effects of autocracy on growth are adverse, if a dictator uses his power to steal the nation's wealth and to carry out non-productive investments. Many governments in Africa, some in Latin America, some in the formerly planned economies of Eastern Europe and the Marcos administration in the Philippines seem to fit this pattern in the opinion of Barro. Barro further commends that democratic institutions provide a check on governmental power and thereby limit the potential of public officials to amass personal wealth and to carry out unpopular policies. In the opinion of Minier (1998, pp. 241-263) there is an interconnection between democracy and development and the relation between the two centres around variables such as education, fiscal policy or investment that may be affected by democracy and that in turn influence economic growth rates. The increase in democracy has some affects on rates of economic growth. While contrasting Minier argues that in the totalitarian regime, the dictator allocates it to the building of a presidential palace,

while in the democracy the government channels the funds towards investment in infrastructure. Minier cites that the Athenian economy was much stronger than that of Sparta and this difference is often attributed to the flexibility of Athens' democracy. Other proponents like Doucouliagos and Ulubaşođlu (2008, pp. 61-79) on '*democracy aids economic growth*' argue that implementation of the rule of law; contract enforcement and protection of property rights do not necessarily require an authoritarian regime. Authoritarian regimes tend to be more corrupt and prone to extravagant use of resources, internally inconsistent policies and short-lived and volatile economic progress.

While the scholars favouring authoritarian regimes argue that authoritarian regimes generally have more centralised power than democracies which can facilitate economic growth, particularly in developing countries. Theorists like Lerner, Lipset, Huntington, Inglehart, Vanhanen etc. argue that when the people of a state are more developed the people are more inclined to believe in democratic values and will support a democratic system. Lipset views that increase of wealth is related casually to the development of democracy by changing the social conditions of workers, increasing the extent to which the lower strata are exposed to cross-pressures, which will make them less receptive to extremist ideologies (Doorenspleet, 2002, pp. 48-64). Lipset, who applied the Weberian modernisation theory to Latin American countries, further treats economic development as a prerequisite of democracy and argues that economic development increases education and size of the middle class, increasing democratic norms and values in the society. Leftwich prominent supporter goes to the extent of saying democracy only has a negative impact. This is because democracies are often unstable and this instability blocks development policy from efficient functioning (Eapen, 2004, p. 416). Huntington stresses the role of rapid economic growth in promoting democracy of Greece, Spain, Brazil, South Korea and Taiwan. Huntington further argues that democracies have weak and fragile political institutions and lend themselves to popular demands at the expense of profitable investment. Democratic governments are vulnerable to

demands for redistributions to lower-income groups and are surrounded by rent seeker for directly unproductive profit-seeking activities (Doucouliagos & Ulubaşođlu, 2008, pp. 61-79). It is widely believed that the countries with high levels of development are better suited to democratic institutions than those that are poor. Barrington Moore in his study of major western democracies and Albert Soboul in his analysis of the French Revolution emphasised the role of the middle class or the urban bourgeoisie in the transformation of political systems into democracy and stated '*no bourgeois, no democracy*' (Minier, 1998, pp. 241-263). Karl Marx identifies the bourgeoisie as the major force behind the emergence of democracy in Western Europe. In the early 1940s, Joseph Schumpeter highlighted the historical correspondence between the development of capitalism and democracy. He established a creed for the liberal democratic theorists who would treat capitalism and the presence of an autonomous bourgeois class as requisites of development and democracy (Zehra, 1991, pp. 33-54).

In the 1950s and 1960s, scholars such as Daniel Lerner, Seymour Lipset and Philips Cutright presented evidence pointing to a strong statistical relationship between the level of economic growth and various measures of democracy. These data furnished powerful support for a theory of modernisation. According to the theory of modernisation, changes in economic life provide the basis for democratic government. Through the process of industrialisation and urbanisation, together with improvements in the areas of communication and education, a social transformation in society takes place. In other words, this is a theory of political emancipation at the mass societal level and the factor behind the process is economic development (Hadenius, 2002, p. 65). While the argument in the 1960s had been that democracy was passively correlated with the level of modernisation. Modernisation was viewed as the equivalence of development. It was only following the decline of communism and fall of autocratic rule that encouraged the students of comparative politics to revisit the '*development–democracy nexus*'. In the 1990s, in Latin America, among the

students of politics the issues of democratisation re-entered the mainstream of comparative politics (Hyden, 2002, pp. 1-19).

Rapid economic development may be seen as a prerequisite for the growth of democracy, a strong defence programme and ability to maintain internal stability through the advancement of general prosperity. For instance, in some of the countries like South Korea, Taiwan, Chile, Mexico, Singapore, Indonesia and Thailand economic growth preceded democracy. But at the same time in Argentina, Brazil, the Philippines, Bangladesh, Nepal etc. which were under authoritarian regimes, both economic growth and democracy remained at low rate. In China economy has grown explosively over the last 25 years, but its politics have remained essentially stagnant. In Russia, meanwhile, the economy has recently improved even as the Kremlin has tightened the political reins (Mesquita and Downs, nd, pp. 77-86). So, in those countries the economic growth have had overlapped the political freedom and thus democracy was suppressed to reap economic development. It remains true that in already established democracies, a high per capita income contributes to stability, but the growing number of affluent authoritarian states suggests that greater wealth alone does not automatically lead to greater political freedom. The Sandbrook's survey of 39 states in sub-Saharan Africa further shows that authoritarian regimes do not have a better comparative developmental record than liberal democratic regimes. Nor do they have a better record on national unity. Diamond similarly draws the conclusion from a comparative study of 26 developing countries that democracies do not inevitably or inherently have a worse economic record than dictatorships. There is certainly a more positive relationship between democracy and development that can be discerned for the future (Munslow & William, nd, pp. 3-8).

Nevertheless China operating under a Leninist political system and a free-market capitalist economy appears to have outclassed India in economic growth. Economic growth rates since the 1980 have annually averaged between 8 and 10

percent in China compared to India's average of about 3 to 5 percent.¹ But this may be considered misleading because China introduced its reforms in the mid-1970s while India embarked on its economic reforms in 1991.

The explosive economic growth in Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Thailand carry another common thread. Actually these states were all part of the American security network to contain the Communist threat. In all of them, security pressures and especially American security interest resulted in a high level of American military involvement and security ties with the United States. This has resulted in expensive economic ties and rapid economic growth. Economic explosion of Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Thailand have had much to do with American investments and generous markets led by the United States. This has served as springboards for an extended economic boom during the Cold War. Similarly, in Chile, the United States preferred a military dictatorship rather than a Marxist regime. The more politically stable and open economy under the Chilean general led to a generous infusion of American investment in Chile.

Despite of hot argument among the scholars regarding the nexus, democracy and development in the present political context, the two concepts always seem to have an intertwined existence or correlation. There might be the possibility of incompatibility between democracy and development in the newly emerging nations, yet development in the economic sphere would go hand in hand with the development of democracy in the political sphere. Thus both the concepts are not supplementary but complimentary to each other. Democracy may not exhibit direct statistical relationship with economic growth, but it clearly serves to militate against the negative economic effects of corruption. In democracy, through electoral mechanism the citizens are allowed to evict the politicians who violate democratic norms and damages economic growth through corruption (Drury, Kriekhaus & Lusztig, 2006, pp. 121-133).

¹ In India it has increased in recent years particularly since the mid of 1990s.

Now let us briefly turn to the concept of development. The concept of 'development' emerged after the Second World War. Since then the term 'development' has been used and defined in different ways by different scholars and schools of thought. In the 1950s and 1960s, the concept of development was dominated by the idea of either 'modernisation' or 'industrialisation'. The concept was oriented with the pursuit of economic growth and progress and dominated not only economics but also sociology, anthropology, psychology and political science (Simmons, 1988, pp. 13-44). Eisenstadt saw 'modernisation' as 'the process of change towards those types of social, economic and political systems that have developed in the Western Europe and North America and then have spread to the other European countries and to the South American, Asian and African continents' (Simmons, 1988, p. 13). Rostow views 'development' or 'modernisation' as 'a linear path along which all countries travel through a series of five stages: the traditional society, the preconditions for takeoff, the takeoff, the drive to maturity and the age of high mass consumption' (Simmons, 1988, p. 14). Esteva Gustavo describes development as 'a process through which the potentialities of an object or organism are related until it reaches its natural, complete, full-fledged form' (Sachs, 1997, p. 11). According to Marx, development occurs through the build-up of forces of production, especially the addition of tools, machines, and infrastructures to human labor power' (Peet, 1999, p. 102).

In the early 1970s, there was a growing awareness that the poor majorities were being excluded from whatever benefits were reaped through economic growth. Thus distribution had become an integral part of development objectives along with economic growth. Development planning became equity-oriented rather than exclusively growth-oriented and subsequently this led to the emergence of basic-needs approach in the mid 1970s. The basic-needs approach was more concerned with reduction of poverty and increase of equity and included strategies such as creation of employment opportunities, integration of rural development and expansion of agricultural output and improvement of human resources and capital, etc. In the Third World countries, it was concerned

with health care, education, nutrition, housing, water supply and sanitation, formulation and implementation of policies oriented to the satisfaction of their basic needs (Simmons, 1988, pp. 13-44). According to the notion of '*Human Development Index*' calculated by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) development not only means economic growth alone but also social and cultural variables. This concept stems more for '*enlarging people's choices*' especially in terms of increasing access to knowledge, nutrition and health services, security, leisure political and cultural freedom. The Human Development Index measures '*development*' in terms of longevity (life expectancy at birth), knowledge (adult literacy and mean years of schooling) and income sufficiency (the proportion of people with sufficient resources to live a decent life). The UNDP also calculates a '*Human Development Index*' that measures the political participation, the rule of law, freedom of expression and non-discrimination (Peet, 1999, pp. 1-16). In a nutshell, the concept of human development mainly centres on what is called improvement of condition of the people in the society.

In the context of Sikkim, by development was meant economic growth as well as fulfilment of basic-needs of the people in the society. This was because Sikkim became a part of the Indian Union in 1975 and both democracy and development have not taken their deep root and concrete shape in the society. Furthermore, majority of the people were dependent on agriculture and lived Below Poverty Line. Illiteracy was very high, the industrial performance was very low and the condition of the service sector was bad. Even during the period when the SSP led government came to power in 1985, 39.71% of the total population of Sikkim lived Below Poverty Line. The literacy rate of the state was just 34.05% and the contribution of manufacturing industries to the Net State Domestic Product (NSDP) was also only Rs 5.2 million. Similarly, the service sector was also very poor with only road transportation facilities. As such the policies and strategies of Bhandari led SSP government was oriented more to the measures of poverty reduction, creation of employment opportunities, integration of rural development and expansion of agricultural output and improvement of human

resources and capital, health care and services, education, nutrition, housing, water supply and sanitation, rural electrification and formulation and implementation of policies oriented to the satisfaction of the basic-needs and development in terms of longevity and redistribution of income for income sufficiency.

In India, democracy was conceived in its Constitution declaring that '*India is a democratic state*' and at present India is accepted as one of the biggest democracy in the world. Since the attainment of independence from the British rule in 1947, in India democracy has been chosen as a form of government. Democracy is supposed to develop the economy, reduce poverty and attain the welfare of the people. As such in India, both democracy and development go hand in hand.

In Sikkim, both democracy and development were absent under monarchical rule. There was an absence of people's participation in both the political as well as administrative affairs. Majority of the people remained illiterate and lived Below Poverty Line. Such kind of situation pushed Sikkim from monarchical state of nature to the democratic process. So, for the state like Sikkim, democracy and development were two fundamental facets for which its sovereignty was submerged with the Indian Union.

After it became a part of India, Sikkim gradually witnessed both democracy and development. Under Sikkim Congress government led by Kazi (1974-1979) and Sikkim Janata Parishad government led by Bhandari (1979-1984), transformation in both political and socio-economic fronts took place. However the development was not so rapid since democracy have not deepen its roots till then. From 1984-1994, SSP led by Bhandari ruled Sikkim for almost ten years. But so far no study has been conducted to see whether democracy was ensured along with development in Sikkim in the period between 1984 and 1994 under the SSP regime.

The Problem

SSP was formed by Bhandari on 24th May 1984 after his dismissal from the Chief Ministership on 11th May 1984. The SSP swept the 1985 Sikkim Assembly election by winning 30 out of 32 Assembly seats and formed the government. Thereafter the state politics of Sikkim was dominated by the SSP till it was defeated in 1994. For almost 10 years Bhandari remained an undisputed political leader of Sikkim. The victory of the SSP in 1984 and later for the second term and the formation of the SSP Governments meant that there was a period of one-party-system and one-man-rule in Sikkim for almost a decade. It pursued several policies in this period which will be a part of our investigation in this thesis.

Keeping the above facts in mind, several questions arise. These are: What were the issues raised and promises made by the SSP in order to come to power? What were the reasons behind the domination of the SSP from 1984-1994 in the politics of Sikkim? How could the SSP win two consecutive elections to the Sikkim Legislative Assembly of 1985 and 1989 and the Parliamentary elections of 1984, 1989 and 1991? Why was there an absence of opposition from both national and regional parties in Sikkim? What were the socio-economic policies of the SSP led government? What were the strategies adopted by the SSP in order to maintain its domination over state politics of Sikkim? How far the SSP was able to fulfil its promises made to its people? What were the policies of SSP relating to poverty alleviation, education, agriculture, industry, health care and social welfare? What could the SSP led government achieve in the various sectors? Was the SSP able to balance the interest of different communities of Sikkim? What were the special policies of the SSP towards the Schedule Tribes & Schedule Castes during its tenure in office?

Did the SSP government promote and respect the spirit of democracy in its two consecutive terms? How did Bhandari handle law and order situation in Sikkim? How did SSP led government look upon the languages of Sikkim? How far the SSP led government was able to protect the rights and interests of the

Limboos in Sikkim? Could it fulfil their aspirations, demands and urges? How did the SSP led government undermine press-media and opposition parties during the 10 years of its rule in Sikkim? How the SSP led government behaved with the opposition and the press? What kind of governance did SSP provide to the state-politics of Sikkim? Was there any shift in the policies of Bhandari in SSP led government in its 10 years of rule? How did the SSP led government looked upon grassroots democracy and the empowerment of women? What was the attitude of Bhandari towards Centre-State relations? Was there any political defection in the 10 years of SSP led government rule? How far the poor people of Sikkim benefited by the SSP government? Did the SSP led government really work for the poor who constituted 39.71% of the total population of Sikkim? What were the factors behind the decline of SSP? Why the SSP could not come back to power after 1994? These are the questions that are interesting.

Research Questions

The questions which are raised above are general in nature. The study however will focus on some specific questions and these are the following:

- (1) How could Nar Bahadur Bhandari led Sikkim Sangram Parishad (SSP) emerge victorious in the 1985 elections in Sikkim and come to power? What were the issues raised and promises made by the party?
- (2) To what extent the government was able to protect the rights and interests of the Linguistic and Religious minorities in the state? Was the government able to fulfil their aspirations and demands?
- (3) Was the government able to provide good governance to the people of Sikkim? Could it ensure democracy and social justice and maintain rule of law?
- (4) What were the policies of SSP led government towards Agriculture, Education, Industry and Service Sectors? What was its performance in these fronts?

(5) What were the Welfare Policies of the SSP? To what extent the policies contributed to poverty alleviation? How far the rural development policies of the SSP led government benefited the poor sections of the society?

Review of Literature

The literature and accounts on Sikkim are very few in number. Even though they are rare yet cover different aspects of Sikkim. However, below we review in brief the literature available on Sikkim and point out to the research gap in the area. The literature available on Sikkim can be divided into two main categories depending upon the contents. *The first category*, deals with the historical and political developments in Sikkim since the 1940s, issues related to the emergence and growth of different regional political parties and development of party-politics in Sikkim. In the *second category* we find four different types of works. First, deals with the socio-political and socio-cultural aspects, second, with the socio-economic aspects, third, with the historical and educational aspects and the last one with the geographical aspects of Sikkim.

The works of Basnet (1974), Kazi (1983), Sengupta (1985), Bhadra (1992), Gaulay, (2002), Chakravartti (2003), Syangbo (2010) and Gurung (2011), deal with historical and political development of Sikkim in general. The accounts of Sukla (1976), Rao (1978), Das (1983), Ray (1984), Kazi (1993 & 2009), Chakravartti (1994) and Chettri (2012) shed light on party-politics, political organisation and governance in Sikkim. Similarly, accounts of Sinha (1975 & 2008), Singh (1993), Subba, Tanka B. (1999), Thapa (2002), Bhattacharya (nd) and Gurung and Lama (2004) highlight the socio-political as well as the socio-cultural aspects. The works by Subba, Pahalman (1999) and Bhutia (1999) critically discuss about the misuse of power by Bhandari during his rule in Sikkim. Likewise, the works by Subba, Tanka B. (1989) and Subba, J R (2008), deal with the socio-economic aspects of the people of Sikkim and account by Risley (1894), Sikkim Coronation (1965), Wangchuk and Zulca (2007) and Subba, J R (1999), shed light on the historical

aspects. Finally, a work by Baldev, Agnihotri and Srilekha (1995) and Chaudhury (2006) deal respectively with the educational and geographical aspects of Sikkim.

Basnet's A Short Political History of Sikkim (1974) deals with the period before 15th August 1947, the day India attained Independence, the emergence of political parties, agitation launched by the different political parties and intervention of the Indian Government in the political affairs of Sikkim. It also deals with the first Panchayati Raj election of 1950, Parity System (1953) and first Sikkim State Council election of 1953, allocation of seats for the Sikkimese Bhutia-Lepcha, Tsong (Limboo), Schedule Caste and Nepalese in 1966 and finally the revolt of 1973 which resulted in the birth of democracy in Sikkim. However, the book deals only with the period before 15th August 1947 and the interplay of political parties, the Chogyal of Sikkim and the Government of India from 1947 to May 1973. Hence, it fails to cover the political aspects of Sikkim from 1973 onwards.

Spotlight on Sikkim (1983) by Kazi sheds light on the history, geographical and topographical aspects, distinct cultural identity religion and racial affinities of Sikkim. It discusses about the emergence of the Himalayan Kingdom, Sikkim with reference to the '*Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum*', constitution of state council of Sikkim and emergence of Political Parties. It also looks at the procedure of elections in Sikkim, the Party System, introduction of responsible government, guarantee of Fundamental Rights, Rule, Law and independent of Judiciary from Legislative and executive power based on '*one-man-one-vote*', constitutional safeguard of Sikkim under Article 371F of the Indian Constitution, Ordinance of 1979 and the Amendment Bill of People's Representation Act 1980. The book attempts to present an intensive analysis of major issues yet it does not cover the political aspects of Sikkim after 1982.

Sengupta's work Sikkim: Government and Politics (1985) sheds light on the politics and government of Sikkim till 1985. The author discusses the political

developments that led to the merger of Sikkim to the Indian Union in the perspective of its political history, the current, cross-current of ethnic, social and religious factors. He also highlights the nature and changing trends of the political development and dynamics reflected through the electoral process, political parties and pressure groups of the past, the political system upto 1973, the dynamism, political framework and governmental process. The author also attempts to correlate the political dynamics to the nature and functions of the governmental organs like Legislative, Executive and Judiciary. Thus the book provides an in-depth account of the political process, organisations and working of the government in Sikkim. Though the book is a very comprehensive work, it is limited to the political aspects of Sikkim upto 1984.

Bhadra's Sikkim: Democracy and Social Change (1992) discusses the factors that led to the transformation of Sikkim from a theocratic monarchy to parliamentary democracy and fused the basic components of indigenous culture of Sikkim with the standard and practices of modern democratic life. It attempts to theorise the political process of Sikkim in terms of nation-building, political participation, modernity, social mobility, identity and integration and examines whether democracy is compatible with the culture and tradition of Sikkim. It further tries to find out the various agents and factors of social change, problems of adaptability and stability in Sikkim and role, function and influence of different social classes and media for the political change, development, and participation and modernisation, socialisation and cultural change in Sikkim. This book gives more emphasis to social forces and social changes than political organisation.

Gaulay, in the introduction of his book *History of Democratic Movement* (2002) discusses about the inhabitants of Sikkim prior to the establishment of the Namgyal dynasty in 1642 AD, the administration and relationship of Sikkim with neighbouring countries, Bhutan, Nepal, Tibet and British India. He also discusses the emergence of landlordism and social evils like Kalobhari, Jharlangi, Theki-bethi and Khuruwa, growth of political organisations, administrative and political

reforms, electoral process and finally merger of Sikkim to the Indian Union in 1975. The book also deals with the biographies of personalities who struggled for democracy to overthrow landlordism and social evils which prevailed during the monarchical rule in Sikkim. The book is basically a biographical account of the democratic movement in Sikkim.

Chakravarti's (1994) article **Government and Politics in Sikkim** focuses on the development of party politics in Sikkim since the 1940s and makes a comparative study of administration of Sikkim in the pre-merger and post-merger period. It analyses the constitutional position of Sikkim, political structure, social policy, electoral politics of Sikkim from 1979-1994 and administration of the state. In this article, the author shows the non-existence of a strong opposition political party during that period as a phenomenal characteristic of the politics of Sikkim. The article does not cover Bhandari's performance in government.

Syangbo's Thesis, '*The Sikkim Democratic Front and the Politics of Popular Mobilisation in Sikkim*' (2010) covers the period from 1993 to 2004 and more particularly the period after the SDP came to power in December 1994. The study briefly focuses on the downfall of the Sikkim Sangram Parishad and origin and growth of Sikkim Democratic Front and the strategies adopted by SDF to come to power. It focuses on the mobilising strategies adopted by the SDF and interestingly highlights the development of the electoral populism in Sikkim. Since the research is mainly on the study of SDF therefore, it does not shed any light on the SSP government led by Bhandari.

Gurung's (2011) *Sikkim: Ethnicity and Political Dynamics: A Triadic Perspective* contains an exhaustive list of political parties and organisations of Sikkim. In this book, the author contends that ethnic consciousness in Sikkim is ramified through historical process in which politics had played a determinate role in consciousness rather than ethnic communities creating the consciousness.



Sukla's Sikkim: The Story of integration (1976) discusses about the land, flora and fauna, the people of Sikkim and traces the early history of Sikkim. It also discusses the emergence of various political parties in Sikkim after the 1940s, introduction of the Parity System in 1953 and the rise of communalism in Sikkim, rise of political agitation in Sikkim resulting in the dawn of a new era i.e, democracy in Sikkim with the formation of the first democratic ministry for the first time in Sikkim. It further deals with the Bill of 1974, changing the status of Sikkim from Protectorate State to an Associate State in 1974 and finally the integration of India with that of the Indian Union in 1975. Though this book discusses the political aspects of Sikkim but does not shed any light on the state politics of Sikkim after 1976 to any great extent.

Rao's Sikkim: The story of its Integration with India (1978) analyses the struggle of the people of Sikkim for democratisation of their administration and closer political association with India. It further discusses the political development of Sikkim in the pre-merger period as a result of the influence of Indian independence, democratic aspirations and urges of the people of Sikkim, emergence of political organisations, creation of Sikkim State Council through democratic election in 1953 based on Parity System. It also records the Treaty of 8th May 1973, Sikkim Bill, 1974 and the merger of Sikkim with the Indian Union on May 16th 1975. But the author fails to reflect on the political parties, organisations and administration after 1973.

Sikkim Saga (1983) by Das attempts to answer queries which arose in the mind of the author, who served Sikkim as a Chief Executive (1973-1974). The questions which came in his mind are; (i) was merger of Sikkim with the Indian Union necessary? (ii) was the uprising against the Chogyal in 1973 really popular? (iii) why the provision of Indo-Sikkimese Treaty, 1950 could not have been used to protect India's vital interests to merge Sikkim to Indian Union? (iv) what was the role of Delhi in it? (v) Did May 8th 1973 Agreement signed between three parties the Chogyal of Sikkim, the Government of India and Political Parties of Sikkim not

adequately meet the requirements of a democratic setup? (vi) what has India ultimately gained? The book attempts to shed light on the role of three Ladies; Indra Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, Hope Cooke wife of the Chogyal and Elisa Maria, the wife of Lhendup Dorjee Kazi during that period of time. A political assessment of the future in Northeast India has also been discussed in this book. This book though very informative yet it is limited to only those questions that arose in the author's mind.

Datta-Ray's account Smash and Grab: Annexation of Sikkim (1984) recounts how Sikkim was taken over by India in a smash and grab raid. It mainly highlights the dangerous case with which public opinion can be whipped up into chauvinistic acquisitiveness. He also ventilates the concern over the fact that substitution of innuendo for evidence and propaganda for proof, was accepted by the media and public and seeks to present a balanced and objective analysis of the events leading to the annexation of Sikkim. The author also relies on interviews, eye-witness accounts, anecdotes and also on secret agreements and previously unpublished letters in order to substantiate his point. The book is limited to the political history of Sikkim and looks at how it was smashed, grabbed and finely annexed by the Indian Union.

Inside Sikkim Against The Tide (1993) by Kazi specially discusses the issues at stake in the tiny Himalayan State of Sikkim and exposes the hollowness of the 'democratic system' under Bhandari led government. The struggle of the people of Sikkim for the preservation of their distinct identity within the Indian Union and fight for the free movement and expression is the main agenda in the book. The author seeks for freedom and democracy and demands a better deal from Delhi. The book gives only a general idea of party politics of Sikkim under Bhandari but fails to expose the developments during the period, 1979-1992.

Sikkim for Sikkimese; Distinct Identity within the Union (2009) by Kazi ventilates as how the special Status enjoyed by Sikkim and Sikkimese people

under article 371F of the Indian Constitution is gradually being diluted and provisions and terms of 'merger' are violated. Kazi reminds India to listen to the voice of the people of Sikkim before it is too late and honour the commitments and assurances made to the people of Sikkim during the merger period. The hidden agenda of this book is to maintain and preserve the distinct identity of Sikkim and the people of Sikkim within the Indian Union as per the provisions made under article 371F of the India Constitution and 8th may 1973 Agreement. The literature does not shed light on the performance, policies and programmes of any government. It is merely a compilation of articles published in various newspapers on various issues.

The thesis of Chakravartti, '*Political Development of Sikkim*' (2003) by and large discusses how traditionalism and constitutional protection of Sikkim is being continued in due course with the functioning of the Executive, Legislative, Judiciary and Administration, Panchayati Raj Institution, Electoral process since 1975. It also focuses on the development of Sikkim in the socio-economic field and argues that the political leadership ultimately tries to protect democracy, basic rights and identity of the people of Sikkim. The manner in which it is discussed is limited and does not shed light on Bhandari led government in detail.

Chettri's '*Decentralised Governance and Development in India*' (2012) presents a detailed account of rural development in Sikkim and provides an incisive and comprehensive analysis of decentralisation good governance and development in the Himalayan state of Sikkim. The book deals with the evolution of democratic decentralisation in India and then examines the emergence of democratic decentralisation in Sikkim. It devotes space on decentralised governance in Sikkim: current status and prospects and on good governance and democratic decentralisation in Sikkim with reference to rural development and poverty alleviation.

Sinha in '*Politics of Sikkim: A Sociological Study*' (1975) deals with the historical evolution and evolution of the important social forces active in Sikkim. He argues as how an indigenous tribal ethos accommodated a complex Lamaist tradition of the Tibetan feudal origin giving the rulership of Sikkim a unique character of its own in the history of Sikkim. In part-II of the book he seeks to identify different set of the elite, the patrician Kazis, the neo-rich plebeians, the ambitious pro-palace bureaucrats, the Nepali political leaders and youth congress leaders who had led and directed various social forces in action. It also analyses the personal and social background, social and economic status, political affiliation and perception of various elite's in Sikkim. In part III he evaluates the political process and development in Sikkim in the post 1947, period after Indian Independence in terms of institutional accomplishment and development, transformation of theocracy to democracy and finally merger of Sikkim to the Indian Union. Since the work mainly analyses the political development of Sikkim upto 1974, it does not shed any light on the politics of Sikkim after 1974.

Another account, *Sikkim, Feudal and Democratic* (2008) by Sinha analyses as how Sikkim has increasingly been exposed to the wind of change as the result of a new sense of political identity with strong nationalistic aspiration in the consciousness of the people generating a new pattern of political dynamics and called for new institutions to cope with the task of nation- building. It also analyses the forces and forms of political development, the power structure of Sikkim, social foundation of the political institutions, the characteristics and role of the elite and bearing of these phenomenon on the efforts of nation-building and search for political and ethnic identity. Since the book is on the sociological aspects of Sikkim especially on feudalism and elites groups, hence it fails to cover the political aspects of Sikkim.

Singh's (ed) '*People of India: Sikkim*', Volume-XXXIX (1993) is a comprehensive work that offers a bio-cultural and linguistic profile of all the 25 communities who constitute the ethno-demography of Sikkim, their history,

culture, custom, religion, tradition, faith and belief, languages, art, crafts, food habits, agriculture practices, settlement and house-pattern, festivals, socio-economic and political organisation, practises of ritual, and ceremonies including birth, marriages, death and livelihood and socio-cultural relationship among the people of Sikkim. The book being based mainly on anthropological study discusses only the impact of modernism on the socio-cultural economic and linguistic aspects of different ethnic communities.

Politics of Culture: A Study of the Three Kirata Communities in the Eastern Himalayas (1999) by Subba outlines the process of economic, linguistic, religious and cultural degeneration that the groups faced at the hands of powerful Namgyal rulers in Sikkim and Gorkhas in Nepal, resulting in their becoming victims of state-formation in those two Himalayan Kingdoms. The book also attempts to reconstruct the story of these communities on the basis of historical as well as ethnographic data and explains their need to reconstruct the image today, an identity for themselves despite the time and cultural resources they have lost. This book is incisive study of this Himalayan region and Kirat communities therefore, sheds lights largely on the relationship of Kirantas-Limboo, Rai and Yakhas with the Aryans, the Kiranta dynasty, their political, socio-economic and social organisation and the present status of their culture, language and religion.

The Thesis, *Ethnicity, Class and Politics in Sikkim* (2002) by Thapa examines how class and ethnic factors influence the political process in the tiny Indian state and how the identities of the Sikkimese are maintained and reproduced in the political and social life of the people. The work attempts to assess the relative significance of the two factors in understanding the political process in the state. It also examines the interplay between the civil society and polity and tries to see how the former help to shape political identities. This thesis focuses and looks only at the role of classes and ethnic groups in the politics of Sikkim.

Sikkim; The Player Wheel and Scriptre, (nd) by Bhattacharya focuses mainly on the relationship between the indigenous culture, Buddhism and other ethnic culture especially Hindu culture of Sikkim. It emphasises on the critical role of the Buddhist institutions that provided the foundation for Sikkim's political system since the establishment of Sikkim as an independent state polity in central Himalayas in 1642 AD. It also discusses the governing process, the traditional pattern of administration, revenue settlement pattern, State Advisory Council, old laws of Sikkim, impact and influence of Buddhism on the State Council, Executive Council and Judiciary and on the legal, Buddhist Community, Election Sangha institution. Since this book is on Buddhist culture, it mainly focuses on socio-cultural aspects.

Gurung and Lama's '*Sikkim Study Series, Culture*', Vol-III (2004) provides an account of the rich and complex cultural practices of Sikkim. It has distinct flavour as most of the contents and inputs are directly drawn from the oral history like folktales, legends, rituals, beliefs and practices are all put together in an attractively easy to practice format. The narration is simple, lucid and engrossing. It highlights the richness of sub-cultures, explains and demonstrates as to how these feed into the super-structure of Sikkimese cultural dynamics. However, the work does not cover any political aspect of Sikkim except cultural and social aspects of different ethnic communities of Sikkim.

Subba's book '*Sikkim who Ruined it*' (1999), translated version of '*Sikkim Bigarney Ho Ko?*' ventilates inhuman act, atrocity, wrong commitment, misdeeds and crimes in various forms which prevailed during Sikkim Sangram Parishad's rule in Sikkim. It highlights how democratic and individual rights of the people and Rule of Law were violated and curtailed, common and innocent people were oppressed endlessly and harassed and tortured and how the administration, bureaucracy and police forces were misused to suppress the democratic aspirations of the people. The book only discloses the authoritarian and tyrannical

rule in Sikkim during the one party system, one-man-rule and one-reign terror of Bhandari regime. Hence, it does not cover other political aspects of Sikkim.

Rise and Fall of Tyrant, Resurgence of Democratic Forces under Pawan Chamling (1999) by Bhutia discloses all the misdeeds, wrong commitments, and large scale misuse of public funds, unnecessary harassment and torture of people who opposed Bhandari during his fifteen years of rule in Sikkim. It also attempts to bring to public notice as to how muscle power, administration, bureaucracy and commandos and public forces were misused by Bhandari led government to impress the aspirations and urges of the people, torture the public endlessly, common public suffered and rights and freedom were snatched through physical torture during one man, one party and one language rule in Sikkim. This book only exposes the misdeeds, wrong commitments, corruption charges, dictatorship and coerciveness of Bhandari.

Subba's another work *Dynamics of A Hill Society* (1989) discusses the early history of the Nepalis, their migration and subsequent settlement in the Sikkim-Darjeeling Himalayas, changes in the caste organisation in the background of its traditional structure, nature of the agrarian system and the caste-class nexus. It also analyses the emerging class structure and its role in shaping the destiny of the people. But the work only sheds light on the socio-economic, history and culture of Sikkim and Darjeeling and fails to touch any political arena of Sikkim.

J R Subba in '*The Evolution of Man and the Modern Society in Mountainous Sikkim*', (2008) considers human phenomenon on a global scale. He provides insight into the history of scientific evolution of human-kind, production of food, development of writing system, emergence of modern society and their spread all over the world. He also places emphasis on the history of development of human society in an evolutionary framework, depicting the human environment interactions in time and space and discusses on a project findings and recommendation covering sustainable livelihood issues of the people of Sikkim.

But the book is limited to the evolution of Man and the Modern Society in Mountainous Sikkim so does not cover the political aspects of Sikkim.

Risley's '*The Gazetteer of Sikkim*' (1894) discusses the history of Sikkim, demography, rulers, tribes and chief families, nomenclature of places, old laws, culture, tradition, marriage and customs of Sikkim. It also gives an account of the geology and mineral resources such as copper, iron, lime, garnet and method of cultivation, vegetation including flowering plants and ferns, orchids, palms, bamboos, rhododendrons, primula, herbaceous plant and tree of the topical zone of both temperate and alpine zone of Sikkim, species of butterflies, reptiles, birds and mammals found in the different regions of Sikkim. It also gives a general description of Lamaism in Sikkim, monasteries, temples, monkhood, monastic routine as a village priest, some magic rites and dances, the mode of offering the mandalas etc. Though the work is considered to be an authentic document of Sikkim, it is limited only to history of Chogyal, customs, old laws, vegetations flora and fauna and Buddhism and fails to discuss administrative and political system, institutions and organisations at that point of time.

Sikkim Coronation (1965) deals with the coronation of the 12th Chogyal Palden Thendup Namgyal of Sikkim, 1963 as well as the history, geography, demography, culture, religion and festivals of Sikkim. It also includes the messages and compliments received on the auspicious occasions of Ser-Thri-Nga-Sol of the coronation from India and abroad. But the book does not highlight the political institutions and administrative structure of Sikkim.

The Limboos of Eastern Himalayas with special Reference to Sikkim (1999) by Subba is primarily a study on the history, culture, customs and tradition, socio-economic system, belief system of Yumasam Samyo or Yamasam religion of Limboos and its philosophy and teachings on the basis of Mundhums of the Limboos of west Sikkim.

Kangchendzonga Sacred Summit (2007) by Wangchuk and Zulca accounts at length the history, culture, tradition, faith and belief, language, literature and social way of life of aboriginal inhabitants of Sikkim, Lepcha, Limboo and Bhutia and attempts to demarcate the boundaries of Limbuwan that existed prior to the establishment of Namgyal dynasty in Sikkim in 1642 AD. The book also discusses the spread of Buddhism in Sikkim with the coming of three Tibetan monks, Gyalwa Lhatsen Chenpo, Kathok Rigzing Chenpo and Ngadag Sempa Chenpo to Sikkim in 1641 AD and conversion of Lepchas and Limboos to Buddhism from their ancestral faith, Shamanism. It also discusses the significance and worship of Mt Kanchandzonga as a guardian deity in Sikkim. The work mainly discusses historical and socio-cultural rather than political aspects of Sikkim.

The work, *Educational Administration in Sikkim: Structure, Processes and Future Prospect (1995)* by Baldev, Srilekha and Agnihotri is based on an analysis of information collected from primary sources and data collected from secondary sources in Sikkim. It looks at the status of educational administration 1995, right from the institutions to the state level with a focus primarily on the administration of school education. The study provides a comparative picture of the state vis-à-vis the all India's position at different points of time and critical analysis of various functions of educational planning and administration with suggestions for future development of the administrative system, outlining the tasks ahead for educational planners and administrators.

A review of the literature reveals that they are not adequate to shed light on democracy and development which Sikkim experienced during the SSP regime (1984-1994). The works fail to answer questions like, how and why the SSP emerged as one of the dominant regional political party in Sikkim since 1984-1994? What were the issues raised and promises made by the SSP? Could the SSP led government protect the interest and rights of the linguistic and religious minorities of Sikkim? How far it could ensure democracy and social justice to the different sections of the Sikkimese society? Therefore, the main objective of the

research work was to look at the emergence and growth of SSP, its policies and performance in Sikkim during its almost ten years rule.

Methodology, Source and Data

The research involved data collection from various sources. In order to address the questions related to the objective of the proposed research work, the direct sources or personal sources of information as well as documentary sources of information was collected. In the personal sources or direct sources of information, we have taken unstructured interviews with the party leaders of SSP, party workers, bureaucrats/retired civil servants, senior citizens, social activists and the common people belonging to different social classes in connection with the policies and performance of SSP led government towards the agricultural, educational, industrial and service sectors. We have also interviewed about the achievement of SSP government in the spheres of public welfare, rural development and poverty alleviation and assurance of rule of law, democracy, social justice and system of governance under SSP led government regime. While taking interviews, the interviewees very enthusiastically responded to the questions asked. The information collected through interviews greatly enabled us to piece together a more coherent picture of the policy and performance of SSP led government.

In our research work, we have also used the documentary sources of information; primary and secondary sources. The primary sources included both official and non-official documents. From the official documents such as Sikkim Govt. Gazettee notifications, circulars, official letters, Assembly and Budget proceedings, memorandum of understandings signed and submitted to the Central Government by SSP government during its tenure obtained from various departments, State library, Community libraries, District libraries and library of Sikkim Legislative Assembly. We could collect lot of information regarding the Budget allocation on different sectors, policies and programmes initiated and achievements made by the SSP government. From non-official documents such as

party documents; party literature, election manifestoes, leaflets or pamphlets, biographies, obtained from the party office and SSP leaders and party workers, we were able to get information about the aims and objectives and issues raised and various promises and assurance the SSP made during the time of the elections. From the memorandums submitted and representation made to the Bhandari led SSP government by various social organisations or communities, we collected information on how SSP led by Bhandari responded to the democratic aspirations and fulfil inner hopes of the people of Sikkim. In our research work, we also have made use of the secondary sources such as books, journals, articles, newspapers reports etc. The secondary sources were mainly used for writing the introductory part of the thesis.

Organization of the Study

The thesis is divided into five chapters. In the introduction, we discussed the research problem, research questions, methodology, data collection and organisation of study. In the second chapter, we deal with the questions related to the emergence and growth of Sikkim Sangram Prashad and the issues it raised and the promises made during the elections and the spectacular victories it was able to achieve. In the third chapter of the thesis, we address the questions related to the protection of the linguistic and religious minorities especially the Limboos (Tsongts) Lepchas and Bhutias of Sikkim. In this part, we examine and attempt to understand whether the SSP was able to fulfil the age-old demands, aspirations and inner-hopes of Limboos, Lepchas and Bhutias. In the fourth chapter of our study, we study and analyse whether the SSP led government could provide good governance to Sikkim and ensure democracy, social justice and maintain rule of law in Sikkim during its reign. In the fifth chapter, we examine the various policies adopted by the SSP in relation to the Agricultural, Educational, Industrial and Service sectors. We also assess the performance of the SSP government and its achievements in implementing the policies. In the last chapter of the thesis, we focus on the Welfare Policies of the government with emphasis to rural development and poverty alleviation policies and programmes of SSP led

government. In the conclusion, we summarised each and every chapter of the thesis and finally we arrived at the conclusion stating that the progress of democracy and development took place only to a limited extent. The progress of development however was slightly better than democracy.

Chapter II

THE BIRTH OF THE SSP AND ITS INITIAL SUCCESS

The SSP led by Nar Bahadur Bhandari emerged as the strongest regional party in Sikkim in the 1980s and early 1990s. It was formed in 1984, after the dismissal of Sikkim Janata Parishad government (1979-1984) led by Bhandari. The SSP won two consecutive elections in 1985 and 1989 and formed governments in Sikkim. For almost ten years it dominated state politics of Sikkim. In this chapter of the thesis we attempt to understand the factors responsible for the emergence of SSP and the issues and reasons which contributed to its success. In the chapter, there are four sections. Section I attempts to look at the political developments in Sikkim with the emergence and growth of various political parties prior to 1975. Section II deals with the formation of Sikkim Congress Government led by Lhendup Dorjee Kazi, its performance and later on its decline and, downfall (1974-1979). Section III seeks to study the rise and fall of Sikkim Janata Parishad government (1979-1984). Section IV attempts to understand and analyse the factors responsible for the emergence and growth of the SSP under the leadership of Nar Bahadur Bhandari and the reasons which contributed to the success of the SSP government in Sikkim.

I

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN SIKKIM: A REVIEW

Sikkim is one of the smallest states of the Indian Union with a population of just 607688 (Census, 2011) and 7096 sq kms of land. It became a full-fledged state of the Indian Union on 16th of May 1975. The name of Sikkim is the derivation of two Limboo words, 'Su' meaning 'new' and 'khim' meaning 'house'. The Sikkimese Limboos still call Sikkim 'Sukhim' which means 'New House' in their language. The Lepchas call it 'Renjong' or 'Mayel Liang' and Bhutias 'Denjong'.

Not much is known about the early history of Sikkim. The historical documents specially 'Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum', folktales and legends of Lepchas and

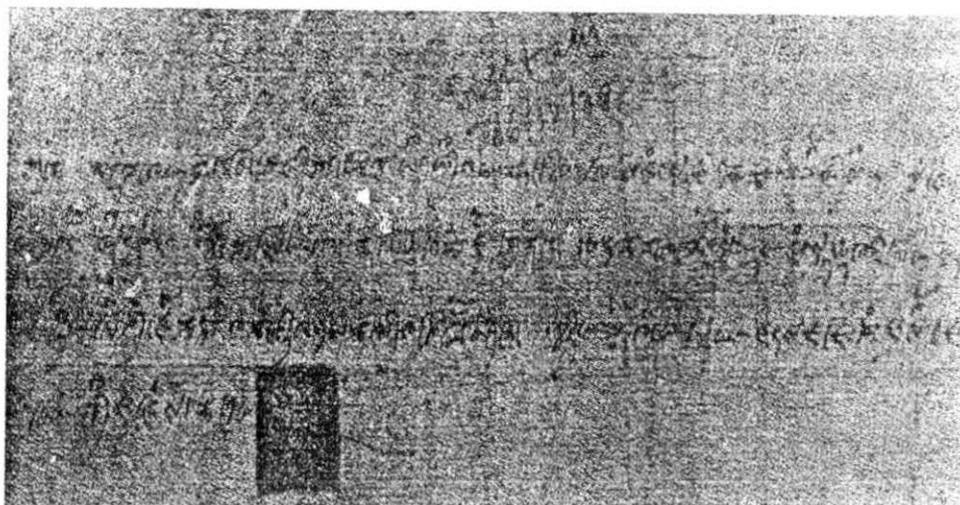
Limboos, ancient records, chronicles and Tibetan traditional texts and other histories, reveal that prior to the advent of Tibetans and Buddhist culture in Sikkim, the Himalayan belt² was divided into tiny kingdoms ruled over by the tribal Chieftains of Rong and Tsong³. As such, there was no proper demarcation of political boundary which exists today.

There is also a historical record that prior to the establishment of the Namgyal dynasty in Sikkim (1642 AD), there existed a landmass called 'Limbuwan' between the Arun River of present Nepal in the west and Teesta River in Sikkim in the east, flanking both the sides of Kanchanjonga, the Great Himalayas in the north and the Great plains in the south (Kharel, 2002, pp. 33-37, Sanyal, 1979, pp. 6-8, Chemjong, 1948, p. 51, Sinha, 1975, pp. 7-14 & 2008, pp. 15-66 and Wangchuk & Zulca, 2004, pp. 61-80) inhabited by the Lepchas and Limboos. The Lepchas were ruled by their Chieftains, 'Mutaiche Emehang' (Chemjong, 1948, p. 48) over the century and the first Chieftain was Turvey Panu (Siinger, 1967, pp. 26-28 and Gurung & Lama, 2004, p. 108). While the Limboos were said to have been administered by the ten Chieftains called 'Theebo:ng Yakthung'. However, both the Lepchas and Limboos could not develop a full fledged state (Datta, 1994, pp. 69-70). For the first time in the late medieval times when Buddhism and Namgyal dynasty descended over the southern frontier of Tibet, present Sikkim, the two native communities, Lepchas and Limboos came under the outside dominion (Sankrityayana, 1994, p. 209). During that period of time, the Lepchas and Limboos also had free intercourse between them (Basnet, 1974, p. 16). The Ordinance issued by the Lepcha Ponu to the Limboos before 16th Century reflects the strong ties between the Lepchas and the Limboos and their existence in the pre-Sikkim period.

² In which Sikkim exist today.

³ Rong and Tsong mean Lepchas and Limboos.

Ordinance issued by the Lepcha Ponu to the Limboos before the 16th Century.



Source: Dahal's 'Sikkimko Rajnetic Itihas', 1984, p.5.

In the early forties of the seventeenth century (1642 AD), three superior Buddhist monks of Ngingmapa Sect⁴ entered into the place called Norbugang, now named Yaksum and chalked out strategies to spread Buddhism in Sikkim. For this they decided first to install an efficient ruler and went in search of an able youth. Finally they found a young youth named Phuntsok Namgyal at Tashitenka and brought him to Norbugang, Yaksum via Yangang (Sikkim Darbar, 1965, p. 27, Gaulay, 2002, p. 13).

It was in 1642 AD, *Chu-Ta* year⁵ according to Tibetan Calendar, Phuntsok Namgyal; descendent of Khyebumsa was consecrated as the first Chogyal⁶ of Sikkim signing the Tripartite Agreement historically known as '*Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum*'⁷ by the Sikkimese Lhoree, Menree and Tsongree. The Agreement was signed at Denjong Phuntsok Khangsar between the ministers of Chogyal Chempo on one side and the leaders of Lepcha and Limboo on the other side (Subba, 1999, pp. 91-151). According to this agreement, the three ethnic communities belonged to the

⁴ Gyalwa Lachen Chempo, Kardok Rigzin Chempo and Ngadak Sempa Chempo were the three superior Buddhist monks of Ngingmapa sect who came to Sikkim to spread Buddhism.

⁵ *Chu-Ta* year means Water Horse Year in Tibetan version.

⁶ In Tibetan vernacular '*Cho*' means '*dharma*' and '*Gyal*' means '*King*'.

⁷ *Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum* in Tibetan language means threesome of Bhutia, Lepcha and Limboo.

151). According to this agreement, the three ethnic communities belonged to the same family, the Bhutia was considered to be a father, Lepcha a mother and Limboo a son. Through this commonwealth, 'Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum' the kingdom was to be ruled. The threesome should not fight among themselves. If one tribe thinks ill of any other tribe, then the culprit would be vexed by the promise (Gurung, 1985, pp. 69-74).

While concluding the treaty of trinity, they pledged and put their seal to the treaty that the people of 'Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum' will thereafter not have separate self-government but abide by one order only. They also pledged that the 'Threesome' would have one destiny, one government.⁸ The main reason behind signing this treaty was to accept the supremacy of the first Bhutia ruler, Phuntsok Namgyal and consolidate the sovereignty of Namgyal dynasty in Sikkim with the co-operation of Lepcha, Limboo and Bhutia who inhabited Sikkim at that time (Kharel, 2002, pp. 33-37, Tulku, 1991, p. 52 & Kazi, 1983, p. 4). After the formation of a new Himalayan Kingdom, the area of Sikkim extended from Thangla⁹ in the north to Titalia¹⁰ in south, Tagongla¹¹ in the east to Tamor Chorten¹² in the west and was called as 'Greater Sikkim' (Sikkim Darbar, 1963, Subba, 1999, pp. 1-46 & 2008, pp. 1-74, Kharel, 2002, pp. 33-37 & Kazi, 1983, p. 4). But when modern Nepal emerged under Prithivinarayan Shah in the 1770s, half portion of the land belonging to Sikkim came under Nepal. As such the landmass, 'Limbuwan' which was within the fold of 'Greater Sikkim' was straddled to two nations; present Nepal in 1770s and Sikkim in 1642 AD (Wangchuk & Zulca, 2004, pp. 61-80).

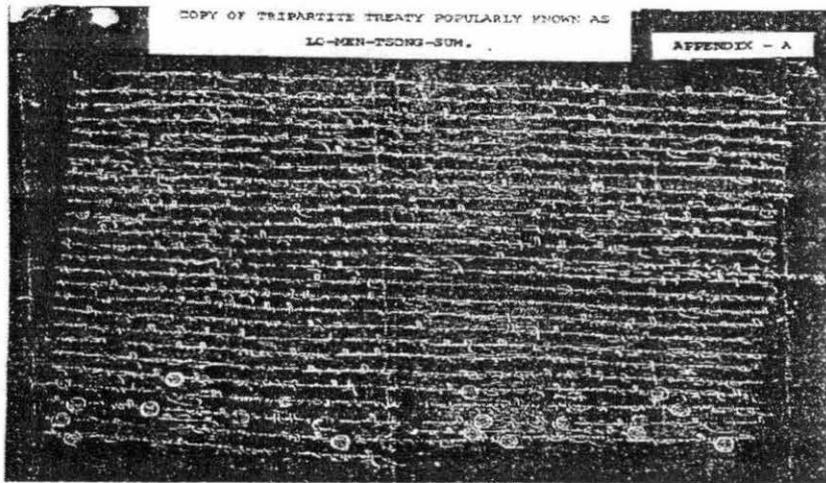
⁸ Treaty of 'Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum', 1642.

⁹ Thangla is near Phari in Tibet.

¹⁰ Titalia is near the borders of Bihar and Bengal.

¹¹ Tagongla is located near Paro in Bhutan.

¹² Tamor Chorten is located in Tamor river in Nepal.



Copy of the tripartite agreement 'Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum'.

Since the early nineteenth century, Sikkim came under the influence of British India. It became a Protectorate of British India in 1890.¹³ During his twenty years stay, 1889-1908 in Sikkim as a political officer, John White Claude brought a number of political and administrative reforms. In 1925, Sikkim State Council was constituted to aid and advice the Chogyal of Sikkim in the administrative affairs. It consisted of both official and non-officials as members. The Chogyal of Sikkim was the head of the Council. When the Council was formed for the first time, it had altogether nine members out of which six were non-officials and three were officials. Later on, Landlords, Thikadars and Buddhist monks from various monasteries were also appointed in the Council by the Chogyal of Sikkim (Kazi, 1983, pp. 4-6 & 2009, pp. 25-28).

The same pattern of Council continued to exist during the Chogyal, Tashi Namgyal's regime. Only the difference between the two regimes was that during the rule of earlier Chogyal, the members of the Council were nominated and in the later the majority of the members were elected. The Councillors generally met twice a year where they used to criticise the budget, which invariably went through the Council for sanction of the Chogyal (Kazi, 1983, pp. 5-7). During the reign of Tashi Namgyal (1914-1965) Sikkim witnessed a gradual evolution towards

¹³ After John White Claude was appointed as the first political officer of Sikkim in 1889.

reign of Tashi Namgyal (1914-1965) Sikkim witnessed a gradual evolution towards a democratic form of government. At the same time, interestingly several political developments were also taking place in Sikkim with the growth and emergence of different political organisations in the 1940s which emerged due to the impact of Indian struggle for independence.¹⁴

Three pioneering political organisations, Praja Sudharak Samaj of Gangtok headed by Tashi Tshering Bhutia as its President, Rajya Praja Sammelon of Timi Tarku with Gobardhan Pradhan and Dhan Bahadur Tiwari as leaders and Praja Mandal of Chakung by Lhendup Dorjee Kazi Khangsarpa emerged during this time¹⁵. These three pioneering political parties held public meetings at Pologround, Gangtok on 7th December 1947 and finally in the same evening threesome merged together and gave birth to a new political organisation named Sikkim State Congress (SSC) with Tashi Tshering Bhutia as its President and Chandra Das Rai as a General Secretary. The newly formed political organisation put forward three important demands: (i) Abolition of Landlordism, (ii) Formation of interim government as a necessary precursor of democratic and responsible government and (iii) Accession of Sikkim to the Indian Union (Kazi, 1983, p. 12 & Sengupta, 1985, p. 8). Since the emergence of SSC, Sikkim experienced an unprecedented democratic movement for the first time. The activities of SSC started attracting the common people towards it (Bhattacharya, nd, p. 77 & Bhadra, 1992, pp. 6-9).

In order to encounter the SSC and its demands, the status-quoists and pro-Chogyal took common platform and formed Sikkim National Party (SNP) in April, 1948. It had the direct backing and effective patronage of Maharaja, Palden

¹⁴ In 1947, India attained its independence from the yoke of British rule. This landmark achievement of India greatly inspired and influenced the educated and intellectual youths of Sikkim. They were determined to overthrow the bondage of feudalism and bring in democratic institutions in Sikkim.

¹⁵ Both Praja Sudharak Samaj of Gangtok and Praja Mandal of Chakung stood for the promotion of people's welfare and protection of their rights whereas Rajya Praja Sammelon took the stand for the accession of Sikkim to the Indian Union and union of Gorkhas of Sikkim and West Bengal (Sengupta, 1985, p. 151).

Thendup Namgyal who was then the de-facto ruler of Sikkim (Bhattacharya, nd, p. 78). Since the party, SNP was anti-thesis to the SSC, it aimed to fight against the democratic aspirations. It gave emphasis to the communal and racial difference as a main weapon to paralyse the democratic development in Sikkim (Sengupta, 1985, pp. 8-153). However, the SSC put constant pressure upon the Chogyal of Sikkim for the abolition of landlordism, introduction of interim government and accession of Sikkim to the Indian Union.

The Darbar of Sikkim agreed to the abolition of landlordism and introduction of interim government. In response to the first demand of the SSC, in May, 1949 an interim government was formed with Tashi Tshering Bhutia as the Chief Minister with four other ministers, Captain Dimik Singh Lepcha, Chandra Das Rai, Reshmi Prashad Alley and Kazi Dorjee Dadul. But unfortunately, the ministry could not last long and came to an end after 29 days of its rule. Regarding the accession of Sikkim to the Indian Union, the Darbar of Sikkim refused the proposal for a number of reasons. The reasons stated were:

- (a) Historically, socially, culturally and linguistically Sikkim had closer affinities with Bhutan and Tibet.
- (b) From geographical and ethnic point of view, Sikkim was not a part of India. She only had political relations with the latter which was imposed on her.
- (c) From the religious point of view, being Lamaist, she was quite distinct from India and
- (d) The policy of the party is to maintain intact the indigenous character of Sikkim and preserve its integrity (Kazi, 1983, p. 12).

Though the Darbar of Sikkim brought number of reformations, yet political situation grew more and more confused. The educated intellectuals wanted immediate abolition of exploitative and tyrannical feudalism and bring in democracy. They demanded popular rule, rule of law and universal adult franchise. On the other hand, the delegations from Buddhist status-quoists

headed by the Chogyal of Sikkim had a series of meetings and discussions in Delhi as an effort to find a basis for Indo-Sikkimese relation (Bhattacharya, nd, pp. 77-78).

In 1948, the Standstill Agreement was signed between India and Sikkim. Under the provision of this treaty, Sikkim continued to be the Protectorate of India and its external affairs; Defence and Communication came under the control of Indian government. In 1950, based on the Standstill Agreement of 1948, Indio-Sikkimese Treaty was signed which further confirmed the status of Sikkim as a Protectorate of India.¹⁶ The Treaty had nothing to do to fulfil the demands of the democratic aspirants and subside the democratic agitation. It was signed only to strengthen the relationship between India and Sikkim. Therefore, the political situation continued to grow from bad to worse and democratic movement continued gaining momentum.

On 28th December 1952, the Darbar of Sikkim issued a Proclamation, which envisaged the Constitution of the Sikkim State Council and the Executive Council based on Parity System. The Executive Council was to be constituted by twelve elected members of whom six would be Bhutia-Lepcha and six Nepali. Five other members were to be nominated by the Chogyal of Sikkim. It was decided that the first general election to Sikkim State Council would be held in the same year, 1953 (Bhadra, 1992, p. 85, Bhattacharya, nd, pp. 139-140 & Sengupta, 1985, pp. 12-73). Under the said Proclamation, Sikkim was divided into four territorial constituencies to elect 12 representatives. The constituencies and allocation of seats was as shown in Table-A: 1.

¹⁶ The Treaty contained altogether 13 Articles. According to this Treaty, Sikkim continued to be the Protectorate of India and was to enjoy autonomy in regard to its internal affairs (Art-II), Indian government was to look after the defence and territorial integrity of Sikkim (Art-III), regulate and conduct external relations of Sikkim in terms of political and financial (Art-IV), maintain and regulate railways, aerodromes, posts, telegraphs, wireless etc (Art-V), appoint a representative of India to reside in Sikkim (Art-XI) etc. The Treaty further made provisions for the subjects of Sikkim to have right of entry into the Indian Union freely, carry out trade and commerce, acquire, hold and dispose any property, movable and immovable (Art-VIII) (Sikkim Darbar, 25th July 1951, pp. 1-6).

Table-A: 1

Constituencies and Allocation of Seats during Sikkim State Council Election, 1953.

Constituencies	Seat Allocation		Total
Gangtok Constituencies	2 Bhutia-Lepcha	1 Nepali	3
North-Central Constituencies	2 Bhutia-Lepcha	1 Nepali	3
Namchi Constituencies	1 Bhutia-Lepcha	2 Nepali	3
Pemayangtse Constituencies	1 Bhutia-Lepcha	2 Nepali	3
Nomination by the Chogyal	3 Bhutia-Lepcha	2 Nepali	5
Total	9	8	17

Source: Bhattacharya, nd, p. 136 & Sengupta, 1985, pp. 73-74.

The procedure, which was adopted during the election of 1953, was peculiar because while electing Bhutia-Lepcha candidates, the Bhutia-Lepcha voters of each constituency, in the first stage elected four candidates each for Gangtok and North-Central constituencies and two candidates each for Pemayangtse and Namchi constituencies. Similarly, for electing Nepali candidates, the Nepali voters had to elect four candidates each for Pemayangtse and Namchi and two each for Gangtok and North-Central constituencies.¹⁷ Thereafter there was to be a final stage of election in which candidates specified above had to be elected by all the voters in the respective constituencies.¹⁸

During the election, four political parties, Sikkim National Party, Sikkim State Congress, Rajya Praja Sammelon and Sikkim Schedule Caste League had contested. Sikkim National Party and Sikkim State Congress secured 6 Bhutia-Lepcha and 6 Nepali seats respectively whereas Rajya Praja Sammelon and Sikkim Schedule Caste League did not secure any of the seats. The SSC could not secure any of the Bhutia-Lepcha seats while Sikkim National Party did not secure any Nepali seats (Table-A: 2). In this election both the SNP and SSC seemed to have

¹⁷ The candidates so elected had to be the candidate at the final election for both Bhutia-Lepcha and Nepali candidates referred above in Table-A: 1.

¹⁸ According to the Proclamation, a candidates fighting election for Council had to be above the age of 30 years, a subject of Sikkim, should not hold any office of profit under Sikkim Darbar and possess such other qualifications as may be prescribed by the Chogyal (Sengupta, 1985, p.72).

emerged as two sectarian parties representing the Bhutia-Lepcha and Nepali communities respectively (Sengupta, 1985, p. 73).

Table-A: 2
Seats Secured by the Political Parties in the first Sikkim State Council Election, 1953.

Name of the party	No of seats contested	No of seats secured	Community
Sikkim State Congress	06	06	Nepali- 06
Sikkim National Party	12	06	Bhutia-Lepcha- 06
Rajya Praja Sammelon	05	00
Schedule Caste League	02	00
Nomination by Chogyal		05	Nepali- 02 Bhutia-Lepcha- 03
Total	25	17	17

Source: Cited in Bhattacharya, nd, p. 140 from Sikkim Darbar Gazette, Vol. III, No 2, July 1953.

The second general election to the Sikkim State Council was supposed to be held in 1956 but was withheld.¹⁹ After the embodiment of agreement, the Darbar of Sikkim issued a Proclamation on 16th March 1958. According to the Proclamation, the enrolment of Council was increased from 17 to 20. The seat for both Bhutia-Lepcha and Nepali remained the same, 6 each respectively. However, the number of nominated members in the Council was enlarged to 6. A new, 1 seat each for Sangha and General was introduced.²⁰ Following the same year, the election was held. There were altogether 41 candidates of whom 20 were the contestants from Nepali, 19 contestants from Bhutia-Lepcha and 2 contestants from the Sangha seat respectively (Table-A: 3). The most peculiar feature of this election, 1958 was an introduction of Sangha and General Seat.

¹⁹ This was because the Council which had completed three years of its term earlier had to be modified and the tenure had to be extended to 5 years after obtaining the agreement of all the political parties by the Dewan of Sikkim.

²⁰ The Sangha representative was to be elected by an Electoral College constituted of the monks belonging to the monasteries recognised by the Sikkim Darbar. For qualifying to the General seat, candidate had to be permanent inhabitant of Sikkim with other qualification as prescribed by the Sikkim Darbar.

Table-A: 3

Community-wise break-up of Candidates contesting in different Constituencies in Sikkim, 1958.

Name of Constituencies	No of Seats	No of Contestants	No of Nepali Contestants	No of Bhutia-Lepcha Contestants
Sangha	01	02	---	---
General	01	03	02	01
Pemayangtse	3 (2 Nep+1 BL)	09	06	03
Namchi	3 (2 Nep+1 BL)	09	06	03
North-Central	3 (1 Nep+2BL)	08	03	05
Gangtok	3 (1 Nep+2 BL)	10	03	07
Total	14	41	20	19

Source: Cited in Sengupta, 1985, p. 77 from Sikkim Darbar Gazette, Vol. VIII, No. 5, Notification No. 5 (63) 58/ CE, dated: 18th October 1958.

In 1960, due to friction within the two major political parties, SSC and SNP, a new political party named Sikkim National Congress (SNC) emerged through the merger of Swatantra Dal of Lhendup Dorjee Kazi, dissident group of SSC and SNP led by Sonam Tshering Bhutia (SNP), Chandra Das Rai (SSC) and Lhendup Dorjee Kazi (SD). Lhendup Dorjee Kazi became the President of Sikkim National Congress.

With the formation of a new political party, the politics of Sikkim also changed in the Sikkim State Council. The SNP had 5 members; SNC 4 and SSC 3 in the Council (Sengupta, 1985, p. 81). Members of the SNC (1960) submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister of India in Delhi. The memorandum carried the following objectives: (i) A Constitutional monarchy of Sikkim, (ii) A Council based on communal parity but elected by a joint electorate, and (iii) An independent judiciary with a High Court established by a charter (Kazi, 1983, p. 13).

The third election to the Sikkim State Council was to be held in 1961. However, the Proclamation of Sikkim Subject Regulation Act 1961 created dissatisfaction and resentment among the Nepalis as the Regulation referred to only Sikkimese, 'Lho-Men-Tsong', Bhutia, Lepcha and Limboo, among the

categories of persons entitled to citizenship but excluded Nepali who formed 70% of the total population of Sikkim (Govt. of Sikkim, Home Dept. No 5/277/61, Dated: 16th January 1962). This led to a certain amount of possible discrimination against the community (Datta, 1994, p. 77 & Rao, 1978, pp. 20-21). The political parties launched agitation and demanded for the revision of Sikkim Subject Regulation Act 1961. In 1962, the Darbar of Sikkim announced its willingness to hold the third election by October but the political situation changed due to Sino-India conflict. Until further notice was served, the election was postponed in the public interest. The Executive Council was also allowed to continue to hold office until further order.

In 1966, next Royal Proclamation was issued by the Chogyal, Palden Thendup Namgyal according to which the total number of seats in Sikkim State Council was increased from 20 to 24 adding 1 more seat for Nepali and 1 for Bhutia-Lepcha. It also introduced 1 each separate seat for Tsongs (Limboos) and Schedule Caste as indicated in Table-A: 4.

Table-A: 4
Community-wise Seats Allotment in the Sikkim State Council, 1966

SI No	Community	Seats
01	Seat reserved for Bhutia-Lepcha	07
02	Seat reserved for Nepalese	07
03	Seat reserved for Tsong	01
04	Seat reserved for Schedule Castes	01
05	Seat reserved for Sangha	01
06	General seat	01
07	Nomination by the Maharaja of Sikkim	06
	Total	24

Source: Sikkim Darbar, Gazettee, 21st December, 1966, No. 6.

The new allotment of a reserved seat for the Tsongs was a kind of political justice given to the Tsongs in due recognition of the century old historical Treaty, 'Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum', their distinct identity and their role in shaping the history of

Sikkim as well as effort on the part of the Chogyal to strengthen his position (Bhattacharya, nd, p. 143). In accordance with this Proclamation, the third general election to the Sikkim State Council was held in 1967. The SNP, SSC, SNC and Sikkim Schedule Caste League four political parties secured 08, 05, 02 and 01 seat respectively out of 18 elective seats. The candidates of Sikkimese Tsong and Sangha secured the other 2 seats (Table-A: 5).

Table-A: 5

Seats secured by the respective Communities and Political Parties in Sikkim State Council Election, 1967.

Sl No	Name of Political Parties	No of seats secured	Community
1	Sikkim National Congress	07	06 Nepalese and 01 Bhutia-Lepcha
2	Sikkim National Party	05	05 Bhutia-Lepcha
3	Sikkim State Congress	02	01 Nepalese and 01 Bhutia-Lepcha
4	General Constituency (SNC)	01	01 Nepalese
5	Tsong Constituency, ally to (SNP)	01	01 Tsong
6	Schedule Caste	01	01 Nepalese
7	Sangha Constituency (SNP)	01	01 Bhutia-Lepcha
8	Nomination by the Maharaja	06	
	Total	24	18

Source: Cited in Bhattacharya, nd, p. 144 in Sikkim Darbar Gazette Extraordinary No. 19, dated: 12th May 1967.

During the end of 1969, a new political party, Sikkim Janata Party was formed with Lall Bahadur Basnet as its President and Krishna Chandra Pradhan a General Secretary. It stood for secularism, democracy and unity of the Sikkimese people (Bhadra, 1992, p. 113). On the other hand both SNC and SSC stood for democracy and demanded for the written Constitution from time to time. They also promised various socio-economic reformations in their election manifestoes (Sengupta, 1985, p. 87).

Under such a political situation, the fourth general election to Sikkim State Council was held in 1970. In this election, SNC secured 5 seats, SSC 4 seats and SNP 8 seats including 1 Sangha and 1 Tsong seat (Bhadra, 1992, p. 114). After the Constitution of Sikkim State Council, a six member Executive Council was formed on July 1970.²¹ But in 1972, Kazi was dismissed from the Executive Council and the portfolios were reallocated among the five Executive Councillors (Sengupta, 1985, p. 163).

In October, 1972, Sikkim State Congress and Sikkim Janata Party merged and Sikkim Janata Congress (SJC) was formed to stage the politics of Sikkim. It launched state-wide campaign against the Darbar of Sikkim, demanding joint electorate and abolition of the Parity System. The political development of Sikkim took sharp turn on the eve of the fifth election to the Sikkim State Council of 1973. The leaders of the SNC and SJC in their meeting held at Gangtok on February, 1973 put forward five demands to the Darbar of Sikkim.²²

II

THE SIKKIM CONGRESS LED GOVERNMENT AND ITS DOWNFALL (1974-1979)

Lhendup Dorjee Kazi was born in 1904 in an ancient and noble Khangsarpa Lepcha Kazi family at Chakung, West Sikkim (Sinha, 1975, p.109).²³ In 1945 he joined politics and dedicated his full time for the noble cause of the people of Sikkim.

²¹ Martam Topden was its Senior Executive Councillor and Nakul Pradhan and Lhendup Dorjee Kazi as Executive Councillors and Norbu Wangdi, Chaksum Bhutia and Bhawrajit Mukhia as its deputies (Kazi, 1983, p. 11). Lhendup Dorjee Kazi was allowed the portfolio of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Transport Authority (Sinha, 1974, p. 110).

²² The demands were (i) Full-fledged democracy in Sikkim, (ii) A Written Constitution, (iii) Fundamental Right, (iv) One-man one-vote based on Universal Adult Franchise and (v) Abolition of Parity System (Kazi, 1983, p. 13).

²³ His forefathers had played significant role in the history of Sikkim. His two very influential paternal uncles, Phodang Lama and Khangsar Dewan during the reign of the Maharaja of Sikkim, Thutob Namgyal were the instrumental in getting the Nepalese settlement in Sikkim in the nineteenth century (Sinha, 1975, p. 109). Lhendup Dorjee Kazi, who was brought up in such a liberal traditional family, entered the famous Rumtek Monastery as a monk at the age of 6 years. After 18 years of his priesthood, he became a social worker and established number of schools in west Sikkim.

Unlike other political leaders in Sikkim, Kazi had a number of advantages to win the hearts of all section of the Sikkimese society. By virtue he belonged to Bhutia-Lepcha community thus had greater appeal as far as Bhutia-Lepcha progressive elements were concerned than any other leader. He was also a monk which was his source of strength to impress the spiritual minds of the Sikkimese people. Therefore very soon, Kazi became an architect of democracy and spearheaded the democratic movement in Sikkim.

After Lhendup Dorjee Kazi's dismissal from his Executive Councillorship in 1972, he and his wife, Elisa Maria left for Europe for tour. In 1973, after he returned from Europe Kazi again joined politics and took part in the election on the intervention of the Indian Government. He started his politics with the fragmented party but due to his organising capability and towering leadership, he could mobilise a political force behind the SNC. Sooner or latter, all the youths joined his party. There was a cry for democratic government everywhere in the Sikkim. The Sixth General Election was held in January 1973. During this time, there were three organised political parties, SNP, SJC and SNC. The SNP secured 11 seats including 7 Bhutia-Lepcha, 2 Nepali, 1 Sangha and 1 Schedule caste seat. Whereas SJC secured 2 seats and SNC 2 seats including 2 Tsong and 2 general seat (Sengupta, 1985, p. 35).

The leaders of two political parties, Lhendup Dorjee Kazi of SNC and Krishna Chandra Pradhan of SJC accused Darbar personal of rigging the election. They protested against the pro-national party officials who were on duty in the election and started agitation over the issue of rigging. A Joint Action Committee (JAC) was formed under the leadership of Lhendup Dorjee Kazi. JAC mobilised the people to achieve their demands and urged upon the Chogyal of Sikkim to fulfil their aspirations and demands failing which it would launch a mass movement. They were reluctant to join the Sikkim State Council formed through the Council Election in 1973. The continuous protests led to the deterioration of administration and collapse of law and order in Sikkim. Such political turmoil

compelled the Chogyal of Sikkim to request the Government of India to take charge of law and order of Sikkim.

The Indian Government sent Avtar Singh, a Senior Officer of the Ministry of External Affairs on 8th April 1973 to examine the situation. The Indian Army took charge of law and order of Sikkim. The Government of India appointed B S Das as the Chief Administrative Officer of Sikkim. Thus, the administration of Sikkim came directly under the control of the Indian Government. On 8th May 1973, the Tripartite Agreement between, the Chogyal of Sikkim, Indian Government and three political parties consisting of 15 members was signed.²⁴

The first general election of the Sikkim Legislative Assembly was held in April 1974 in accordance with the Representation of Sikkim Subject Act of 5th February 1974 of the Chogyal of Sikkim and 8th May Agreement of 1973 under the supervision of the Election Commission of India. According to the notification No.196/SC, 5th February 1974, No. 17 of Sikkim Darbar, the Assembly was to be composed of 32 members and Sikkim was divided into thirty-one territorial constituencies and one Sangha constituency. The Sangha constituency was to be comprised of Sangha belonging to the monasteries recognised by the Chogyal of Sikkim (Darbar of Sikkim, Gazette, 5th February 1974, No. 17).

On the eve of the election, SNC and SJC which were working together to achieve the common goal since February 1973, merged and gave rise to new political party, Sikkim Congress (SC). In the election of 1974, there were only two political parties, SNP and SC and one independent candidate. The SC under the leadership of Lhendup Dorjee Kazi emerged as the most powerful political party and swept the poll capturing 31 of 32 seats in the Assembly, losing 1 seat to SNP. The SC stood for democracy, social and economic justice and political right of the

²⁴ This treaty envisaged the establishment of a fully responsible government with more democratic Constitution, guaranteed right, rule of law, independent of judiciary, legislative and executive powers to the elected representatives of the people and Universal Adult Franchise based on one-man-one-vote

people. The election result of 1974 indicates that majority of the people of Sikkim were in favour of democracy, socio-economic justice and fundamental rights.

After the formation of the new Assembly under the Chief Ministership of Lhendup Dorjee Kazi, a house on 2nd May 1974 adopted a resolution, Government of Sikkim Bill 1974 intending to make the Chogyal as a Constitutional Head.²⁵ This resulted to the rise of frictions and conflicts between the Chogyal and various political parties. Some section of pro-Chogyal officials and supporters did not welcome the Bill of 1974. They launched demonstrations to prevent the Assembly from approving the Bill. Meanwhile the Indian Parliament enacted the 35th Constitutional Amendment Bill 1974 and made Sikkim as an 'Associate State'. The Bill of 1974 was challenged in the Central Court of Sikkim at Gangtok.

The political situation became from bad to worse. An emergency meeting was called to reconsider the Bill. Finally, in an emergent session held on 10th April 1975, the Assembly passed a resolution abolishing the institution of the Chogyal and proclaiming Sikkim to be a Constituent Unit of India. The resolution read as, '*the institution of the Chogyal is hereby abolished and Sikkim shall henceforth be a Constituent Unit of India enjoying a democratic and fully responsible government*'. A Referendum, called '*Special Poll*' was held on 14th April, 1975 to place the resolution before the people to get final verdict from them regarding Sikkim's merger to the Indian Union. In the Referendum, '*Special Poll*' out of 61143 total voters, 59637 voted in favour of the resolution and only 1496 voted against the resolution (Rao, 1978 & Kazi, 1993, pp. 289-290).²⁶

The result of the Referendum, '*Special Poll*' was placed in the Indian Parliament for reconsideration. The Indian Parliament passed the 36th

²⁵ Since this Bill was a controversial; it caused much apprehension in the minds of the people of Sikkim.

²⁶ In other words about 97.53% wanted Sikkim to be merged with India and 2.44% wanted Sikkim to remain as an independent state.

Amendment Bill on 26th April, 1975 making Sikkim the 22nd state of the Indian Union inserting Article 371F into the Indian Constitution. Thus, on 16th May 1975, Sikkim became a full-fledged state of the Indian Union under the 38th Amendment of Indian Constitution. This historic event marked the end of 333 years old Chogyal rule in Sikkim.

The SC merged with the Indian National Congress (INC) and became a state unit of the party in December 1975 after Sikkim became a part of the Indian Union. The lone representative of SNP also joined the Congress. The Assembly of Sikkim became a single party affair. However, in 1977, the National Emergency was imposed at the centre. This had great impact on the state politics of Kazi's government.

After the withdrawal of Emergency at the Centre, the state politics of Sikkim took a new turn. Inter-party conflict and factionalism within Sikkim Congress Government of Kazi led to disunity and disintegrity within the party (Bhadra, 1992, p. 138). The strength of Sikkim Congress Government led by Kazi in the Assembly was reduced to 28 from 32 after Nar Bahadur Khatriwada disassociated with the party with three other MLAs and formed the provisional unit of the Congress for Democracy which latter on became Sikkim Prajatantra Congress (SPC).²⁷ So, President's Rule was imposed on 18th August, 1979 under Article 356 of the Indian Constitution. This marked the end of Kazi's Government.

Though the Kazi Government ruled for only one term i.e, from 1974-1979, it brought a number of changes in socio-economic spheres. Sikkim witnessed rapid development, particularly in Health, Education, Agricultural, Industrial and other allied sectors. During the time of the Chogyal of Sikkim, the Plan outlay was only 3.71 crores. However, after Sikkim became a part of India, the Planning Commission of India started pumping sufficient amount of money in order to give

²⁷ The SC which had become a heterogenous organisation later became the state unit of the All India Congress Party and then Janata Party finally.

all possible support to achieve its long as well as short-term goal. In 1975-1976, the Planning Commission of India sanctioned Rs 6.31 crores, in 1977-1978 Rs 12.47 crores and in 1978-1979 Rs 15.80 crores. Out of this 90% was by the way of grant and 10% as loan (Nirash, 1978, p. 38). The top most priority of the Kazi Government was to achieve self-sufficiency in food grains production.²⁸ In 1977-1978, land was acquired to set up regional centres and regional sub-centres. Action for the identification of suitable varieties for different agro-climatic condition, works for the multiplication of crops like maize, paddy, wheat and millet was initiated. For the rapid transformation and double-cropping in the cultivable lands, government distributed High Yielding Varieties of food grains and vegetable seeds and saplings of fruits to the farmers.²⁹

In 1975, the government enacted Sikkim Cultivators Protection (temporary provision) Act to provide occupancy rights to tenants for the first time in Sikkim. The government under various schemes constructed a number of minor and medium size irrigation canals and by 1979, about 28000 hectares of land was covered with the schemes. In the year, 1979-1980, the outlay of Rs 80 lakh was embarked for minor irrigation. By the end of 1979, 72 multi-purpose co-operative societies including fair price shops were set up for advancing loans to the farmers for developing agriculture, horticulture and agricultural products at highly subsidised rate. The government also passed and enforced Sikkim Co-operative Societies Act 1978 in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly to consolidate and amend the law relating to Co-operative Societies of Sikkim. With the initiative of the government, 'Growers Association' was also set up for marketing vegetables and fruits. As a result of these effort of the government, food grain production in 1977-1978 increased from 35000 tonnes of 1976 to 40000 tonnes (Singh and Singh, 1978, pp. 16 & Roy, 1980, Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India, pp. 8. 12). The Government also conducted

²⁸ During the financial year 1978-1979, the Government launched crash programmes to bring the fallow lands under the plough during the winter season with the objective of covering 50% of such land under multiple cropping in the next five years

²⁹ The farmers were trained in the Regional Centres for the scientific application and use of chemical fertilizers and HIV seeds and adaptation of scientific/modern techniques of cultivation.

preliminary survey for the plantation of coffee in 100 acres of land. The sum of Rs 2 lakh was allocated for the plantation of coffee in 1978-1979.

During the first two years of the Fifth Five Year Plan (1975-1979), the infrastructure for animal health, extension and commercialisation was set up. For 1979-1980 alone, an annual outlay of Rs 72 lakh was proposed for Animal Husbandry and Dairy Development in Sikkim. Dairy Development Board and Livestock Development Co-operation were established to provide Veterinary Service and promote dairy farming, to provide remunerative price of work producers, the production cum collection system and financing various small and village enterprises and marketing animal products. In the 1975-1979 annual plan, government also made provision to set up poultry farms to accommodate 500 birds each in each of the district veterinary hospitals at four district headquarters. Under the control of the Forest Department, a fishery wing was established for the first time in 1976-1977 to exploit the existing fishery wealth and develop the inherent potentiality in inland fisheries. Under the 1979-1978 annual plans, a piggery development scheme was initiated for small breeding units and demonstration centres were set up. Rs 6.30 lakh was sanctioned in an annual plan for the piggery development during 1979-1980 (Roy, 1980, Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India, pp. 13-14).

The Industrial growth and activities during pre-merger period in Sikkim was limited to only production and development of traditional crafts such as weaving of carpet and woollen blankets, woodcarving, painting, and cane and bamboo crafts and papermaking. The most important industries during this time were Sikkim Distilleries (1975), Sikkim Mining Co-operation, Sikkim Fruit Preservation Factory, Sikkim Jewels etc. Soon after Kazi led Government came to power, the government conducted a number of surveys for industrialisation in Sikkim through the various agencies.³⁰ The government also established Sikkim

³⁰ Those agencies were Development Commissioner, Small Scale Industrial Units (1975-1976), National Industrial Development Co-operation (1975), Industrial Development Bank of India (1977-

Time Co-operation' (SICO) in 1976 for the Assembly of watches and Sikkim Industrial Development and Investment Co-operation (SIDICO) in 1977 as a Financial Institution at the state level to promote and finance the industrial units by providing loans and also to procure and distribute raw material for selective industries and activities. During 1974 to 1979, large number of small manufacturing units for washing soap, coke briquette, matches, candles, leather goods, swan timber (Bagey Khola), cables, aluminium utensils, detergents, cotton fabrics with loom and bread and biscuits were set up (Singh & Singh, 1978).

Similarly, considerable achievement was made in the field of education during the Kazi Government. The enrolment of students increased to 45758 in 1979 against 32279 of 1974.³¹ Sharp rise in the enrolment of students at every stage of education has necessitated the increase in the strength of teaching personal by more than 50% from about 1200 in 1975 to 1919 in 1975 and also expansion of school facilities, infrastructural development and rise of expenditure in the educational sector. Along with this, the Plan Expenditure on Education also increased from Rs 63.95 lakh in 1975-1976 to Rs 99 lakh in 1978-1979 and then to Rs 391 lakh in 1979-1980. To ensure regular and qualified teachers to impart education in the schools of Sikkim, the government established full-fledged State Institute of Education (SIE). The state government made education free for the boys upto the end of class VIII and for girls up to class X.³² Under the Directorate of Education, Text Book Units for three regional languages viz Tibetan, Lepcha and Limboo of Sikkim was set up and Text Book Writers in each language were appointed to prepare text books up to class VII. Besides from text books, dictionaries in Lepcha, Limboo and Tibetan languages had also been produced by the Text Book Unit, Education Department. In 1977, a regular Government Degree college was established at Gangtok to ensure higher education and to provide

1978), High Power Team of the Ministry (1977-1978), Government of Handlooms (1977-1978), Roller Flour Hill Project etc (Dasgupta, 1985, pp. 31-36).

³¹ There was a marginal difference of 13,480.

³² The government also provided books to the students at half the cost. Free boarding schemes for the children of the weaker section of the society to study in Junior High Schools were launched in order to make education universal and accessible to all.

three streams, Arts, Commerce and Science. The night college established in 1972 was allowed to continue to exist to benefit those who were in the middle of their under-graduate course. At the primary level, the government in 47 private primary schools provided one teacher each. Ten primary schools were upgraded to Junior High schools, 5 Junior High schools to High schools and altogether 264 schools were set up from 1974-1979. In 1975, an elaborated programme of Non-Formal Education (NFE) was also launched in Sikkim for catering to continuing education of dropouts. From 1975-1979, 424 sub-centres were set up and in those centres the enrolment of the students were 13000 with 430 part-time teachers (Roy, 1980, Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India, pp. 34-37 & Singh & Singh 1978, p. 6). For making better facilities to the patients, hospitals at Mangan and Singtam were constructed. From 1974-1979, 33 to 50 new ambulances were provided. Three emergency medical officers, three additional general duty medical officers, at the Headquarter and four district medical officers were appointed. Number of Primary Health Centres and Primary Health Sub-Centres to cover the entire population were established. Preventive measures to fight malaria, smallpox and tuberculosis were launched throughout the state. Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) was also launched in two of the four districts to facilitate the supplementary nutrition programme. For the first time in Sikkim, in 1976-1977 full-fledged Social Welfare Department was set up (Roy, 1980, Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India, pp. 38-40 & Nirash, 1978, pp. 19-53).

During the Chogyal regime, democracy was silent, the masses could neither experience the spirit of democracy nor could have an opportunity to have political representation and participation in the governance and in state affairs. The masses were merely subjects.³³ Since the dawn of democracy in Sikkim in 1975, political liberty, rights, social and economic justice could be enjoyed by the people of Sikkim, the people could participate in both administrative and political

³³ It was Lhendup Dorjee Kazi, an architect of democracy for Sikkim who was able to overthrow and plant the seed of long cherished and aspired democracy in 1975. In other word, it was for the shake of democracy that Sikkim was scarified.

affairs as a citizen. The society of Sikkim could witness rapid transformation and socio-economic development. Universal and elementary education, basic health care and social welfare became more accessible to the people of Sikkim.

III

FALL OF KAZI AND RISE OF SIKKIM JANATA PARISHAD LED BY BHANDARI (1979-1984)

After the 16th of May 1975, Sikkim entered a new phase of democratisation. The people of Sikkim also went through a different socio-economic and political experience such as current and cross-current of the political life, inter-party conflict, inter-community and intra-community contradictions, working of the democratic government, social-economic transformation and development in the state. Several factors such as distrust, a sense of insecurity feeling among the people of Sikkim of becoming aliens in their own homeland, wide flow of outsiders into Sikkim generated apprehension and dissatisfaction among the Sikkimese people of both elite and common strata. Communalism became more a dominant feature of the politics of Sikkim. Apart, merger of Sikkim within the India union had always been the burning issue in the minds of the people of Sikkim. Anti-Indian feeling in the state was increasing day by day. Lhendup Dorjee Kazi who was declared as undisputed leader during 1974's Sikkim Legislative Assembly election, lost his position and image after the merger of Sikkim to the Indian Union. He was accused of being '*Deshbechuwa*'³⁴ and functioning as a mini-Chogyal of Sikkim who deprived the people of Sikkim of their rights and freedom of speech and expression (SSP, 1993, p.2). Moreover, his isolation from the people further added fuel of propaganda, which gradually tarnished his image publicly. In protest against the working of his government, series of public rallies and demonstrations took place all over Sikkim (Séngupta, 1985, p. 167 & Bhadra, 1992, pp. 115-125).

³⁴ '*Deshbechuwa*' in Nepali vernacular means seller of a country, Sikkim.

Meanwhile, the Janata Party came to power at the centre. This political change at the centre had a serious impact on state politics of Sikkim. Nar Bahadur Bhandari and Nar Bahadur Khatiwada considered this political change more as a chance to secure central government's support in favour of their effort in opposing Kazi's government. Under such political dilemma in Sikkim and public discontentment and apprehension, a new political party, Sikkim Janata Party was formed on March 1977 by a young pro-Chogyal and anti-merger schoolteacher, Bhandari.³⁵

Nar Bahadur Bhandari was born in a humble farmer family in 1938 at Malbasey, Soreng in west Sikkim. In March 1968, he joined Government service as a school-teacher and served in various schools of Sikkim. In February 1974, during the pro-democracy revolution he resigned from his service and joined politics.³⁶ In 1976, Bhandari was arrested under Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) during Lhendup Dorjee Kazi's Government and was kept in Behrampur Jail in Orissa from 1976-1977 (SLA Secretariat, 1993, pp. 1-2 & IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, 2000, pp. 55-56). During this time Bhandari had to suffer a lot. His wife also lost her government job (Sengupta, 1985, p. 169). His supporters and party was not allowed to hold any public meeting in the state. Meanwhile in 1977, National Emergency was also imposed in the country. In 1977, he was released from the jail. Thereafter he again joined politics and on 22nd March, 1977, formed Sikkim Janata Party. In the same year, October 1977, the name of Sikkim Janata Party was changed to Sikkim Janata Parishad. But this party was not given registration as a political party (Sengupta, 1985, p. 168). The Sikkim Janata Parishad (SJP) stood for democracy, socialism and secularism. It promised to provide real democracy to the people, undertake all sort of development in the state and curb corruption

³⁵ The party had full support of the Chogyal, other members of noble families as well as the section of people who were anti-merger.

³⁶ Bhandari along with few like-minded associates then formed the United Independent Front, became its General Secretary and contested the first general election held on the basis of Universal Adult Franchise for the first time in Sikkim in 1974 under the banner of the Front but could not succeed.

(Himalayan Observer, 22nd September 1979, Vol-14, No. 5). The SJP also made commitment to take up local issues since its inception.

Since May, 1975, the merger of Sikkim to the Indian Union had always been the burning issue of state politics of Sikkim.³⁷ Some members of the ruling party had been demanding to undo the merger of Sikkim to the Indian Union (Bhadra, 1992, & Sengupta, 1985, p. 98). Since Sikkim was merged with the Indian Union during Kazi Government, Bhandari accused Kazi as '*Deshbechuwa*' or '*Man of Mergers*' and his MLAs as '*Batishey Chor*' meaning '*Thirty-Two Thieves*' (SSP, 1993, pp. 5-6). Bhandari sensitised '*anti-merger*' as an important issue of local politics. '*Sikkim Forkao*' meaning '*let us bring back Sikkim*', '*Sikkim for Sikkimese*' '*Let us not be fooled again*', and '*We have to regain our lost rights*' were some of the slogans raised by the SJP which earned the sympathy and confidence of all section of the people including the monks and royal families (Bhattacharya, nd, p. 155). He also promised to provide 2 separate seats reserved for the Sikkimese Tsongs in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly if voted to power in the election (Chakravarti, 1991, p. 41).

Meanwhile, the question of reservation of seats for different communities came up and created tension in the political atmosphere of Sikkim. According to the 8th May 1973 Agreement, out of 32 seats, 16 were reserved for Sikkimese Bhutia-Lepcha including one Sangha and 16 for Nepali including Tsong and Schedule Caste. But the Central Government proposed to reserve 12 seats for Bhutia Lepcha, 1 Sangha and 2 for Schedule Caste and remaining 17 seats as general and placed it in the Parliament in March 1979, proposing the amendment of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 to accommodate provision for the election to Sikkim Legislative Assembly. In May, the Bill was introduced in the Parliament. On 18th August, 1979, President's Rule was imposed in Sikkim under Article 356 of the Indian Constitution. Meanwhile, the Parliament was also

³⁷ Moreover, the statement of the Prime Minister of India, Maroji Desai criticising the manner in which Sikkim was merged gave rise to considerable sensation in Sikkim.

adjourned resulting in the dissolution of Parliament. The Election Commission of India fixed the date of election in Sikkim for the 12th October, 1979. The President in the meantime issued an Ordinance called Representation of the People (Amendment) Ordinance 1979, stating that during the operation of this Ordinance, the Representation of the People Act 1950, the Representation of the People Act 1951, and Delimitation of Parliamentary and Assembly Constituency Order, 1976, should have an effect. This Ordinance of 1979 has abolished 16 Nepali seats, which were reserved for them in the Assembly and reduced 16 Bhutia-Lepcha seats to 13 including 1 Sangha seat.³⁸ This change has brought apprehension among the people of Sikkim especially among the Sikkimese Nepali. This Bill of 1979, called Black Bill, 1979 was strongly opposed by the SJP as it failed to accord any reservation for Sikkimese Nepalis and provided the plain people the franchise. The party also demanded that the system of reservation as was agreed upon by all in the Tripartite Agreement of 8th May 1973 should be continued.

The citizenship issue was one of the burning topics of Sikkim during this time. It precipitated political crisis in Sikkim when electoral roll was being prepared with the prospect of 1979 Assembly Election as names of a number of people from the voter's list was excluded during this time. Citizenship issue cropped up when in October, 1978, state Government published a draft voter's list, which put the total number of electorates at 94000. The new list had the name of only 2000 people more in it than the old list published in 1974 (Bhadra, 1992, p. 140). The issue was taken up by the SJP demanding that all those names which had been included in the 1974 electoral roll should be included in the new rolls prepared for conducting the coming election and that citizenship should be granted to those who were living in Sikkim till 1971 (Sengupta, 1985, p. 171-185). Bhandari also opined that a good number of people had been left out of the electoral rolls who were genuine Sikkimese subjects. He also alleged that the 1974 electoral rolls was full of discrepancies since names of many persons who were

³⁸ This Ordinance in fact has violated the provisions of Article 371F of the Indian Constitution and 8th May Agreement of 1973.

either Indian citizens or Sikkimese subjects were included in the voter's list (Bhadra, 1992, p. 117). Apart from these local based political issues, Bhandari also, in order to get the support of cross sectional people of Sikkim, kept the inclusion of Nepali language in the 8th schedule of the Indian Constitution as one of the low key issues.³⁹

In Sikkim, there have been an atmosphere of uncertainty, tension and confusion due to citizenship issue and Ordinance of 1979.⁴⁰ Moreover, some sections of the people especially pro-Chogyal and people having anti-merger sentiments were not satisfied with the merger of Sikkim to the Indian union. Under such political crisis, Sikkim went to the poll on 12th October 1979 to elect 32 members of the Sikkim Legislative Assembly.

The first Assembly Election to Sikkim Assembly after Sikkim's merger to the Indian Union was conducted under the direction of the Election Commission of India and Indian Election Law.⁴¹ For the first time, 17 seats were declared general and plainsmen were provided both rights to exercise franchise and contest an election in Sikkim. The voters were for the first time provided with election photo-identity cards containing their photographs, names, addresses, and constituencies. Of the total electorates of more than one lakh, photo identity cards for eighty thousand voters could be prepared before the election (Sengupta, 1985, p. 102 & Bhadra, 1992, p. 141).

But the Chief Election Officer made it clear that the voters having their names in the electoral rolls would be eligible (Bhadra, 1992, p. 141). During this time, there were a total number of 1 17157 electorates in Sikkim.⁴² Out of 117157 voters, 2144 voters belonged to Sangha (Election Commission of India, New Delhi,

³⁹ Since Nepali language is one of the most common language used by the people of Sikkim as medium of communication.

⁴⁰ Under which no Assembly seat had been reserved for Nepali of Sikkimese origin.

⁴¹ It was held according to the new parity formula and is considered to be the first democratic election in Sikkim (Chakravarti, 1994, p. 100).

⁴² Out of which 51,224 were female and 65,913 were male voters.

1979, pp. 1-47). Three national political parties; Communist Party of India (Marxist), Indian National Congress and Janata Party and four regional parties; Sikkim Schedule Caste League, Sikkim Congress (R) and Sikkim Janata Parishad and Sikkim Prajatantra Congress as well as Independent candidates had contested during the election (Election Commission of India, New Delhi, 1979, pp. 1-47). Election was conducted in 30 constituencies and 1 Sangha constituency.⁴³

In the election, SJP won 16 seats in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly and formed government with the support of 1 Sangha seat. Except SPC, no other party contested the Sangha seat. The candidate who won the Sangha seat was supported by both Janata Party and the SJP. But the elected candidate, Lachen Gomchen Rimpoche having joined the SJP as a result its total strength increased upto 17. The Sikkim Congress (R) secured 11 seats of which B B Gurung won from two constituencies, Chakung and Jorethang-Naya Bazar. The SPC secured 4 seats. The three National political parties, CPI (M), INC and JNP, state political party, Sikkim Schedule Caste League did not secure even a single seat. Out of 108 Independent candidates contested in the election, only 1 candidate, Lachen Gomchen Rimpoche was elected. The SJP, which secured 16 seats, had 22776 votes (31.49%) of 72339 votes polled in 213 polling stations as shown in Table-A: 5.⁴⁴ The Janata Party led by Kazi could not win even a single seat. The SJP gained an absolute majority in the Assembly and formed a new government based on a regional political party for the first time in the state politics of Sikkim.

⁴³ Separate ballot boxes were provided for casting votes to the Sangha constituency. For the first time, two candidates backed directly by political parties fought the Sangha constituency (Chakravarti, 1994, p.99). In one constituency, Khamdong constituency (SC), election was not conducted due to the death of a contesting candidate. B B Gurung of Sikkim Congress (R) contested from two constituencies-Jorethang-Naya Bazar and Chakung.

⁴⁴ Next to SJP which got second highest votes was Sikkim Congress (R) of Ram Chandra Poudyal, i.e. 14,889 votes (20.58%) in the election.

Table-A: 6

Seats secured by the political parties in Sikkim Legislative Assembly Election, 1979.

SI No	Party	Seats		Votes Polled	
		Contested	Won	Votes	Percentage
I	National Political Parties	—	—	—	—
1	Communist Part of India(M)	02	00	241	0.33%
2	Indian National Congress	12	00	1476	2.04%
3	Janata National Party	30	00	9534	13.18%
	Total	44	00	11251	15.55%
II	State Political Parties	—	—	—	—
1	Sikkim Schedule Caste League	02	00	85	0.12%
2	Sikkim Congress Revolutionary	27	11	14889	20.58%
	Total	29	11	14974	20.70%
III	Registered (Unrecognised Parties)	—	—	—	—
1	Sikkim Janata Parishad	31	16	22776	31.49%
2	Sikkim Prajatantra Congress	32	04	11400	15.76%
	Total	63	20	34176	47.25%
IV	Independent Candidates	108	01	11938	16.50%
	Grand Total	244	32	72339	

Source: Election Commission of India, New Delhi, 1979, pp.1-47.

After the formation of SJP ministry, Bhandari replaced Central Reserve Police with Sikkim Armed Police from various state government offices and ministerial official residence. Slowly, he tried to put an end to the influx of deputationists from government of India and other states to Sikkim. He attempted to transform the entire administrative system of Sikkim in accordance with the change of time and need of hour and circumstances (Chakravarti, 1994, pp. 101-102).

3rd January 1980 was fixed as polling date for the General Election to the Lok Sabha. The countermanded poll in the Khamdong (SC) constituency following the death of a candidate and a by-election to the Sikkim Legislative Assembly from Chakung constituency was notified by the Election Commission that it has to be held along with the Parliamentary Election. By-election of Chakung constituency was to be held as a result of B B Gurung's resignation who had

contested from two constituencies, Chakung-7 and Jorethang-Naya Bazar-10 in October, 1979 election. Gurung retained the seat of Jorethang-Naya Bazar, leaving Chakung constituency. In the election of those two stated constituencies, Dal Bahadur Damai of Sikkim Prajatantra Congress from Khamdong (SC) and C B Rai of Sikkim Congress (R) from Chakung won the election (Sengupta, 1985, pp. 108-110 & Bhattacharya, nd, pp. 157-158).

In the Parliamentary Election of 3rd January 1980, seven candidates contested. They were Pahal Man Subba of SJP, Ram Chandra Poudyal of Sikkim Congress (R), Indra Bahadur Rai of SPC, Kharananda Adhikari of Indian National Congress (U) and Independent candidates, Ashok Kumar Subba, Ram Prashad Sharma and Damber Kumari Pradhan. Pahal Man Subba of SJP won the Lok Sabha seat securing 31750 i.e, 61.65% votes of 51503 total valid votes. Nearest to it was Ram Chandra of Sikkim Congress (R) with 11632, i.e, 22.59% as shown in Table-A: 7.

Table-A: 7

Number of Votes secured by the Contestants in the Sikkim Parliamentary Election. 1980.

Sl No	Name of Candidates	sex	Party	Votes secured	Percentage
1	Pahal Man Subba	Male	SJP	31750	61.65%
2	Ram Chandra Poudyal	Male	SC (R)	11632	22.59%
3	Indra Bahadur Rai	Male	SPC	5125	9.95%
4	Ram Prashad Sharma	Male	IND	1073	2.08%
5	Kharananda Adhikari	Male	INC (U)	943	1.83%
6	Ashok Kumar Subba	Male	IND	801	1.56%
7	Damber Kumari Pradhan	Female	IND	179	0.39%
	Total		07	51503	

Source: Election Commission of India, New Delhi, 1980, p.201, Vol. 1.

Few months after the formation of SJP led government in Sikkim, Parliamentary Election was held in India, in January 1980. Congress (I) returned to power at the centre with absolute majority. This political change at the centre had great impact in the state politics of Sikkim. The three opposition parties, SPC of Khatiwada, Sikkim Congress (R) of Ram Chandra Poudyal and Janata Party of Kazi which were

trying to get recognition of Congress (I) joined together to seek the permission of the Congress (I) leadership to form a unit of the party in the state.⁴⁵ The SJP leader, Bhandari came to know about this fact and merged with the Congress (I) in July 1981 along with eight ministers and eleven MLAs and became the ally of Congress (I). The SJP changed its name and became Sikkim Parishad giving up its middle term '*Janata*'. But the merger of SJP with Congress (I) was not an easy affair as the leadership suffered from a serious rift over the question of its merger.⁴⁶ While constituting the Sikkim PCC (I) ad-hoc committee, the central leaders inducted four of the colleagues of Kazi which was against the wishes of Sikkim Parishad members. Bhandari took the matter with the High Command of the party and names of those four persons were dropped. This disappointed the Kazi group, which led to the re-grouping of Kazi men under the flag of Sikkim Congress.

On 1st July 1981, a meeting of Sikkim Parishad was held. In the meeting Sikkim Parishad strongly took the stand and passed a resolution on seat reservation requesting the Congress-I High Command to recommend the Government of India the need of restoration of the parity system and to maintain the Sangha seat so that the interests of the local people are fully protected.

In 1983, the Bhandari Government came out with the seat formula which was more reasonable and acceptable to most of the people in Sikkim.⁴⁷ The matter was pursued further when Bhandari visited Delhi to meet the Prime Minister of India and discussed the issue. On the same subject, the memorandum was submitted to the Prime Minister on July 1983 by the State Government

⁴⁵ In a joint sitting, they passed a resolution announcing their willingness to work as a single group in the state and under the leadership of the Prime Minister, Mrs Indra Gandhi.

⁴⁶ This act was against the wishes of staunch supporters of the party. It was also accused to violate the party manifesto which declared to promote the all over interest of the sons of the soil and to safeguard the regional interest of the state. But ultimately they had to give away a strong lobby. V. Patel, one of the General Secretaries of the Congress (I) also admitted that there had been dissension in the former Sikkim Parishad on the issue of merger.

⁴⁷ The seat formula was as 13 seats for Bhutia-Lepcha including Sangha, 13 for Nepali including Tsongs of Sikkimese origin 2 for Schedule Caste and 4 for General category (Kazi, 1983, p. 28).

requesting the Prime Minister to consider the matter regarding the reservation of seats in the larger interests of the people of Sikkim.

Meanwhile, the controversy of the ruling party with the central leadership over the issue of nomination of candidate for the Rajya Sabha created crisis in the state politics of Sikkim. The SPCC (I) wanted to nominate Kalzang Gyatso Bhutia as Rajya Sabha candidate whereas the central leaders wanted Solaman Sareng to be re-elected for the same. In order to resolve the issue, Rajendra Bajpai was deputed to Gangtok to meet the leaders of SPCC (I). He had discussed with the leaders and Bhandari agreed upon the decision of the party High Command and re-elected Solaman Sareng as a member of Rajya Sabha from Sikkim (Sengupta, 1985, pp. 183-185). From time to time, the issue of Citizenship of 30,000 people of Sikkim also led to political tensions in Sikkim. The opposition leaders particularly Ram Chandra Poudyal of Sikkim Congress Revolutionary (R) constantly pressurised the Bhandari Government to ventilate its stand on the issue.⁴⁸

Apart, the Bhandari government was also facing severe criticism from different directions. The opposition leaders accused his government of being corrupt and supporting nepotism and favouritism.⁴⁹ In February 1982, R C Poudyal of Sikkim Congress (R) submitted a memorandum to the President and Prime Minister of India to institute corruption charge against the Bhandari government.

In 1983, the gap between Bhandari and Sherab Palden Bhutia of his ministry started widening. The whole Congress (I) Legislative party members was divided into ministerial and non-ministerial groups (Sengupta, 1985, p.

⁴⁸ All-Party Citizenship Committee was constituted with L B Basnet, the then Deputy Speaker of Sikkim Legislative Assembly as its Chairman to look upon the matter of citizenship issue. Bhandari also took stand, expressed his readiness to grant citizenship to those 30,000 stateless persons of Sikkim and considered 1970 as cut-off-year (Sengupta, 1985, p. 184).

⁴⁹ Corruption had become most common talk all over the state.

185).⁵⁰ Bhandari, obtaining the permission from the High Command dropped Sherab Palden and Sanchaman Limboo from the Cabinet.⁵¹ Sherab Palden declared his willingness to serve the Congress (I) but was forced to leave the party in March 1983, when Bhandari issued corruption charge sheet against him and his group. This resulted in a crisis in the State Congress (I) on the eve of the Budget Session of the Assembly and Rakdong-Tintek By-Election.

The continuous inner-party conflict in the Congress (I) was giving rise to different speculation in the state politics of Sikkim. In June 1983, Kazi dismissed his old party Sikkim Congress and formed a new political party, named Sikkim United Council. This newly formed party got its momentum and strength when two dropped out ministers of Bhandari's ministry, Sherab Palden and Sanchaman Limboo joined it. In January 1984, a group of 13 ruling party MLAs including 4 ministers submitted memorandum to the Governor of Sikkim, Homi J Talyarkhan enumerating corruption charge against Bhandari Government and expressing their lack of confidence against Bhandari. In Delhi, Janata Party also demanded the imposition of President's Rule in Sikkim in the context that Bhandari Government had lost majority in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly. But the party High command had no intention to change the leadership in Sikkim immediately. Some pro-Bhandari group furthermore demanded the removal of party leaders like Loden Tshering, Sonam Tshering and ministers like Lachen Gomchen Rimpoche and Athup Lepcha. But on the one hand some strong section of party men were pressuring Bhandari to step down from the Government. On the other, opposition parties were relentlessly accusing Bhandari of being corrupt (Bhadra, 1992, p. 118).

⁵⁰ Sherab Palden Bhutia was a close and confident of Bhandari since the very beginning of Bhandari's political career. However, Bhandari was increasingly growing unpleasant over the predominance and popularity of Sherab Palden Bhutia. Furthermore, Palden annoyed his ministerial colleagues in the party by his attempt to keep himself clean of the charge of corruption.

⁵¹ Though Bhandari tried to maintain the differences for sometime, the ethnic interest and corruption issue went on widening the rift within the ruling party.

IV

DECLINE AND FALL OF SJP LED GOVERNMENT AND EMERGENCE OF THE SSP (1984-1994)

The Third Sikkim Legislative Assembly and the Eighth Lok Sabha Election were to be held in 1985 and 1984 respectively. In early 1984, Bhandari took a rigid stand. He and his party started demanding special status for Sikkim and recognition of Sikkim as a tribal state. On a number of occasions, in the public meetings, he declared that there would be no election in Sikkim if seats are not reserved for the Sikkimese Nepali community and citizenship is granted to the stateless people of Sikkim. 'No Seat, No Vote' and 'No Reservation, No Election' were the two important slogans of Bhandari. The two slogans were adversely against Bill 79 of 1979 which abolished 16 seats reserved for the Nepalis including Tsong in the Sikkim Assembly and had immense impact over the people who were dissatisfied and unhappy with the Bill 79 (Kazi, 1983, pp. 27-28).

In April 1984, a conference of the Congress (I) was held at Jorethang, South Sikkim. During this time, Bhandari assumed an uncompromising attitude over the issues of seat reservation and grant of citizenship and criticised the central government severely for not fulfilling the aspirations and demands of the people of Sikkim. He also declared that his party would boycott the coming Assembly Election of 1985 and Lok Sabha Election of 1984 if central government fails to meet the demands.

Inner-party conflict continued to exist within the ruling government led by Bhandari. Some legislators and political leaders of opposition parties have been accusing Bhandari of being corrupt. The pro-Bhandari group demanded the removal of Loden Tshering, Sonam Tshering and ministers, Athup Lepcha, Lachen Gomchen Rimpoche. As a result of this, Bhandari in 1984, took a drastic step of expelling three Ministers like Athup Lepcha, Samten Tshering and Lachen Gomchen Rimpoche from the cabinet on the charge of anti-

people activity (Bhadra, 1992, p. 18). The dissident group consolidated their position and pressurised the party High command for changing the leadership of the government since Bhandari has lost majority support.⁵² They also accused Bhandari of being corrupt in Sikkim (Sengupta, 1985, pp. 189-190).

Although, the party High Command had no intention to disturb the political atmosphere in the state on the eve of the General Election of 1984 but the situation was going out of order. The Union Minister for state, P. Venkatasubbaia was sent to Sikkim by the party High command to observe the situation on 10th May 1984 evening. The Governor of Sikkim, Homi J Talyarkhan and P Venkatasubbaia understanding the political situation, requested Bhandari to step down and give up the three demands on which he had staked his carrier: Assembly reservation for the Nepalis, Indian citizenship for an estimated 30000 stateless people of Sikkim, and inclusion of the Nepali language in the Eight Schedule of the Constitution.⁵³ However, Bhandari was reluctant to do so. As a result the Governor of Sikkim, Homi J Talyarkhan⁵⁴ dismissed Bhandari from his high profile office on the 11th May 1984 (Govt of Sikkim Gazette, Friday, 11th May 1984, No-59, 60). On the same day, B B Gurung, the then finance Minister in the Bhandari's government was sworn in as the third Chief Minister of Sikkim along with three other ministers (Sikkim Herald, 16th May 1984, vol-27, No-32/ Govt. of Sikkim Gazette, Friday, 11th

⁵² They also remarked that the future of not only minority but also of the majority community was in danger at the hands of Bhandari.

⁵³ Bhandari was given ultimatum to think over the matter until 9 O'clock of 11th May morning 1984. Otherwise he had to quit the chair of Chief Minister if fails to do so (SSP, 1993, p. 8).

⁵⁴ In exercise of his power under Article 164 (1) of the Indian Constitution.

May 1984, No-59, 60).⁵⁵ The CBI instituted investigation on the charges of corruption in which Bhandari was stated to have been involved.⁵⁶

The moment, Bhandari was dismissed from Chief Ministership, he started mobilising his supporters and threatened to quit the Congress (I). He went to Delhi with a number of MLAs and demanded that the government be formed under the leadership of Chamla Tshering Bhutia who enjoyed majority support. But nobody paid attention to his demand. Bhandari in disgust along with his majority legislators quitted the Congress (I). Nar Bahadur Khatriwada invited Bhandari to join his Gorkha League. On the other hand, Chandra Das Rai also called Bhandari to join his Himali Congress and form a broad-based political platform. But Bhandari declared that he would not join any political party. He was determined that Sikkim required regional party, regional politics and regionalism as a faith and decided to devote his activities for the promotion of those activities (Sengupta, 1985, p. 191 & Bhadra, 1992, p. 118).

It was under such circumstances that Bhandari on 24th May 1984 formed a new regional political party, Sikkim Sangram Parishad (SSP) with red and white coloured-flag and elephant as its election symbol (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1984 & Constitution of SSP, 1984). The newly formed party, the SSP just a few months before the Third General Election to the Sikkim Legislative Assembly of March 1985 emerged as one of the strongest regional political party of Sikkim. It stood for socialism, secularism and democracy and upheld sovereignty, unity and integrity of India, maintain peace, progress and

⁵⁵ In the meeting held on 13th May 1984, 22 MLAs in writing had given full assurance of their support for the leadership of Gurung. The cabinet of Gurung was further extended on the 16th May 1984 by including other five Ministers (Sikkim Herald, 17th May 1984, vol-27, No-33/ Govt. of Sikkim Gazette, Wednesday, 16th May 1984, No-61, 62). Gurung confirmed that his government was stable since he enjoyed support of the majority. The dismissal of Bhandari was welcomed by the opposition parties of Sikkim.

⁵⁶ The Government of Gurung could not survive for more than 13 Days. Due to the failure of the constitutional machinery, in pursuance of sub-clause (I) of clause (C) of the of the Proclamation issued on the 25th May 1984, by the Governor, Homi J Talyarkhan under Article 356 of the Indian Constitution once again imposed President's Rule in Sikkim (Govt of Sikkim. Gazette, No-6(21) Home/84/ 2nd Friday, 25th May 1984).

communal harmony, protect and promote the age-old customs, tradition and cultural heritage of Sikkim. It also promised to fight anti-social and anti-National activities (Constitution of SSP, 1984, pp. 1-2). The SSP also raised a number of issues in its Election Manifesto, 1984, pp. 3-10. These issues are discussed under sub-heads as below:-

(i) Restoration of Seats in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly

Restoration of seats in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly for the ethnic communities of Sikkimese origin had been the most important issue that has been agitating the minds of the people of the state ever since the Tsong seat in 1973 and Nepali seats were abolished in 1979. The reservation of seats in the Sikkim State council was made during the Chogyal of Sikkim on the basis of maintaining peace and communal harmony amongst the various ethnic communities in the state and ensuring that one community does not dominate over other communities (Sikkim Darbar, 8th May 1973).⁵⁷

The reservation of seats made under the provision of 8th May 1973 Agreement, continued until 1979. In March 1979, Central Government proposed to reserve 12 seats for Bhutia-Lepcha, 01 Sangha and 02 Schedule Caste and remaining 17 seats to be left as general seat and placed it in the Parliament, proposing the amendment of the Representation of the People Act 1951 to accommodate provision for the election to Sikkim Assembly. The said Bill was introduced in the Parliament in May 1979. On 18th August 1979, President's rule was imposed in Sikkim under Article 356 of the Indian Constitution. Meanwhile, the Parliament was also adjourned resulting in the dissolution of the Parliament. The Election Commission of India fixed the date of the election in Sikkim for the

⁵⁷ The seat reservation was an important element in the Historic May 8th 1973 Agreement reached between the Chogyal, the Government of India and three major political parties of Sikkim. This Agreement was the precursor to Sikkim's merger with the Indian Union in 1975. Here it is also worth mentioning that when the said Tripartite Agreement was signed, Tsong seat was abolished and clubbed the Tsongs with Nepali community without their consultation. This undemocratic move had paved the way for the eradication of their distinct identity. Since then the Tsong have been agitating to get back their Tsong seat procured in 1966.

12th October 1979. The President of India meantime issued an Ordinance called 'Representation of the People (Amendment) Ordinance 1979' stating that during the operation of the Ordinance, the Representation of the People Act 1950, the Representation of the People Act 1951 and Delimitation of Parliamentary and Assembly Constituency Order 1976, should have an effect.

When this Ordinance, 1979 was implemented in Sikkim, 16 seats which were reserved for the Nepalis in the Assembly was abolished and 16 seats reserved for the Bhutia-Lepcha was reduced to 13 including 1 Sangha seat.⁵⁸ The Bill of 1979, called Black Bill, 1979 was strongly opposed by the SJP on the pretext that it failed to accord any reservation for Sikkimese Nepalis and provided the plain people the franchise. The party also demanded that the system of reservation as was agreed upon by all in the Tripartite Agreement of 8th May 1973 should be continued. As a reaction to it, R C Poudyal formed the Sikkim Congress (R) on 22nd September 1979 opposing the 'Black Bill No. 79 of 1979'. Poudyal also filed a writ petition in the Delhi High Court under Article 226 of the Indian Constitution on 18th September, 1979 (Kazi, 1983, p. 24).

The demand for restoration of reserved seats became the main plank of SSP. Bhandari reminded that Sikkim is a small state with less population therefore, the continuous influx of the people from other parts of the country will be dismembered one day and Sikkimese people will become a minority. Furthermore, if the political rights of the Sikkimese people is not restored in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly through seat reservation then politically they will be endangered and their identity will be diluted within Sikkim in near future. Therefore, Bhandari made commitment to bring back the abolished seats in the Assembly if SSP was voted to power (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1984, p. 3).

⁵⁸ This Ordinance in fact has violated the provisions of Article 371F of the Indian Constitution and 8th May Agreement of 1973 and brought apprehension and discontentment among the people of Sikkim especially among the Sikkimese Nepali.

(ii) Grant of Citizenship to Stateless Person in Sikkim with 1970 as the Cut-off year

Grant of citizenship to those persons who were rendered stateless was another political issue reflected in the SSP manifesto. Sikkim had before it, the problem of involving thousands of people who were left out of being Indian citizens. This unpleasant situation has arisen out of the Sikkim citizenship order of 1975 that was issued by the Central Government following the merger of Sikkim to India on 26th April 1975.⁵⁹ But thousands of people whose names were not entered in the Register due to various reasons became stateless overnight following Sikkim's merger to the Indian Union. As a result, those stateless persons were deprived of all the benefits, facilities and privileges enjoyed by other citizens. While in Goa, Daman and Diu, Dadra, Nagar Haveli and Pondicherry, the people became Indian citizens the moment the territories became a part of the Indian Union. The case in Sikkim was not the same. The different and illogical yardstick followed in the case of Sikkim had deeply affected and hurt the sentiments of Sikkimese people. Realising this fact, Bhandari in his SSP manifesto, made this issue as one of the political agenda and promised to the people that he would grant citizenship with 1970 as the cut-off year if voted to power (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1984, P. 3).

(iii) Son of the Soil policy

'Son of the Soil Policy' was another political issue of the newly formed SSP. Since the very beginning of his political carrier, Bhandari was deeply influenced and inspired by anti-merger and pro-Chogyal feeling. He also had an apprehension that the continuous influx of the people from other parts of India in

⁵⁹ The citizen order stated, 'Every person who immediately before the 26th April, 1975 was a Sikkim subject under the Sikkim Subject Regulation, 1961, shall be deemed to have become a citizen of India on that day' (Memorandum submitted to the President of India, dated: 21st October, 1991). Accordingly only those persons whose names were entered in the Sikkim Subject Register under the Sikkim Subject Regulation, 1961, were deemed to have become Indian citizens.

due course would outnumber the Sikkimese people and they will become insecure and become a minority losing their distinct identity in future. He was very much critical about the outsiders who came to Sikkim in search of employment either on deputation or for a fixed period of time.⁶⁰ He feared that the people from the plains would gradually outnumber the Sikkimese people from all positions of importance (Sengupta, 1985, p. 175).⁶¹ He also intended to preserve the local identity to give all sorts of government jobs, trade licence and facilities and benefits to only Sikkimese people (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1984, p. 4a).

(iv) Maintenance of Cordial Centre-State Relation

Bhandari, in 1979, came to power on Anti-merger, Anti-Bill, 1979 and Citizenship issue that was quite controversial in nature. He had bitter experience when his ministry was dismissed in 1984 due to uncompromising nature and contradictory attitude towards the Centre and the Governor. The Indian Constitution clearly states that the Chief Minister and his Council of Ministers hold their office during the pleasure of the Governor. It means if the Governor of the state is not satisfied and not pleased with the performance of the government in the state then he can dismiss the ministry under Article 164 (1) of the Indian Constitution. Moreover, under the Article 371F (g), the Governor of Sikkim enjoys special power and responsibility. Considering all those aspects, Bhandari wanted to maintain cordial relation with the Centre to ensure more financial support and political freedom for the state of the Indian Union and external support for constitutional amendment to the concept of the state government continuing in power in the pleasure of the Governor (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1984, pp. 8-9).

⁶⁰ Earlier he even had accused Lhendup Dorjee Kazi government of depending upon the 'imported bureaucrats'.

⁶¹ In 1979, in the manifesto of the SJP too, Bhandari declared that 'It shall be the constant endeavourance of his government to provide over-all interest of the sons of the soil of Sikkim and safeguard the regional interest of the state' (Kazi, 1983, p. 27).

(v) Constitutional Recognition of Nepali Language

Nepali language is one of the languages that is spoken by a sizeable number of Indian Nepalis living in some parts of West Bengal, Nagaland, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Dehradun, Himachal Pradesh and other parts of India.⁶²

In Sikkim also, Nepali language is used as lingua-franca for communication. It is spoken almost by all the ethnic communities of Sikkim.⁶³ In 1984, when Bhandari formed the SSP he included the inclusion of Nepali Language in the Eight Schedule of the Indian Constitution as one of the political agenda in Sikkim. He ventilated that Constitutional recognition of Nepali language and its inclusion in the Eight Schedule of the Indian Constitution would facilitate unity, integrity and national integration in the country. Therefore, he made this agenda as one of the issues and appealed to the masses that if SSP is voted to power then his government would endeavour to include the same in the Eighth Schedule of the India Constitution (Memorandum submitted to the President of India, 21st October 1991, pp. 3-5).

Apart from those political and local issues of Sikkim, the SSP also took a stand to declare Sikkim as a 'Backward State' with the view of making provision for special treatment of Sikkim in the matter of fund allocation and granting more facilities aiming to achieve and improve the economic, educational, social and cultural life of the people of the State (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1984, p. 4).

Poverty alleviation and social welfare was the bedrock of the SSP's programmes. The SSP in its election manifesto promised that the main thrust will be the development of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Horticulture, Poultry

⁶² As a well-developed language, it has a rich literature. It is taught in most of the Indian Universities and Colleges. Due to its richness in literature, the Sihitya Academi, New Delhi, recognised it. Inclusion of Nepali language in the Eight Schedule of the Indian Constitution has been an age-old aspiration and demand of Nepali speakers of India. The issue has been raised from time to time both in the state and Union legislatures but remained unfilled.

⁶³ The Constitutional recognition of Nepali language as a political issue took its shape in 1979, when Bhandari included the matter in the manifesto of SJP. But this attempt was unsuccessful and it remained as a mirage until 1990s.

Farming and Forestry.⁶⁴ Thus, the SSP further promised to demand regular supply of better seeds, fertilizers insecticides and agricultural implements, establishment of Regional Centres, Sub-Centres and Village Level Work Centres and implementation of irrigation projects by constructing canals. Better breed of cattle wealth was felt necessary to increase the protection of milk and milk products. It also assured to extend all sort of measures and provide loans to the farmers at a highly subsidised rate with the objective to make poor people and every village self-sufficient in their basic need (Sikkim Herald, 29th January 1984, Vol-29, No-5). Furthermore, the Parishad laid great stress on Rural Electrification Programme, Rural Housing Schemes and essential commodities at a highly subsidised rate. It pledged to electrify each and every village in Sikkim in the shortest possible time and provide safe drinking water and made an assurance to launch various schemes for Old Aged, Disables, Destitute, Women and weaker section of the Sikkimese society (Sikkim Herald, 21st January 1984, Vol-27, No-2).

For making education free, universal and accessible to all, the SSP laid more stress on vocational education reoriented to meet the needs of the country as a whole. It promised to give more emphasis on quality rather than quantity in the educational sphere by providing free education upto class (XII) with free text books and exercise books at highly subsidised rate, opening more schools, Colleges, Polytechnics, Engineering, and Medical Colleges and University and upgrading existing schools in Sikkim. It also promised to fight for more seats for Sikkimese students in the educational institutions outside the State (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1984, pp. 5-6 & Sikkim Herald, 25th July 1984, Vol-27, No-23).

So far as the extension of basic and better health care was concerned, the SSP stressed for greater medical facilities in terms of more beds, more qualified doctors and better nursing care, mother and child care in the State. It called for specialized and sophisticated treatment in main hospitals in Gangtok.

⁶⁴ During the SJP led government (1979-1984) Bhandari had given much emphasis to these sectors. As a result, the food production increased from slightly over fifty thousand tonnes to ninety three thousand tonnes.

and more facilities in District Hospitals and Dispensaries, establishment of more hospitals, primary Health centres, sub-centres wherever necessary and provide free medical facilities. The Parishad made commitment to give top most priority to the supply of safe drinking water to the people all over the state with a time-bound programme especially for the supply of safe drinking water to all the villages in the State (SSP, Manifesto, 1984, p. 6). It also accorded top priority to family planning and promised to provide mid-day-meal for school going children upto class-V (Sikkim Herald, 29th January 1984, Vol-29, No-5).

The strengthening and widening of the infrastructure of Transport and Communication was very essential for all-round development of the state. Thus, construction of roads and bridges and need for the strengthening of telecommunication was also added in the agenda of election manifesto, 1984. For telecommunication network, SSP led government promised to establish and launch the mini Radio station and a pocket Television Relay centre in Gangtok to cover the State Capital as well as powerful Radio & Television Network covering the entire State (SSP, Manifesto, 1984, p. 5).

For generation of employment avenues and opportunities, the SSP promised to establish Small Scale and Cottage Industries of handlooms and handcrafts and other industrial units. It further pledged to encourage carpet weaving, thanka paintings and wood-work and assured to develop infrastructure for tourism industry in Sikkim by demanding net-work of ropeways in the State to carry men and material, inexpensively and swiftly from one place to another. For the industrial units, hotel taxi operators, artisans, entrepreneurs and businessmen as well as unemployed youths, the Parishad committed to provide financial assistance through Sikkim Industrial Development and Investment Corporation (SIDICO) and Financial Industries and Sikkim Khadi and Village Industrial Board (FISKVIB) (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1984, p. 6 & Sikkim Herald, 5th July 1984, Vol-27, No-23).

For the welfare of the schedule Tribe and Schedule Caste, the party assured to demand for more financial allocation and provide pre-matric and post-matric scholarships and increase the same for school going children, give special concession to the youths of ST & SC on matters of recruitment to Central Services, grant housing loans at a highly subsidized rate, provide home for homeless and impart training for capacity building and skill development (SSP, Manifesto, 1984, p. 7 & Sikkim Express, 26th January 1984).

For efficient, corruption free and accountable administration, the Parishad gave more stress for the decentralisation of Administration involving the people right from the grass-root level through strengthening village Panchayat. For the augmentation of forest wealth and maintain ecological balance, the Parishad assured to place emphasis on preserving and increasing social forestry (SSP, Manifesto, 1984, p. 8).

In addition to these, SSP also made an assurance for the construction of community centres, Panchayat Ghars, Libraries and Multi-Purposes Co-operative Societies (Sikkim Herald, 29th January 1984, Vol-29, No-5 & 19th January 1985, Vol-29, No-5). It further promised to protect the rights and interests of the people of Sikkim, maintain peace, progress, communal harmony and secularism, uphold the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India and fight against anti-social and anti-national elements, various forms of exploitation, suppression and oppression and discrimination respective of caste, race and religion. To work for the welfare of the youths, women and children and preserve, protect and promote the age-old customs, tradition and cultural heritage of the people of Sikkim and shall preserve Sikkimese distinct identity (SSP, Manifesto, 1984, p. 3 & Constitution of SSP, 1984, pp. 1-2).⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Although the new Parishad (SSP) was formed over the ruin of old Parishad (SJP), the two differed in the issues raised and standpoint. The SJP had issues like anti-merger of Sikkim to the Indian Union, Restoration of seats in the Sikkim Assembly, Grant of citizenship to the stateless persons and Constitutional recognition of Nepali language and stood for democracy, socialism, secularism and anti-corruption. It also had some important slogans like 'Let's return Sikkim', 'Sikkimese for Sikkimese', 'Let us not be fooled again' and 'We have to regain our lost right'. While

The Eighth Lok Sabha Election was held in December, 1984. In the election, there were eight contestants 3 from National parties-Indian National congress (INC), Communist Party of India (CPM) and Janata National party (JNP) and 5 Independent candidates of which Bhandari was one of them. In this election, Bhandari as an Independent candidates won the Lok Sabha seat securing 56614 i.e, 68.50% of the 96024 total valid votes polled in 225 polling stations. Nearest to Bhandari was Pahalman Subba of Indian National Congress who secured 21324 i.e, 25.81% of the total valid votes polled as indicated in Table-A: 8.

Table-A: 8

Votes secured by the candidates in the Eighth Parliamentary Election, 1984.

Sl	Name of contestants	Party	Votes Secured	%
1	Nar Bahadur Bhandari	Independent	56614	68.50%
2	Pahal Man Subba	Indian National Congress	21327	25.81%
3	Bishnu Kumar Rai	Independent	1717	2.08%
4	Lal Bahadur Basnet	Independent	936	1.13%
5	Bhim Bahadur Mishra	Communist Party of India	843	1.02%
6	Ashok Kumar Subba	Janata National Party	604	0.73%
7	Phur Tshering Lepcha	Independent	495	0.60%
8	Bal Deoram Harijan	Independent	110	0.13%
	Total	08	96024	

Source: Election Commission of India, New Delhi, 1984, p. 198, Vol. I.

The victory of Bhandari in the Eighth Parliamentary election of December 1984 made him more confident and determined to fight for the forthcoming Assembly election which was to be held in March 1985. His 68.50% of votes secured during Parliamentary election confirmed that his newly formed party, SSP certainly had a chance to come to power. So, Bhandari mobilised the youths and his supporters under the banner of SSP with elephant as its election symbol and red and white coloured flag in the election campaign.

new Parishad (SSP) had issues such as Restoration of seats, Constitutional recognition of Nepali language, Grant of citizenship to the stateless persons, Son of the Soil policy and Cordial Centre-state relationship and stood for the protection of rights and interests, peace, progress, communal harmony, secularism, upholding sovereignty, unity, dignity and integrity.

In March 1985, the Fourth Assembly election was held in Sikkim. In the election, four national political parties, CPI (M), CPI, Indian National Congress (INC) and Janata Party and two state political parties; SSP and Sikkim Prajatantra Congress (SPC) had contested (Election Commission of India, New Delhi, 1985, p. 1). Here it is also worth mentioning that during this time, there were altogether 195 candidates who fought an election. Out of 195, 94 including 11 women were independent candidates. In the Assembly election, SSP led by Bhandari got a landslide victory securing 30 out of 32 Assembly seats.

During the election, the total number of votes polled was 97057 in 290 polling stations. Out of 97057 votes polled, 60371 (62.20%) was secured by the SSP as indicated in Table-A: 9. On 8th March 1985, the SSP led ministry was formed with 11 cabinet ministers including the Chief Minister, one speaker and 19 chairmen for the term of five years. The formation of Bhandari government confirmed the firm political foundation of the SSP, setting a new milestone in the political history of Sikkim.

Table-A: 9
Number of votes secured by the political parties and independent candidates
in Fourth Sikkim Legislative Assembly Election, 1985.

Political Party	Seats		Votes Polled	
	Contested	Won	Votes	Percentage
I National Political Parties	—	—	—	—
Communist Party of India	02	00	25	0.03%
Communist Party of India(M)	01	00	336	0.35%
Indian National Congress	32	01	23440	24.15%
Janata National Party	20	00	913	0.94%
Total	55	01	24714	25.47%
II State Political Parties	—	—	—	—
Sikkim Prajatantra Congress	14	00	438	0.45%
Sikkim Sangram Parishad	32	30	60371	62.20%
Total	46	30	60809	62.65%
II Independent	94	01	11539	11.88
Grand Total	195	32	97057	

Source: Election Commission of India, New Delhi, 1985, pp. 1-45.

CONCLUSION

During the Chogyal regime, democracy was absent. The masses were not allowed to participate in the governance and in state affairs. There was no political representation. They were merely subjects. Since the dawn of democracy in Sikkim in 1975, political liberty, rights, social and economic justice could be enjoyed by the people of Sikkim, the people could participate in both administrative and political affairs as citizens. The society of Sikkim could witness rapid transformation and socio-economic development. Universal and elementary education, basic health care and social welfare became more accessible to the people of Sikkim. But sometimes, it is also claimed that democracy in Sikkim suffered from serious hollowness. It is reported that the provision made under Article 371F of the Indian Constitution was violated. Such violation of the provisions of the 8th May Agreement of 1973 and Article 371 confirms the hijack of democracy also in Sikkim.⁶⁶ Moreover, misuse of power and corruption by the political leaders who are in power indicates violation of democratic institutions in Sikkim. Since in Sikkim, democracy has not taken its roots hence corruption and misuse of power inhibited the working of democracy.

⁶⁶ For instance abolition of 16 seats which were reserved for Sikkimese Nepalis and reduction of 16 seats for Bhutia-Lepcha to only 13 seats through Sikkim Ordinance in 1979 without consulting any public opinion and passing in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly was clear indication of the violation of the said provisions as well as an act against the interest of the Sikkimese people.

Chapter III

LINGUISTIC AND RELIGIOUS MINORITIES UNDER SSP LED GOVERNMENT

Sikkim is a multi-ethnic society inhabited by different ethnic communities belonging to different racial and linguistic groups. There are more than 25 different tribes and communities and more than 13 different languages belonging to different linguistic stock are spoken in the state. There is an age-old co-existence of different religions such as Yumanism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity etc and faith and belief system among the different ethnic groups.

Of these different tribes and communities of Sikkim, 'Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum' Bhutia, Lepcha and Limboo, three indigenous communities constitute both linguistic and religious minorities in Sikkim. According to Thapa (2002, p.33) until 1951, there were 39397 (28.70%) Buddhist and 15991 (11.65%) Limboo Yumanist. Rest, 81872 (59.64%) of the total population of Sikkim were Hindus. While the census of 1981 affiliated to the language, records 192891 (62.57%) Nepali speakers while 22391 (7.26%), 21548 (6.9%) and 17922 (5.8%) the Lepcha, Bhutia and Limboo speakers respectively (Singh, 1993, pp. 10-11). According to the Census of India, 1991 out of 406457 total population of Sikkim, 256418 (63.08%) were the speakers of Nepali language. Meanwhile Bhutia, Lepcha and Limboo speakers recorded only 32593 (8.01%), 29854 (7.34%) and 28174 (6.93%) respectively which constituted 36.93%. The census of 2001 also records 390170 (72.14%) Nepali speakers of the 540851 total population of Sikkim and on the other, Bhutia, Lepcha and Limboo speakers constituted 41825 (7.19%), 35728 (6.14%) and 34292 (5.89%) of the total population of Sikkim respectively. On the basis of religious and linguistic aspects; Limboo, Lepcha and Bhutia constituted the linguistic and religious minorities of Sikkim at the point of time when Bhandari led government ruled Sikkim (1985-1994).

In this chapter, we try to analyse whether the SSP government protected the interests and rights of the linguistic and religious minorities. This chapter has been divided into three sections. Section I seeks to understand the ethnographic composition of Sikkim especially the historico-linguistic, socio-economic and politico-cultural aspects of different ethnic communities that distinguish each community from one another. In section II, attempt is made to understand the political situation of Limboos in the pre-merger SSP era (1642-1984) and the role of various social organisations of Limboos in ventilating their interests, aspirations, urges and demands. It also attempts to understand and analyse the policy of SSP led government towards the Limboo community of Sikkim. In Section III, we analyse the policies of Bhandari towards the two linguistic and religious minorities, Bhutia-Lepchas of Sikkim. It studies whether there were demands and urges from those two minorities for the protection of their interests and rights and if SSP led government could fulfil it.

I

SIKKIM: THE ETHNIC COMPLEXITY

Among the Indian states, Sikkim represents complex ethnographic composition. In 1642 AD when Namgyal dynasty came into existence, Sikkim was represented by the popular Tibetan phrase '*Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum*', the three aboriginal people of the newly emerged Himalayan kingdom (Chaudhury, 2006, pp. 23-26). The '*Lho*' 'southern' refers to the Bhutias who settled in the southern part of Tibet i.e. Sikkim and Bhutan, '*Men*' 'foothills' refers to the Lepchas inhabiting the lower slopes of the eastern Himalayas and '*Tsong*' refers to the Limboos who are believed to have migrated originally from Tsong one of the central province of Tibet (Sprigg, 1999, p. VI).⁶⁷

⁶⁷ The other tribe who were one of the group mentioned among those celebrating the coronation of the first Chogyal of Sikkim, Phuntsok Namgyal along with the '*Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum*' were the Mangers.

According to Richard Temple the total population of Sikkim during the seventies of the 19th century was very small, about 5000. Out of which 2500 were Lepchas, 1500 Bhutias and 1000 Limboos (Sengupta, 1985, p.27). But ethno-demographic structure of Sikkim appeared to be more complex and diversified in 1890s when H H Risley the British Officer conducted the first population census in 1891 on Sikkim dividing the whole demography of Sikkim on the basis of caste and race. Risley had listed more than 14 communities with the total population of 30458. Of which 5762 were Lepchas, 4894 Bhutias, 3356 Limboos, 2921 Gurungs, 2867 Murmis, 2020 Rais Jimdar, 1963 Khambus, 1670 Kamis, 1414 Brahmins, 829 Chhetris, 901 Mangars, 727 Newars, 326 Slaves, 287 Dorjis and 521 miscellaneous including troops. The table below indicates the composition of demography of Sikkim in the early 1890s.

Table-B: 1
Showing the population of Sikkim as on 1891

Sl No	Race/Caste	Male	Female	Children	Total
1	Lepcha	2362	2399	1001	5762
2	Bhutia	1966	1960	968	4894
3	Limboo	1255	1159	942	3356
4	Gurung	1108	1047	766	2921
5	Murmi	801	778	1288	2867
6	Rai Jimdar	726	691	587	2020
7	Khambu	726	648	589	1963
8	Kami	626	464	580	1670
9	Brahmin	521	372	521	1414
10	Mangar	363	346	192	901
11	Chhetri	303	253	273	829
12	Newar	240	183	304	727
13	Slaves	124	99	103	326
14	Dorji	102	92	93	287
15	Miscellaneous including Troops	350	72	99	521
Total		11589	10563	8306	30458

Source: Risley, H H, (1894), The Gazettee of Sikkim, p. 27, Low Price Publication, Delhi-110052.

Since then there has been a rapid increase of population in Sikkim.⁶⁸ At present, the total population of Sikkim is 607688 (Census, 2001, Govt. of India). With the rapid growth of the population in Sikkim, the dominance of 'Lho-Men-Tsong' was changed in due course of time adding more diversified races, language and culture to the ethnographic composition of Sikkim.

The People of India, Sikkim, Vol-XXXIX by K S Singh (1993) enumerated altogether twenty-five tribes and communities in Sikkim. While the Report of the Commission for Review of Environmental and Social Sector, Policies, Plans and Programmes (CRESP, 2008) records different ethnic communities and tribes of Sikkim such as Bhujel, Bhutia, Bahun, Chhetri, Dewan (Yakha), Damai, Gurung, Kami, Kirat Khambu Rai, Lepcha, Limboo, Mangar, Pradhan (Newar), Jogi (Sanyasi/Giri), Sarki, Sherpa, Mukhia (Sunuwar), Tamang, and Thami. The Bhutias constitute 8.57%, Lepchas 7.94%, Limboos 9.79%, Tamangs 6.8%, Sherpas 4.45%, Mangars 2.69%, Rais 13.4%, Gurungs 5.87%, Dewans 0.003%, Jogis (Sanyasi/Giri) 0.46%, Mukhias (Sunuwar) 0.65%, Thamis 0.09%, Bhujels 0.6%, Bahuns 6.96%, Chettris 12.22%, Pradhans (Newar) 3.73%, Kamis 4.25%, Damais 1.96%, Sarkis 0.2% and others 9.34% of the total population of Sikkim. The Rai is the single largest community in Sikkim followed by the Chettris. Among the Schedule caste, Kami is the largest community followed by Damai and Sarki. The community with lowest population in Sikkim is Dewan followed by Thami.

On the basis of historical affiliation, socio-cultural and linguistic affinities and akinness of their faith and belief, these different communities and tribes can be further grouped under four different stocks viz Lepcha, Limboo, Bhutia and Nepali. The first three are more or less single entities and fourth one comprises of several castes, sub-castes and tribes. Therefore, for understanding different aspects of these different ethnic communities, brief discussion is made on each caste and community under different sub-heads.

⁶⁸ In 1901, the population of Sikkim increased to 59,014, in 1911 to 87, in 1921 to 81,721, in 1931 it went upto 109,808, 1941 to 121,520, 1951 to 1,37,725, in 1961 to 1,62,189, in 1971 to 2,09,843, 1981 to 3,16,385, in 1991 to 4,06,457 and in 2001 to 5,40,851.

The Lepchas: The Lepchas who love to call themselves as '*Mutenchi Rongkup*' are said to be the aboriginal inhabitants of Sikkim. Their population in Sikkim is 46174 i.e, 7.94% of the total population of Sikkim (Socio-Economic Census, 2005-2006, DESME, Govt. of Sikkim). They are mostly concentrated in Dzongu, Mangan and Kabi-Tingda in the north district, Rakdong-Tintek, Rumtek, Ranka, and Assam Lingjay in the east district, Wok and Rateypani in the south district and Dentam, Daramdin, Tashiding and Rinchenpong in the west district of Sikkim (Subba, 2008, p. 252). In the rural areas, they are mostly dependent on agriculture. Those in the urban areas are businessmen and government servants and 1.98% of Lepchas are government contractors (CRESP, Govt. of Sikkim, 2008, p. 194). Their language called '*Rong Chhyo*' belongs to Tibeto-Burman of Sino-Tibetan family stock. It is one state official language of Sikkim recognised in 1977 by the government of Sikkim and being taught upto under-graduate level in the colleges of Sikkim. Of 46174, total population of Lepchas in Sikkim, 35728 (77.37%) of them speak Lepcha language in Sikkim.

The Lepchas, once along with the Limboos had strong hold in Sikkim but lost their control over Sikkim after the arrival of the Tibetans (Dasgupta, 1992, p. 10). The Lepchas originally belonged to the race of hunters and food-gatherers along the foothills of Great Himalayas. They lived as the free rulers of the immense forests (Sengupta, 1985, p. 54). However, different scholars put their different opinions regarding the original homeland of Lepchas. Some scholars have traced their homeland originally to be Mongolia from where they are considered to have migrated to Sikkim via Tibet and Burma through the foothills of Assam and Nepal (Sengupta, 1985, p. 53).⁶⁹ Chaudhury locates the original homeland of Lepchas to be the land in Sikkim bounded by the rivers of Teesta in the east and Rangit in the west (2006, p. 23). The Lepchas were ruled by their

⁶⁹ But the Lepchas of Sikkim do not accept this notion and consider themselves to be the original inhabitants of Sikkim.

Chieftains over the century and the first Chieftain was Turvey Panu (Siinger, 1967, pp. 26-28)⁷⁰.

The Limboos: The Limboos, one of the Kiratian races of Mongoloid physiognomy are other aboriginal inhabitants of Sikkim (Wangchuk & Zulca, 2007, p. 61 and Chaudhury, 2006, p. 25). They share very close socio-cultural akinness with the Lepchas and linguistic affinity with the Bhutias of Sikkim. They are quite often called as 'Subba' and sometimes 'Tsong' by the Bhutia and Lepchas in Sikkim. They called themselves as 'Yakthungba' meaning 'Hillman' (Subba, 1999, p. 32). They inhabited the land of Sikkim along with the Lepchas (Sanyal, 1979, p. 7) even before there was Sikkim for them to live in (Sprigg, 1999, p. V). Once upon a time, the Limboos were ruled by their Chieftains called 'Thebo:ng Yakthung' but could not develop a full fledged state (Datta, 1994, p. 70). They finally along with the Lepchas lost their control over their principalities in the late medieval times when Namgyal dynasty was established in Sikkim (Sankrityayana, 1994, p. 209 & Das, 1992, p. 10). Prior to the establishment of Namgyal dynasty in Sikkim, there has been free intercourse between the Lepchas and Limboos and strong ties existed between them (Basnet, 1974, p. 16).

In the ancient time the Limboos inhabited the landmass called *Limbuwan* which encompassed the area extending right from Arun Valley in the west of present Nepal to Teesta River in the east in Sikkim, from Great Himalayas in the north to Great Indian Plains in the South (Sanyal, 1979, pp. 6-7). But when Sikkim emerged as an independent sovereign state in 1642 AD after accepting Phuntsok Namgyal as the first king of Sikkim by the Lhoree, Menree and Tsongree (Tulku,

⁷⁰ In the primitive age, the Lepchas were primarily animist like those of the Tsongs of present Sikkim. They acknowledged the existence of good and bad spirit and do lot to appease the bad one. They were superstitious and believe in witchcraft. Even today they have their priest, *Bongthing* and *Bon* generally called 'Monn' who acts as exorcist in Lepcha community and social and religious functions depending upon the nature of the rituals. The Lepchas of Sikkim at present follow three distinct religious faith and belief- animism/Hindu, Buddhism and Christianity. According to CRESO Report (2008, p. 180) 84.06% are Buddhist, 12.73% Christian and 3.21% are Hindus. The Lepchas considered Kanchanjonga as their elder brother, the first creator of their mother Creator, 'Itbu Mu' (Wangchuk & Zulca, 2007, p. 29).

1991, pp. 50-55) through the formation of Council known as 'Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum' and emergence of Nepal in 1770s under Prithvir Narayan Shah, Limbuwan was straddled into two nations viz Sikkim and Nepal (Wangchuk & Zulca, 2007, pp. 68-79). Number of Limboo villages falling within the fold of the territory of Sikkim thereafter became a part of Sikkim and Limboos of those villages coming within the fold of modern Sikkim became the bonafide and permanent citizens of Sikkimese origin (Khamdhak, 2003, pp. 276-284).

The Limboos are mostly concentrated in Singpheng, Darap, Nambu, Lungang, Lingbit, Timlon, Daramdin, Tharpu, Sombaria, Soreng, Timburbung, Khanisirbung, Samdong, Martam, Bermoik, Hee-Pangbhay, Uttarey, Lingchom, Tikject, Langang, Changay, Lungjik, Yaksum, Gerethang, Thinling, Mangsabung in the west district, Sokay and Rabitar in south district, Mangsila in the north district and Aho, Assam Lingjay, Biring and Losing in the east district. Their total population in Sikkim is 56650 (Socio-Economic Census, 2005-2006, DESME, Govt. of Sikkim). Their literacy rate in Sikkim is 69.94% of their own population and 9.79% of Sikkim (CRESP, Govt. of Sikkim, 2008, p. 195).⁷¹

The Limboos have patriarchal social structure. Both male and female enjoy equal status in the family and society. Daughter cannot inherit parents' property unless she remains unmarried at parents' house and take care of them and shoulders sole responsibility of son in the family. The Limboos, though officially recorded as Hindus, yet their religion is neither Hindu nor Buddhist as Chaudhury (2006, p. 28) and Hooker (1855, p. 128) accord. Dalton (1872) records their religion as paganism (Gurung 2011, p. 127) and H H Risley (1894) as animism. But the Limboos claimed themselves to have their own religion and ancestral faith

⁷¹ By profession Limboos of Sikkim are agriculturalists (60.73%) depending mainly on their own land and land based activities. The land is owned by individual proprietors and is mostly a land owning community. Their main source of income is drawn from terrace cultivation of agricultural and horticultural crops and livestock rearing. Some are engaged themselves in government as well as in private jobs.

and belief system known as 'Yumaism' or 'Yuma Samyo' which is akin to the Bonism of ancient Tibet. The worshipping place of Limboo is called 'Manghim'.⁷²

The Limboos language 'Yakthung Sappa:n' belongs to Tibet-Burman language family. It is one of the state official languages of Sikkim recognised by the State Government in 1981 and being taught upto under-graduate level in the Government Colleges of Sikkim.⁷³ It has rich literature and independent script called 'Srijonga Script'. Out of 56650 total population of Limboos in Sikkim (Socio-Economic Census, 2005-2006, DESME, Govt. of Sikkim) 34292 (66.20%) of their population and 5.89% of the total population of Sikkim speak Limboo language

⁷² They are Shamanist and social functions like marriage ceremony, pre-natal worship, 'Sapok Chomen', birth purification ceremony 'Yangdang Pho:ngma' and rituals are officiated and performed by the their shamans called *Phedangmas, Sambas, Yebas* or *Yemas*. The Limboo Shamans also act as exorcist and do medications in the society.

The Limboos believe in Almighty, *Tageraningwa?phuma* who is considered to be an omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, infinite, eternal and creator of the universe and all sentient beings according to Limboo philosophy. They also *Yumamang, Okwanama, Himsamang, Sammangjyangs* and *Tapsammangs* who are believe to have supernatural power. *Yumamang* as the Limboos believe is the manifestation of *Tageraningwa?phuma*. The Limboos also believe in the nature like mountains, caves, rivers, springs, lakes etc as the manifestation of different deities and divinities and worship and propitiate them on various occasions. *Tumyanghangs* are the most respectable persons in Limboo family and society. The religions and social functions and activities are carried out under their supervision and advice. The Limboos have their own oral mythology called *Mundhums*, around which whole Limboo socio-cultural activities revolves. The Limboos hardly use Hindu priest, Pandits and those who are influenced by the Buddhist culture use monks sometimes but not always.

The Limboos have number of social and seasonal festivals; *Kokfekwa Tongnam, Sisekpa Tумыen Tongnam, Srijonga Sawan Tongnam, Bolihang Tongnam, Tongsum Tongnam* or *Chesok-Theesok* and *Yokwa* or *E:mang* observed by the Limboos. *Kokfekwa Tongnam* specially marks the beginning of New Year for Limboos. *Sisekpa Tумыen Tongnam* one of the major festivals of Limboo is celebrated in the month of *Sise:kla* (mid-July). *Srijonga Sawan Tongnam*, the birth anniversary of Tyeongsi Srijonga is observed on the full moon day of December every year. *Bolihang Tongnam*, another important social festival of Limboos falls on the new moon day of October-November. *Theesok-Chesok* or *Tongsum Tongnam*, harvest festival is celebrated during the month of November-December. While *E:mang* is the festival of worshipping nature divinities among the Limboos in the pre-involvement of agricultural activities. It is marked by the blooming of peach plant and during this, entire village men assemble on the top of the hillock and nature divinities of wind, rain, sun are invoked for the favourable season and bumper crops, avoidance of accidents, wounds, epidemics and other natural calamities.

The Limboos also bear uniqueness in their food habits, dresses, ornaments, family pattern, kinship and social organisation. Their folksongs like *Hakparay, Khyali, Pa:llam, Phungwachangma, Yehang Samlo, Tумыang Samlo, Mering Samlo, Tamkay O:kma, Samlo, etc.* and folkdances- *Kellang, Ya?rak, Tambrangay, Panthoray, Sirthapay, Kengjori, etc.* as well as the folk musical instruments clearly indicates the distinctiveness of their identity.

⁷³ Frequent use of diacritical marks, glottal stops, coda-consonants and vowel-length and placing verb at the end of sentences is the peculiarity of Limboo language.

There are altogether 279 Limboo language teachers working in the various government schools of Sikkim. In 2003, they were included in the list of Schedule Tribe.

The Bhutias: The Bhutias who addressed as '*Lhopas*' originally migrated from '*Bhot*' place of Tibet from which their tittle '*Bhutia*' has been corrupted. Their total population in Sikkim is 49873 (8.57%) of the total population of Sikkim (CRESP, Govt. of Sikkim, 2008, pp. 140-147). They are highly concentrated in Lachen-Mangsila and Kabi-Tingda constituencies of North district, Gangtok, Ranka, Assam-Lingjay, Rumtek, Rakdong-Tintek, Pathing, Rigu, Khamdong, Sang Martam in east district, Ralong, Kewzing, Wok, Timi-Tarku, Damthang in the south district and Yaksum, Tashiding, Geyzing, Rinchenpong in the west district of Sikkim (Subba, 2008, p. 269).

Initially, most of the Bhutias were traders and herdsmen but later on they were accustomed to cultivation (Sengupta, 1985, p. 57). In the record of Sinha (2008, p. 31), 'the Bhutias were traders, farmers and lamas searching for new land long before the 15th century for colonisation. Sikkim at that time was very sparsely inhabited by Rong (Lepchas) and Tsong (Limboos). Those grazers and Buddhists missionaries were possibly the earlier immigrant to Sikkim in search of new pastures and potential converts to their religion. The traders in the pursuit of bartering their goods followed them and farmers came in search of rich rice field called Denjong, the '*Valley of rice*'. During later half of the 15th century, an important Tibetan patriarch named Khye-Bumsa from Phari⁷⁴ came to Sikkim presented ceremonial offerings to the then Lepchas Chief, Thekong Thek and established a blood brotherhood. Meanwhile his followers and kinsmen migrated and settled in Sikkim subsequently as pastorals and traders'.

In 1642 AD, the three prominent Buddhist Chempos arrived in west Sikkim at a place Yaksum which was dispersly inhabited by the two indigenous

⁷⁴ Phari is located in Chumbi Valley, Tibet.

inhabitants, Rongs and Tsongs at that time. The three superior Buddhist monks with the core intention to spread 'Cho' installed Phuntsok Namgyal as 'Chogyal' means 'Dharma Raja'. This event marked the beginning of full control over Sikkim with an effective propagation of Buddhist dharma and culture in Sikkim. Large part of Sikkim came under the sway of Tibetan family. Since then there had have been subsequent migration of Tibetans to Sikkim in due course of time.

The Bhutias are the offshoots of 'Nyorpog-Phutsos. *Shangdarpa, Tsechudarpa, Guru Tashi* and *Nyimagyalpo*, are the descendent of Khye-Bumsa while *Bonpas, Gonsarpas, Tsungyapas, Namtsangtors, Tagchungdarpas, Karsorpas, Gyontopas and Topas or Dokhangpas* are the descendent of *Beb-Tsan-Gyat* (Subba, 2008, pp. 267-268). The twelve clans (4+8=12) of Bhutias are eligible for entrance into Pemayangtse monastery as priest (Risley, 1894, p. 28). Their language is called 'Lhokhey' and the script 'Thomi Sambota'.

The Nepalese: The fourth ethnic group which constitute the demography of Sikkim is Nepalese. It is composed of different tribes and castes with distinctive sub-cultural and linguistic stocks, considerable physical character, tradition and customs. The most important castes and communities are Rai, Manger, Tamang, Sherpa, Gurung, Bhujel, Dewan, Thami, Newar, Sunuwar, Sanyasi, Chhettri, Bahun etc. Among the low caste, there are Sarki, Damai, Kami, Majhi etc.

The Rais: The term Rai which amounts to the status of Chief is known to be a tittle given to the Khambus by Prithivir Narayan Shah after capturing their land, *Khambuwan* (Subba, 1989, p. 26). The total population of Rais in Sikkim is 77954 (13.4%) of the total population of Sikkim (Socio-Economic Census, 2005-2006, DESME, Govt of Sikkim). They are scattered all over Sikkim except in the north

district of Sikkim (Subba, 2008, p. 319). They are divided into several clans⁷⁵ and each clan have their own dialect almost intelligible to others.⁷⁶

The Mangers: The Mangers are historically recorded as one of the earlier settlers of Sikkim. They were one of the groups mentioned among those celebrating the coronation of the first Chogyal, Phuntsok Namgyal (Roy, 1980, p. 4). They share very close affinity with the Gurungs and Tamangs. Their total population in Sikkim is 15635 (2.69%) of the total population of Sikkim. Mangers mostly inhabit Kamling, Suldung, Tinzerbong, Takhuthang, Mabong, Khanisirbung, Budang, Ribdi, Barthang, Berfok, Chinthang, Bermoik, Dhupidara, Karzi, Mangnam, Norkhola in west Sikkim, Assangthang, Ahley, Mamley, Kamrang, Koteng, Magarjong, Chiyadara, Maniram, Bhanjyang, Namthang in the south, Kadamtam, Pachekhoni, Subaneydara, Rongli, Sodunglakha, Rhenock, West Pandam, Rumtek 9th Mile, Pakyong, Gangtok, Duga, Sirwani, Khamdong in the east district of Sikkim (CRESP, Govt. of Sikkim, 2008, p. 92).

The Gurungs: The Gurungs are of Mongoloid origin. They called themselves as 'Tamu' meaning 'Thundering Sky'. In Sikkim, their population is 34130 (5.87%) of the total population of Sikkim. They are mostly concentrated in Dodok, Buriakhop, Chakung, Rinchenpong, Dentam, Sardong in the west district, Chhuba, Nagi, Borang and Pathing in the south district and Rigu in the east district of Sikkim (CRESP, Govt. of Sikkim, 2008, pp. 67-162). They have their own language, 'Tamu Kye' and script 'Tamu Kye Lippi'. They are divided into two branches; Char Jat and Sora Jat.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Those clans of Rai are Atharay, Bantawa, Chamling, Thulung, Kulung, Lohorung, Baying, Dungmali, Nechereng, Khaling, Chaurasaya, Rungchenbung, Dumi, Chinthang, Sangpang, Lambichong, Sotang, Thilung, Yaku, Mewahang, Puma, Waling, Khersang etc.

⁷⁶ In Rai community marriage is allowed within the same clan but the *pachha* of the girl and boy must be different.

⁷⁷ The Char Jat or Four Clan is divided into four classes; Ghole, Ghanday, Lama and Lamichanay (Sengupta, 1989, p. 43). Other Sora Jat or Sixteen Clan are Ghyabre, Kyabche, Kurumchhe, Jangre, Tharje, Dorjali, Rilami, Poju, Chormi, Pom, Thim, Migi, Khatra Yog, Paingi, Kholali, Sogun and Thorjami. The Char Jat has a superior social status to Sora Jat (Subba, 1989, p. 43 and Subba, 2008, p. 357).

The Tamangs: The Tamangs belong to Mongoloid racial stock. The word Tamang means 'Horse Trader' in Tibetan language. They are also called as 'Murmi' or 'Dhamang', 'Ishang' and 'Sain' (Subba, 1989, pp. 43-45). Like the Gurungs and Sunuwars, Tamangs also have hierarchical division of their thars or clans which is divided into two groups- 'Bara Jat' or twelve clans and 'Athara Jat' or eighteen clans. The former enjoy the higher social status over the later, 'Athara Jat' or eighteen clans (Sengupta, 1985, p. 59). In Sikkim, they are mostly concentrated in and around the area of Teesta and Rangit Valleys of west, south and east Sikkim. In the west, they are concentrated in Soreng, Rinchenpong and Chakung, in the east, Central Pandam, Assam Lingjay, Ranka and Gangtok and south, Namthang, Jorethang, Melli, Ratepani, Damthang and Timi-Tarku (Subba, 2008, p. 365). Their total population in Sikkim is 39523 i.e, 6.8% of the total population of Sikkim (Socio-Economic Census, 2005-2006, DESME, Govt. of Sikkim). They were included in the list of Schedule Tribe in 2003 along with the Limboos.

The Sherpas: The Sherpas are of Tibetan origin of Mongoloid race. Originally, they inhabited eastern part of 'Kham' region of Tibet. This is the reason why they are called Sherpas which means 'the people of the east' in Tibetan language. They have very close cultural and religious affinity with the Tibetans, Bhutias and Drukpas. Most of them are Buddhist. Their total population in Sikkim is 25894 (4.45%) of the total population of Sikkim (Socio-Economic Census, 2005-2006, DESME, Govt. of Sikkim). They are mostly concentrated in Ribdi, Bhareng, Okhray, Upper Rumbuk, Bega, Upper Bermoik, Siribadam, Singling and Buriakhop in the west district, Ralong, Nayabasty, Damthang, Wok and Parbing in the south district, Regu, Pathing and Khamdong in the east district and Kabi-Tingda in the north district of Sikkim (Subba, 2008, p. 281).⁷⁸

The Mukhias: The Mukhias are also known as 'Sunuwars' by other name. The Mukhia title is believed to have been conferred to them by Prithivir Narayan Shah.

⁷⁸ They have their own language, recognised as one of the state official languages and is being taught upto primary level in the schools of Sikkim. They use Tibetan script.

The Sunuwar called themselves as 'Koinch'. They are divided into two hierarchical clans; Bara Thars or Twelve Clans and Das Thars or Ten Clans. There is not much of social difference between the members of two groups of clan and intermarriage is permissible among them (Subba, 1989, p. 42). The Sunuwar in Sikkim are numerically less with only 3795 (0.65%) total population. They inhabit Nandu Gaon, Chumbung, Ongchu, Geyzing, Rinchenpong, Khechopalri, Rameng, Maj Rameng, Tingmu, Kitam, Polok, Tinjir, Najitam, Tirkulan, Chandmari, Rongyek and Burtuk (Subba, 2008, p. 340). They have their own language, 'Koinchlo' belonging to Tibeto-Burman family. Their language is one of the state official languages of Sikkim and is taught upto primary level (CRESP, Govt. of Sikkim, 2008, p. 56).

The Dewans: The Dewans or Yakha are the descendents of Kirats. They share their close affinity with Rais and Limboos in terms of cultural and social way of life. Not much is known about the Dewans of Sikkim. They are in negligible demographic size in Sikkim. Their total population in Sikkim is just 193, i.e, 0.03% of Sikkim's total population (Socio-Economic Census, 2005-2006, DESME, Govt. of Sikkim). They are found in Ghum Yakha Village in south district and Tadong in the east district of Sikkim (Subba, 2008, p. 332).⁷⁹

The Bhujels: The Bhujels also called 'Khawas' or 'Ghati' are very less in number i.e, 3516 (0.6%) of the total population of Sikkim (Socio-Economic Census, 2005-2006, DESME, Govt. of Sikkim). They are found mostly in Daramdin, Salangdang and Soreng in West Sikkim district, Ghum-Kitam, Turuk, Tokal, Bermoik in the south district and Jitlang, Pakyong, Rhenock and Tadong in the east district of Sikkim. The Bhujels speak Nepali language and they are not known to have their own language (Subba, 2008, p. 45).

The Jogis: The Jogis are called Sanyasis by other name meaning 'Saint'. The total population in Sikkim is 2725 constituting 0.46 % of Sikkim's total population (Socio-Economic Census, 2005-2006, DESME, Govt. of Sikkim). They are found in

⁷⁹ The name of their organisation is Akhil Kirat Dewan (Yakha) Sangh (Subba, 2008, p. 332).

Rhenock, Central Pandam in east Sikkim, Upper Bermoik, Dorong, Hatidhunga, Kamling, Rinchenpong, Lingchom, Soreng and Tatopani in west district, Jorethang and Ralong in south Sikkim (CRESP, Govt. of Sikkim, 2008, p. 170).

The Thamis: The Thamis are one of the several communities of Nepali constellation. In Sikkim, they are thinly populated and are scattered in all the districts of Sikkim. Their total population in Sikkim is 503 constituting 0.09% of the total population of Sikkim (Socio-Economic Census, 2005-2006, DESME, Govt. of Sikkim). Most of the Thamis live in Rhenock, Rongli, Sang Martam and around Gangtok (CRESP, Govt. of Sikkim, 2008, p. 114 & 256). Linguistically, they share very close affinity with Rais and socio-religiously with the Tamangs. Their main occupation is agriculture. Most of them are landless (CRESP, Govt. of Sikkim, 2008, p. 114). The Thamis are divided into Rishmi, Angkami, Dolakhe, Dumpali, Ishirishmi, Dangurishmi, Shirishmi etc (Subba, 1989, p. 41).

The Newars: The Newars generally referred to as 'Pradhan' are supposed to be the inhabitants of Kathmandu Valley. Religion-wise, they are divided into Shivamargis of Hindus and Buddhamargis of Buddhist (Subba, 1989, p. 34). In Sikkim, there are few numbers of Newar Christians alongside of Newar Hindus and Buddhist (Subba, 2008, pp. 420-421). The total population of Newar in Sikkim is 21713 (3.73%) of the total population of Sikkim (Socio-Economic Census, 2005-06, DESME, Govt. of Sikkim).⁸⁰

The Bahun-Chettris: The Bahun-Chettris are the main component of Nepali constellation. They belong to the Aryan stock. They share very close akinness with Kamis, Damais, Majhis and Sarkis of Aryan race in terms of culture, religion,

⁸⁰ They are mostly concentrated in Melli, Namthang, Jorethang and Timi-Tarku in the south district, Regu, Rhenock, Central Pandam, Gangtok, Ranka, Rumtek, Sang Martam and Khamdong in the east district, Soreng, Daramdin Dentam, Geyzing in the west district (Subba, 2008, p. 412). The Newars are mostly businessmen.

language and physical appearance. The Bahun-Chettris belong to the higher caste while rest three castes belong to low caste (Gurung & Lama, 2004, p. 282).⁸¹

Bahuns are Brahmins among the Nepalis. They are major groups Saraswati, Kanyakubja, Gaud, Maithil, and Utkal Bahun. The names are adopted after the place of origin (Subba, 1989, p. 30). Saraswati Bahuns have migrated from river Saraswati, Kanyakubja from Kannauj, Gaud from Bengal, Maithil from Mithila and Utkal Bahun from Orissa. The five major divisions are further grouped into Purbia and Kumai (Gurung & Lama, 2004, pp. 282-283).⁸² On the basis of social hierarchy, Bahuns of different clans are divided into Upadhaya Bahun and Joshi Bahun (Subba, 1989, pp. 30-31). The former teaches the principle of Hindus Vedas and latter studies astrology or Jotish (CRESP, Govt. of Sikkim, 2008, p. 50). The Bahuns in Sikkim are 40483 (6.96%) of the total population of Sikkim (CRESP, Govt. of Sikkim, 2008, p. 126).

The Chettri is a corrupted form of the Sanskrit word 'Khatriya' which refers to a fighting class (Subba, 1989, p.32). In Sikkim, they are second largest single community next to Rais community. Their total population in Sikkim is 71089 (12.22%) of the total population of Sikkim (Socio-Economic Census, 2005-2006, DESME, Govt. of Sikkim). Their main language is Nepali and the script used by them is Dewnagari. The Chettris are divided into Adhikari, Baniya, Basnet, Bista, Bohra, Bura or Burakothi, Gharti, Karki, Khada, Khatri, Khulal, Mahal, Rant, Rana, Roka, Thapa etc. Each of the clans are divided into several sub-clans (Subba, 1989, pp. 33-34).

⁸¹ The Brahmins, in the ancient times, were professionally priests or Brahmins and Chhettris were the defenders of the administration. The two social sects are believed to have become Bahuns and Chhettris of present Nepali society.

⁸²The Purbia Bahuns are of several clans such as Acharya, Aryal, Adhikari, Baral, Baskota, Bastola, Bhandari, Bhatta, Dhital, Dhungel, Chamlagain, Chapagain, Dahal, Debkota, Dhakal, Ghimire, Gotame, Guragain, Kharel, Khanal, Lamichhane, Nepal, Neupaney, Ojha, Parajuli, Paudyel, Pokhrel, Purtel, Regmi, Rimal, Risal, Sigdel, Silwal, Subedi and Timilsina and the Kumai Bahuns are Bhatta, Bista, Dotel, Joshi, Khatiwada, Lohini, Pankey, Pant Upreti etc.

The Kami, Damai and Sarki (Schedule Castes): The Kami, Damai and Sarki are single most untouchables castes. They have Aryan features and considerable cultural affinity with Bahun-Chettris (Subba, 1989, p. 48).

The Kamis, also called as *Biswakarma* are blacksmith by profession. The term 'Kami' is believed to have originated from 'Kamuannu' meaning to earn (Subba, 1989, p. 49) or make things (Gurung & Lama, 2004, p. 284). Their total population in Sikkim is 24721 (4.25%) of the Sikkim's total population. They mostly inhabit the areas of south, east and west districts of Sikkim (Subba, 2008, p. 396). They are divided into Khati, Gajmer, Kalikotay, Rijal, Mangranti, Ghatani, Lohar, Tiriwa, Baraily, Sapkota, Sashankar, Diyali, Dural, Lahagum etc. (Gurung & Lama, 2004, p.284).

The Damais are tailors by occupation. The term 'Damai' is derived from the word 'Damaha' the chief musical instrument of the 'Damai' (Subba, 1989, p. 49). They are musicians who lead the marriage procession and play those musical instruments in any auspicious functions. Their population in Sikkim is 11370 (1.96%) of the total population of Sikkim. They are scattered all over the district of Sikkim. They are divided into Sundas, Das, Pariyar, Bagdas, Mothey, Ranpaheli, Sewa, Darnal, Karkidoli, Bhitrikoti, Suji, Thingmong, Maley, Bardewa, Labar, Thatal, Naubag, Ghimiray etc. (Subba, 2008, p. 398 and Gurung & Lama, 2004, p.285).

The Sarkis are Nepali cobblers and concerned with the work of animal leathers. Their population in Sikkim is 1157 (0.2%) of the total population of Sikkim. They are found rarely in all the districts of Sikkim. Like the other castes, they are also divided into several clans Dukroka, Mungranti, Rurkuti, Khilinge, Bogeti, Achani, Tokangi, Roka, Mijar, Lamjel, Rumtel (CRESP, Govt. of Sikkim, 2008, p.100 and Gurung & Lama, 2004, p.285). Of the three castes, Kami is considered to be superior to Damai and Sarki. The three are treated as Schedule Caste in Sikkim. Special privileges such as reservation of seats in Sikkim Legislative Assembly,

higher educational institutions and government services are provided by the government.

Majhis are also one of the communities recorded in K S Singh's '*The People of India, Sikkim*' (1993). But in the account of CRESP Report of 2008, Government of Sikkim they have been left out. Their population in Sikkim is 466 (0.14%) of the total population of Sikkim (Socio-Economic Census, 2005-2006, DESME, Govt. of Sikkim).⁸³ They are concentrated in a few localities like Majhigaon near Jorethang of south district and Majhitar near Rangpo of east district of Sikkim. They mostly lived in the river banks of the Rangit and Teesta; a warm region with moderate rainfall. The language of Majhi is not so far known but they use Nepali language for the communication. They have a single thar called 'Kusuwar' which is an endogamous unit. The nuclear family is very common to the Majhis. They are superior to the Kami, Damai and Sarki but inferior to the other communities in the social status (Gangopadhyay, 1993, pp. 12-117).

There are other communities like Bihari, Marwari and others who constitute about 9.34% of the total population of Sikkim (Socio-Economic Census, 2005-2006, DESME, Govt. of Sikkim). These communities have been residing in Sikkim since long back and have socio-cultural and religious ties with the people of Sikkim. They are mainly businessmen by profession and are mostly concentrated in the urban areas.

II

THE SSP GOVERNMENT AND THE LIMBOOS OF SIKKIM

The Tsongs (Limboos) are one of the indigenous inhabitants of Sikkim. The phrase '*Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum*' and other historical records go on to prove this fact. The Limboos are neither Nepalis by ethnicity and indigeneity nor Hindus by religion. Historically, linguistically and culturally they share close affinity with the Lepchas

⁸³ The word '*Majhi*' means boat driving which have been corrupted from their profession.

and Bhutias of Sikkim. As such, they are a separate ethnic community with distinct identity. But despite of this fact, they were denied and deprived of genuine political rights and economic benefits. They are the worst sufferers and victims even after Sikkim's merger with the Indian Union. Their 'Tsong Seat' granted by the Chogyal of Sikkim in 1966 was abolished in 1973 and clubbed with the Nepalis. When Schedule Tribe and Schedule Caste (Sikkim) Order, 1978 was implemented in Sikkim they were left out. While the Bhutia-Lepchas who were also the members of 'Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum' had been granted 13 seats reserved for them in the Sikkim Assembly and in 1978, they were included in the list of Schedule Tribe.⁸⁴ So this is the reason why the case of Limboo is taken up separately for discussion in section II. Secondly, till date no study has been made on the Limboos' struggle for ST status and restoration of the seats in the Sikkim Assembly despite of their strong historical, linguistic, religious and cultural hold deeply rooted into the soil and history of Sikkim.

LIMBOOS IN SIKKIM IN PRE-SSP ERA

According to the agreement, 'Lho-Men-Tsong-sum', the 'threesome', Bhutia, Lepcha and Limboo were supposed to be the members of the same family. The Bhutia was considered to be a father, Lepcha a mother and Limboo a son. Through the council, called 'Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum' the kingdom of Sikkim was to be ruled. They all equally had to be represented in the council. They were not supposed to fight among themselves. If one tribe thinks ill of any other tribes, the culprit was to be vexed by the promise (Gurung, 1985, pp. 69-74). The main reason behind this agreement was to establish 'Communicracy' and consolidate unity and co-operation among the Lhoree (Bhutias), Menree (Lepchas) and Tsongree (Limboos) who inhabited Sikkim at that time (Kazi, 1983, pp. 1-29 & Basnet, 1974, p. 16).

But the policy of the successive Chogyals of Sikkim towards the Limboos was sometimes ambiguous. Sometimes, the Chogyals of Sikkim treated the

⁸⁴In other words, they were politically protected and economically benefited.

Limboos as original inhabitants of Sikkim with reference to 'Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum' and sometimes discriminated against because of cultural and linguistic reasons and differences (Gurung, 2011, p.208). Sometimes they (Limboos) were clubbed with the Bhutia-Lepchas with the use of popular expression 'Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum' and sometimes with Nepalis in terms of revenue or tax payment. So, the Limboos did not receive equal treatment from the successive rulers of Sikkim as the Bhutias and Lepchas received from the Chogyals of Sikkim. Even there is no record of Limboos being appointed as Dzongpans (Governors) as well as Kalons (ministers) like that of the Lepchas and Bhutias in the Royal Palace. They were granted mere Decrees 'Lahalmor' permitting the Limboo chiefs to look after the affairs of their 'thums', administrative centres and to use their customary drums like *Negra* (royal kettle drum) and *Kay* (Chyabrun) while observing their religious gathering, rituals and festivals (Gurung, 1985, pp. 69-74). According to the oral history narrated by Yap Sonam Yongda, a famous social worker and founding Chairman of Moyal Liang Trust (MLT), the Limboos during the time of Tensung Namgyal (1670-1700) were even 'Charinangmoos' of the Royal Palace.⁸⁵

In 1917, when Revenue Order No 1 was implemented, the Limboos were not protected as one of the members of the Chogyal's citizens. They were unequally treated with Bhutia-Lepchas but at par with the Nepalis and had to pay higher revenue (Gurung, 2011, p. 129). Even when the Sikkim State Council was constituted in 1925, none of the Limboos were included in the Sikkim Council. In 1952, the Darbar of Sikkim introduced Parity System according to which, 6 seats were allotted to the Bhutia-Lepchas and 6 seats to the Nepalis in the Sikkim State Council. But no seat was allotted to the Limboos of Sikkim. Henceforth, the Limboos continuously made representations and put constant pressure upon the Chogyal of Sikkim for the grant of 'Tsong Seat' in the Sikkim State Council reiterating the historical record of the treaty 'Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum' and aboriginality of Limboos of Sikkim.

⁸⁵ The word 'Charinangmoo' in the statement of Yap Yongda means 'pro-national as well as loyal of the Palace'.

In 1958, in due respect and recognition of their historical records, the Chogyal of Sikkim nominated Indra Prashad Tsong as a Tsong councillor to represent the Limboos in the Sikkim Council. In 1961, on the basis of the Tripartite Agreement '*Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum*' the Limboos were provided citizenship⁸⁶ through the Sikkim Subject Certificate along with the Sikkimese Bhutias and Lepchas (Sikkim Government Notification No 5/277/61, dated: 3rd July 1961, Rao, 1978, Datta, 1994, Kharel, 2002, p. 33). In 1966 under the Royal Proclamation, the Twelfth Chogyal of Sikkim, Palden Thendup Namgyal, provided the Tsongs (Limboos) one separate seat, '*Tsong Seat*' in Sikkim Council for the restoration of their political rights and protection of their distinct identity (Sikkim Darbar Gazette, Gangtok, 21st December, 1966). Therefrom, Harka Dhoj Tsong became the councillor to represent the Limboos in the Sikkim Council in 1967. This change, however, was not welcomed by the leaders of Sikkim National Congress and Sikkim State Congress and was constantly objected to by them. In counter, the Chogyal Palden Thendup Namgyal reiterated that the Tsongs were not Nepalis and in fact they were separate and distinct identity in themselves since ancient times, as such they were granted a '*Tsong Seat*' (Kazi, 1983, pp. 1-29). In 1968, after the Chogyal's approval on 11th March, 1967, teaching of Limboo language in the schools of Sikkim was also started as an optional subject upto class-II (Notification No 36/62/990/Edu 11th March 1968).⁸⁷ The Committee consisting of five members under the Chairmanship of Queen, Hope Cook was also constituted to study the deficiency of the Limboo text book in Sikkim (Subba, 2005, pp.3-12).

The separate seat for the Tsongs (Limboos) in the Sikkim Council continued to remain until it was abolished on 8th May 1973 when a tripartite agreement was signed between the Chogyal of Sikkim, the leaders of the major political parties of Sikkim and the Government of India. Thereafter, the Limboos were merged with Nepalis. While abolishing the '*Tsong Seat*' none of the Limboo was consulted or no consent of the Limboo was taken. This undemocratic act of

⁸⁶ The status of aboriginality, i.e, aadibashi haak in Nepali language.

⁸⁷ Within six years of duration (1968-1974), altogether 9 Limboo language teachers were appointed.

abolishing 'Tsong Seat' paved the way for the gradual erosion and dilution of Limboos' distinct identity.

The act of clubbing the Tsongs with the Nepali community became indigestible. They were of the opinion that the Limboos of Sikkim are separate and distinct community with strong historical, linguistic, religious and cultural aspects deeply rooted into the soil and history of Sikkim. Thus submergence of Limboos with Nepalis was against their interest. As a reaction of this, in 23rd May, 1973, Akhil Sikkim Kirat Limbu Chumlung (ASKLC) was established at Tharpu, West Sikkim. In its first meeting held on 19th July 1973 at Soreng Bazar, West Sikkim, under the Chairmanship of Harka Dhoj Tsong, the Chumlung passed a resolution declaring that the 'Tsongs (Limboos) were not Nepalis but one of the indigenous tribes of Sikkim' (Gurung, 2011, pp. 129-131 and Chaudhury, 2006, p. 25). Since then Akhil Sikkim Kirat Limbu Chumlung time and again kept on highlighting the concept of historical testimony, 'Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum' and vocalising their aspirations and demands.

On 19th August 1973 under the Presidentship of Badhu Lepcha a general meeting of 'Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum' was held at Gangtok and following declarations were made in favour of the Limboos.

'Before the inception of Chogyal Phuntsok Namgyal and its Namgyal dynasty in Sikkim, Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum were the original inhabitants of Sikkim as proved by the history of Sikkim. But due to the manipulation, self centred and one sided policy of Thikadars and political leaders the Tsong (Limboo) community was downtrodden in the political, social, educational and other fields. We expressed our concern to declare that Tsong community is also one of the original communities of Sikkim. The meeting further appeal that the original communities of Sikkim and for the integrity of the three communities let our brotherhood remain strong.'

As per the Revenue Act No: 1 of 1917, the land belonging to the Bhutia-Lepcha cannot be purchased by the other communities. Similarly under the above Act, the law should be made in such a way that the land of the Tsong community cannot be sold to the other communities. However, three communities can purchase land among themselves. Thus the resolution is passed.

The resolution was adopted that the political, social, education, culture, language and literature of Bhutia, Lepchas and Limboo should establish its own institution and render possible assistance in order to develop and remain committed and forwarding.

The resolution passed that in the newly constituted Assembly, seats should be obtained by Limboos of the state. The Tsong, Limboo, Subba, Yakthungba are the same community. Yu-Tsong and Khor-Tsong are surname given to cause fraction within Limboo community. Thus the meeting strongly oppose it and resolution is hereby passed that above community are same community' (Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum ko ghosana Patra, 19th August, 1973).

In April 1974, the General Election to the Sikkim Assembly was held for the first time on the basis of 'one man one vote' according to the 8th May Agreement of 1973 and Representation of Sikkim Subject Act of February 1974 of the Chogyal of Sikkim. In the election, 16 seats each were kept reserved for the Bhutia-Lepcha and Nepali respectively in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly. But no separate seat for the Tsongs (Limboos) was allocated.

In connection with seat reservation and tribal status, the Limboos of Sikkim on 15th June, 1976 submitted a memorandum to the President of India, New Delhi claiming; '*the Limboos of Sikkim are one of the aboriginal inhabitants of Sikkim having their own distinct culture, tradition, religion and language*'. It was further stated, '*Limboos of Sikkim along with the Bhutia and Lepchas have accepted and installed Phuntsok Namgyal as the first king of Sikkim and very name of Sikkim originated from the two Limboo words- 'Su' and 'Khim' meaning new house*' (Memorandum submitted to the President of India by Akhil Sikkim Kirat Limboo Chumlung, dated: 15th June 1976).

In the representation, they requested the Indian Government to consider the Limboos of Sikkim as one of the backward classes and make allotment of necessary fund for their upliftment, reservation of seats and scholarships for higher studies in both within and outside the state, reservation of seats in Government services with relaxation in age and qualification, reservation of seats in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly for their adequate representation, alienation of agricultural land as done in the tribal areas of other states and extend facilities for a minimum period of 20 years at the initial stage (Memorandum submitted to

the President of India by Akhil Sikkim Kirat Limboo Chumlung, Dated: 15th June, 1976).

In response to the representation made by the Limboos of Sikkim to the President of India, Director General (BCW) O K Moorthy, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India wrote a letter to T S Gyaltsen, Chief Secretary of Sikkim stating; *'there is another primitive tribe namely the Limboos who have social affinity with the Lepchas and some of them are animists. The Limboos have been mentioned as autochthonous inhabitants of Sikkim and are sometime considered as Limbuwan Lepchas as is in the case of muglan Lepchas from Darjeeling District. The status of the Limboos will have to be spelt out clearly and if necessary they may be grouped with Lepcha and their entry could be Lepcha-Limboo'* (Letter from the Director General (BCW), O K Moorthy, Ministry of Home Affairs to the Chief Secretary, Government of Sikkim, dated: 21st July, 1976, No. 12016/24/ 75-SCTV).

On October 17th 1977, Akhil Bharatya Kirat Limboo Chumlung held a meeting at Singtam. In the meeting, two main issues; reservation of four seats in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly for those belonging to the Limboo community and official status for the Limboo language were raised (An Express Reporter, 3rd December, 1977). Following this, the said Chumlung on 31st October 1977 submitted representation to the Chief Election Commissioner, Government of India when came to Gangtok, Sikkim. On 5th November 1977, the Governor of Sikkim, Bipin Behari Lall also wrote the Central counterpart T C A Srinivasavaradan, Government of India demanding restoration of seats reserved earlier for the Limboos in Sikkim Legislative Assembly in concurrence to Article 371F (f) of the Indian Constitution. The letter reads:

'The Tsongs/Limboos/ Subbas of Sikkim are well defined community who have their own language, oral as well as written and have a distinct culture, customs and tradition which are not exactly similar as to the rest of the Nepali community. It was apparently in recognition of their separate identity that a Proclamation was issued on 21st December 1966 relating to the election and composition of the Sikkim Council provided for one seat in the Council being reserved for the Tsongs. This reservation of one seat in the Sikkim Council for the Tsongs was maintained in the Proclamation of 31st December, 1969 also. However, for some unknown reason, in the Government of Sikkim Act of 1974 under which the present Assembly was

elected there was no provision for the reservation of any seat in favour of the Tsongs.

The Tsong/Subba/Limboo community has the strength of about 50000 in the state. Educationally, economically and socially however they are a very backward community and in my opinion, they need protection and encouragement in order to bring them to the level of other communities in Sikkim within a reasonable period of time. Article 371 F. (f) of the Constitution lays down that 'Parliament may for the propose of protecting the rights and interests of the different sections of the population on Sikkim make provision for the number of seats in the Legislative Assembly of the State of Sikkim which may be filled by candidates belonging to such section and for delimitation of the assembly constituencies form which candidates belonging to such section alone may stand for election to the Legislative Assembly of the state of Sikkim'.

Reservation of some seats for the Limboos/Tsongs/Subbas can apparently be made under this provision and such reservation in my opinion, will be thoroughly justified, particularly in view of the fact that both in the 1966 and the 1969 Proclamation, relating to election to the Sikkim Council the need for some reservation in favour of the Tsongs/Limboos/Subbas was considered necessary. A copy each of the Proclamation of 1966 and 1969 are also enclosed already for reference' (Letter written by the former Governor of Sikkim, B B Lall to T C A Srinivasavaradan on 5th November 1977).

On 1st February 1978, the delegation led by the President of Akhil Sikkim Kirat Limboo Chumlung called on the Prime Minister of India, Maroji Desai in New Delhi and submitted a memorandum demanding to accord recognition of Limboos as a Schedule Tribe and reserve at least four seats of the 32 Sikkim Legislative Assembly seats. The delegation also met the President of India, N Sanjiva Reddy and presented the memorandum incorporating similar demands (Indian Express, 2nd Feb, 1978 & Hindustan Times, 2nd Feb, 1978). On 18th May 1978, two-man delegation representing the Limboo community of Sikkim met the Home Minister, H M Patel and demanded that four seats be reserved for the Limboos in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly. The representation stated:

'the Limboos of Sikkim were not part of Nepali community but actually were an ethnic minority tribal community having a separate language, script, culture customs and tradition' (Hindustan Times, May 18th 1978).

In 1978; Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribe (Sikkim) Order was implemented in Sikkim. But unfortunately, the Limboos were not included despite of their continuous effort and demand for their recognition and inclusion in the said list. They were left out although the central government and the Governor intended to recognise and include them in the list of Schedule Tribe. They, along with the Bhutia and Lepcha, could have been included in the list of Scheduled Tribes under ST and SC (Sikkim) Order of 1978, but were excluded for some unknown reason. However, other communities such as Sherpas, Drukpas, Chumbipas, Yalmos, Tibetans, Kagatay, Tromopas and Dophthapas who were Buddhist by religion were recognised as Schedule Tribes under ST and SC Order (Sikkim), 1978.

The Presidential Ordinance seeking to amend the Representation of People Act 1950 and 1951 was issued in 1979 and accordingly allocation of seats in the Sikkim Assembly took place. The 16 each seats which were reserved for the Bhutia-Lepchas and Nepalis were rearranged. The 16 seats reserved for the Bhutia-Lepchas were reduced to 13 including 1 Sangha seat. The Eight communities Sherpa, Drukpas, Chumbipas, Yalmos, Tibetans, Kagatay, Tromopas and Dophthapas were brought within the fold of Bhutias for both economic benefit and political share. The 16 seats which were reserved for the Nepalis was increased to 17 and left unreserved as General seats and 2 seats were allocated for the Schedule castes. But no separate seat for the Limboos was allocated for their political safeguard. Thus, the Limboos were neither provided any separate seats in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly under People's Representation Act 1950 and 1951 in 1979 nor included in the list of Schedule Tribe in 1978. They were deprived of both political rights and economic benefits. In 1976, the Central Home Ministry had asked for clarification from the Kazi Government as to why the Tsongs (Limboos) could not be included in the list of Schedule Tribe of Sikkim, but still then Kazi was reluctant to recommend the Limboos as one of the Schedule Tribes

of Sikkim (Gurung, 2011, p. 130).⁸⁸ This ultimately resulted to a great predicament among the Tsongs (Limboos) of Sikkim. The Limboos of Sikkim, restlessly through various forums and organisations kept constantly demanding for their inclusion in the list of Schedule Tribe and restoration of their seats in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly.

The Sikkimese Tsongs were disappointed with the attitude and administration of Kazi. For the Tsongs Kazi was a mere hijacker of democracy rather than the architect of it. For the sake of democracy the Tsong seat was abolished on 8th May 1973 and Kazi himself was one of the signatories when the Tripartite Agreement was signed between the Chogyal, the Government of India and the leaders of the three major political parties of Sikkim on that particular event. Furthermore, during five years of his rule in Sikkim, he did never honour the aspirations and urges of Limboos and was reluctant to include the Tsongs in the list of Schedule Tribe in 1978. It was during his regime, that Sikkim became a part of the Indian Union in 1975 and 16 seats reserved for Nepalis including the Tsongs in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly was abolished and 16 seats reserved for the Bhutia-Lepcha was reduced to 13 including 1 Sangha seat in 1979.

In April 1979, the election to the Sikkim Assembly was held. Sikkim Janata Parishad led by Bhandari won 16 of the 32 seats and formed the government with the support of one Sangha candidate, Lachen Gomchen Rimpoche. During the election, the Bhutia-Lepcha and Limboo votes had been very crucial for the victory of Bhandari; firstly, Bhandari had fought an election on anti-merger plank which was supported by the majority of Bhutia-Lepchas, especially royal families and secondly Bhandari had contested and won from Soreng constituency which was a Limboo dominated area in west Sikkim.

⁸⁸ During Kazi led government rule (1974-1979), only teaching of Limboo language which was started upto class II during the reign of Chogyal was further upgraded to VII.

After the formation of the government, Limboo, Bhutia and Lepcha languages received good deal and witnessed rapid growth and development in Sikkim. In 1980, Textbooks on these three languages were prepared up to the standard of Class VIII and teaching of these languages was started in the same year in the schools of Sikkim. In 1981, Limboo language was recognized as one of the state official languages of Sikkim by the Government of Sikkim (Notification No 6/LD/81). The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) also accepted and introduced Limboo as one of the core subject for the class IX and X in the government schools of Sikkim in 1981. On 3rd March 1983, All India Radio, Gangtok started broadcasting Limboo songs and news bi-weekly composite programme for 15 minutes. In the same year, December 1983, Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), New Delhi introduced Limboo language as core subject for class XI from academic session 1984 and class XII in 1985 (Notification No D.D.No academic 11/F1 (2) 83/49983). In 1984, Limboo script was selected for National Award and Sanchaman Limboo then the Minister for Education, Health and Social Welfare of Sikkim was conferred the award for designing the Limboo letter.

We have seen that, since 1973, the Limboos of Sikkim had been continuously demanding for their inclusion in the list of Schedule Tribe and for restoration of seats in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly. As a reaction of the abolition of Limboos' seat on 8th May Agreement 1973, Akhil Sikkim Kirat Limboo Chumlung (ASKLC) was established at Tharpu, West Sikkim on May 23rd 1973 and the first meeting of the Chumlung was held on 19th July 1973 at Soreng Bazar, West Sikkim declaring that the Tsongs (Limboos) 'were not Nepalis but one of the indigenous tribes of Sikkim' (Gurung, 2011, pp. 129-131 and Chaudhury, 2006, p. 25). Since then, time and again Akhil Sikkim Kirat Limboo Chumlung kept on highlighting the concept of historical testimony, 'Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum' and vocalising their aspirations and demands of Limboos' inclusion in the list of Schedule Tribe and restoration of seats in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly. On 11th March 1980, Sikkim Legislative Assembly was summoned to discuss the 45th Amendment Bill, 1980 seeking to validate the Presidential Ordinance of 1979.

During this session, Dorjee Tshering Bhutia of Ranka constituency raised the issue relating to the Limboos of Sikkim and demanded their inclusion in the list of Schedule Tribe. While P L Gurung stressed on the need to include only the genuine Sikkimese in the ST/SC list of Sikkim (Gurung, 2011, p. 278). By virtue of being representative from the Limboo dominated Assembly constituency, Soreng since 1979, Bhandari time to time raised the issue of Limboos' inclusion in the list of Schedule Tribe from 1981. However, on the other, he remained quite silent regarding the issue of Limboos' seat reservation in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly.

On 14th November 1981, the Limboo representation consisting of sixty signatories including three Limboo MLAs of Sikkim submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister of India (Memorandum submitted to the Prime Minister of India, dated: 5th November 1981) through the Chief Minister of Sikkim. Nar Bahadur Bhandari took the issue very seriously and forwarded the representation to the Prime Minister of India, Indra Gandhi. It read:

'The Limboos do constitute a sizable portion of the population of the state. It is true that there is certainly strong historical date to show that the Tsongs or the Limboos of Sikkim were one of the earlier tribes of this state. The mention of 'Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum' to bear out the earlier close ties between Bhutias, Lepchas and Limboos (Tsongs) in the representation is yet a clear undeniable indication. That the Limboos or Tsongs were given separate reservation in the pre' 74 elections in Sikkim is based on the fact of this community's distinct and older ethnic background in Sikkim. It is quite true that the Limboos are not well placed educationally in Government services and in other spheres as mentioned in the representation. In the circumstances this representation from the Limboos of Sikkim deserves most sympathetic and favourable consideration from Government of India' (Letter of the CM of Sikkim to the PM of India relating to the demand for Scheduled Tribe Status by Limboos of³ Sikkim, dated: 14th November, 1981). This initiative of Bhandari indicated his willingness and possible attitude towards Limboos' inclusion in the list of Schedule Tribe.

On 29th July 1983, the Prime Minister of India, Indra Gandhi had visited Sikkim. In the evening of the same day the Limboos of Sikkim submitted a memorandum to her in the Rajbhawan requesting her to recommend Limboos'

inclusion in the Schedule Tribe (Memorandum submitted to the Prime Minister, Indra Gandhi by the delegates of Limboos, dated: 29th July, 1983). The Government of Sikkim also submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister of India which contained 5 points such as; Restoration of Seats in the Sikkim Assembly for the Bhutia-Lepchas and Nepalis, Grant of citizenship to the stateless persons, Delimitation of the Constituencies, Economic Programme and Peoples' faith in Congress (I) leadership. However the issue of Limboos' inclusion in the list of Schedule Tribe was not mentioned in the memorandum (Memorandum submitted by the Government of Sikkim to the Prime Minister of India, Indra Gandhi dated; 29th July 1983). With regards to the Tsong (Limboo) seat in the Assembly, the Chief Minister submitted a memorandum demanding the restoration of seats both for the Tsongs and Nepalis which was unanimously approved in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly on September 1983. The copy of the same proposal was also sent to the then Minister of the State for Home Affairs, Nihar Ranjan Laskar. Following this on 14th December 1983, the concerned Minister informed the Lok Sabha stating that '*there have been proposals for the reservation of seats in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly for the Tsongs and Nepalis communities of Sikkimese origin which had been passed and approved in the State Assembly*' (Gurung, 2011, p. 279).⁸⁹

THE LIMBOOS UNDER THE SSP REGIME

Sikkim Sangram Parishad (SSP) which emerged as one of the strongest regional political party in Sikkim after 24th March 1984, made a historic comeback in the Lok Sabha election of December 1984 winning the lone Lok Sabha seat with a

⁸⁹ Since the merger of Sikkim to the Indian Union, the issues like merger of Sikkim, Bill No 79, Rights of the Sikkimese vis-a-vis Non-Sikkimese, Son of the Soil Policy, issue of citizenship and reservation of seats continued to dominate the political arena of Sikkim. After the BJP government assumed power in 1979, the whole administrative structure of Sikkim was reorganised. The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) which was set up in 1973 was replaced with the Sikkim Armed Police (SAP). Considerable reduction was made for the central government officials on deputation to Sikkim. Even the name of the Sikkim Janata Parishad was changed to Sikkim Parishad to keep the distinct identity of Sikkim and party. Bhandari was also extremely critical of plainsmen being a Governor of Sikkim. This resulted in the growth of bitterness between B B Lal, the Governor of Sikkim and Bhandari, the Chief Minister of Sikkim.

thumping majority. This victory of Bhandari confirmed that in the state politics of Sikkim local issues and regional parties mattered more importantly than that of the national issues and national political parties.

During the third Assembly election of March 1985, the SSP had raised issues such as restoration of seats in the Sikkim Assembly for the Bhutia-Lepchas and Nepali including the Tsongs, grant of citizenship for the people rendered stateless in Sikkim, preservation of local identity and implementation of son of the soil policy, constitutional recognition of Nepali language, to maintain cordial Centre-State relations (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1984, pp. 1-10), fixation of 1970 as the cut off year for granting of citizenship and amendment of the provision of the constitution which justifies the dismissal of the state government by the governor on one's pleasure (Gurung, 2011, p. 238). Hence, here it is worth mentioning that Bhandari in the election manifesto (1984) of SSP did neither mention Limboos' inclusion in the list of Schedule Tribe nor reservation of their seats in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly. It only promised to launch various schemes and programmes for the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes which included both the Bhutia and Lepchas of Sikkim since 1978 (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1984, P. 7). There was a vast difference between old and new Parishad.⁹⁰ The SJP and SSP greatly differed on political issues and stands. Though the formation of the new Parishad (SSP) over the old Parishad (SJP) was just like changing a bottle with the same wine. However the dropping of the issues like inclusion of the Limboos in the list of Schedule Tribe's and reservation of seats for them in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly and anti-merger of Sikkim in the election manifesto of SSP (1985) indicated a shift in Bhandari's in the 1985's general Assembly election from that of the Assembly election of 1979. During this time, Bhandari was more concerned with the idea of 'Son of the Soil' policy and 'Sikkim for Sikkimese' rather than anti-merger issue of Sikkim. The main issues were reservation of seats in the

⁹⁰ This is because the old SJP was formed on anti-merger platform by Bhandari. In its initial stage, leader and supporters had to suffer from humiliation and torture in the hands of Central Reserve Police. Bhandari was imprisoned in the Central Jail, Behrampur for his anti-merger position. His party was not allowed to hold any public meetings. Hence it took years to get its concrete shape and triumphant success in the 1979 Assembly election while SSP was the foster child of SJP.

Sikkim Assembly for the Nepalis, Grant of citizenship to the stateless and inclusion of Nepali language in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. The issues raised by Bhandari indicate that he was more concerned with the Sikkimese Nepalis rather than the Bhutia-Lepchas and Limboos of Sikkim. Bhandari also projected himself as the spokesman of the people of Sikkim, whose rights was trampled down by the centre (Kazi, 1993, p. 156). This shift might have occurred due to the political development of May 1984 in which Sanchaman Limboo belonging to the Limboo community and the tribal leaders belonging to Bhutia-Lepcha Sherab Palden, Loden Tshering, Sonam Tshering, Lachen Gomchen Rimpoche and Athup Lepcha were involved in the collapse of Bhandari's ministry (Gurung, 2011, p. 238).

In his earlier term under SJP (1979-1984) Bhandari sensitively dealt with the language policy of Limboos of Sikkim.⁹¹ Moreover, sometimes Bhandari also took up the issue of Limboos' inclusion in the list of Scheduled Tribe and reservation of their seats in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly. Therefore, the Limboos once again whole heartedly supported Bhandari in the 1985 Sikkim Assembly election with their inner hopes of being included in the list of Scheduled Tribe and restoration of their seat reservation in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly.

In March 1985, Sikkim Legislative Assembly election was held.⁹² The SSP led by Bhandari got a landslide victory securing 30 out of 32 Assembly seats.⁹³ In the election, two Limboo candidates, Sancha Man Limboo and Birbal Subba won from SSP party tickets. While forming the ministry, both of them were

⁹¹ In 1981, Limboo language was recognised as one of the official language of Sikkim by the Bhandari led government. In the same year (1981) Limboo language was also introduced upto class X as one of the optional subject in the government schools of Sikkim and by 1983, the same was accepted by Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and was introduced up to Class XI in 1984 and XII in 1985.

⁹² There were altogether 195 candidates of which 94 including 11 women were Independent candidates to fight an election. Four National political parties and two state political parties were in the election fray.

⁹³ One seat went to Indian National Congress (INC) candidate, Kalzang Gyatso Bhutia of Kabi-Tingda constituency and next one seat to Palchen Sardar, Independent candidate from Gangtok constituency. The Sikkim Sangram Parishad secured 60371 (62.20%) votes out of 99059 votes polled in 290 polling stations.

given the rank of Cabinet Ministers. So far as the representation of the Limboo community in the Bhandari's ministry is concerned, in 1985, out of 11 cabinet rank posts, Limboos had 18.18% of cabinet ministers and 6.25% of 32 representatives in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly.

After the March 1985 Assembly election, Bhandari emerged as a new politician. He turned more powerful, confident, authoritarian and somewhat cocky. He became intolerant of any criticism from outside and within the party. He demanded complete submission to his authority. Political parties and social organisations either had to join or face being silenced forever (Kazi, 1993, p. 163). It was alleged that the rule of Bhandari after 1985 was of worst type. He was accused of being more arrogant and corrupt. There was continual loss of democratic values both within the cabinet and in party functioning, spoil system, victimisation of the opposition (Gurung, 2011, p. 239). The only visible opposition political parties in Sikkim were the Congress (I) and Naya Sikkim Party of Yap Sonam Yongda. Others completely disappeared from the political arena of Sikkim after the Assembly elections. The social organisations which were more influential and actively prevailed during this time were; Sikkim Tribal Welfare Association, Sikkim Lho-men Youth Council, Rangjyong Mutanchi Rong Tarzum and Muyeel Pronzom of Bhutia-Lepcha (Kazi, 1993, pp.155-172) and Akhil Sikkim Kirat Limboo Chumlung of Limboos (Gurung, 2011, pp.219-314).

Bhandari did not favour the Limboos' inclusion in the list of Schedule Tribe and restoration of their seats in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly after the 1985 Assembly election. In fact he was opposed to it. Bhandari raised those issues with the centre only which were more concerned to the majority Nepalis of Sikkim. The Limboos' interest and aspirations was never highlighted to the Central Government on any occasion. As such, Bhandari's victory of 1985 Assembly election appeared as a slap on the faces of Limboos.

However, there was a continuous representation of the Limboo community to the Central Government even after the election of 1985. On 16th September, 1985, Sanchaman Limboo, the then Minister of Health, Family Welfare, Social Welfare, ST and SC Welfare, Government of Sikkim wrote to Rajendra Kumar Bajpai, Minister of State for Welfare, Government of India, New Delhi enquiring about the position of the file. In reply, on 27th January, 1986, Bajpai stated that the Government of Sikkim had have not recommended despite of their continuous request to the former (DO No.12016/17/81-SC3BCD-I [R/Cell]). On 21st August 1987, MP from Sikkim, L Soloman Sareng submitted Memorandum of Limboos to the Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi along with the letter for the earlier inclusion of Limboos in the list of Schedule Tribe. In the letter he stated:

'the Limboos form a distinct community of Sikkim with their own social heritage, tradition, customs, religion and language... ..the Government of Sikkim had recommended their case in November 1981 and is pending with the Government of India till date.... The Limboos of Sikkim are tribes who are neglected and ignored and the memorandum is self explanatory on this. If Government their genuine demand is not considered by the Government of India then great amount of injustice would be done' (Letter from L Soloman Sareng, MP, Rajya Sabha to the PM of India, Rajiv Gandhi, Dated 21/8/1987).

Despite of continuous demand by the Bhutia-Lepchas and support for Limboos' inclusion in the list of Schedule Tribe and positive response from the Central Government, Bhandari did neither respond to the matter nor seriously dealt with it. When the central government wanted the Limboo community to be recognised as Schedule Tribes, Bhandari was reluctant to make a recommendation (Limboo, 2003, pp. 69-99).

On 13th August 1987, the meeting of the Group of Union Ministers chaired by Buta Singh was held for 16 hours in Room No 9 of the Parliament House, New Delhi in connection with the comprehensive revision of the lists of SCs and STs.

The agenda pertaining to Sikkim State was the inclusion of Limboos in the list of Scheduled Tribe. In the meeting, the chairman wanted to know whether the Limboos of Sikkim were Tribals? In the reply, Pasong Namgyal, Secretary to the Government of Sikkim noted; *'Limboos; they claim their existence right from the time of that of the existence of the Lepchas of Sikkim. They were one of the members of Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum. They have their separate language complete with script which, the state Government has described as one of the State official Languages and is began to be taught upto Class XII in the Schools. They have their different theory of God/Goddess and ritual indicating trait of distinct culture and tradition. Their case for inclusion in the list of ST has already been recommended by the State Government of Sikkim'* (Limboo, 2003, pp. 65-68). Thereafter the file was forwarded to the Chief Minister, Bhandari for the final recommendation. On 22nd August, 1987, in the file Bhandari noted four things under sub-head, 'Demand-I, Demand-II and Demand-III'. In Demand-I, he recommended the reservation of seats for all the communities of Sikkim in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly as per the distribution of seats suggested by Bhandari government in 1987.

Table-2:

Representing the distribution of seats for different communities of Sikkim as suggested by Bhandari led SSP government, 1987.

Communities	No Seats
1 Bhutia, Lepcha and Sherpa of Sikkimese origin including monasteries	13 Seats
2 Nepalis of Sikkimese origin	13 Seats
3 Scheduled Castes of Sikkim	02 Seats
4 Tsong(Limboos) of Sikkimese origin	02 Seats
5 General	04 Seats
Total Seats	34 Seats

Source: Gurung, 2011, p. 280.

In Demand-II, Bhandari recommended for the grant of citizenship to 54000 left out people of Sikkim and in Demand-III, he recommended the inclusion of Nepali Language in the 8th Schedule of the Indian Constitution. So far as the

recommendation of Limboos' inclusion in the Scheduled Tribe is concerned, Bhandari wrote; *'We cannot separate the demands. We do not want Divide and Rule policy. All Sikkimese are one'* (Noting of the Chief Minister on the report submitted by the Secretary, SC/ST Welfare Department, Government of Sikkim, dated: 22nd August, 1987). Such move of Bhandari indicated his unwillingness to include the Limboos' in the list of Schedule tribe. The Limboos became more disappointed and displeased. As a reaction, they revitalised their organisational activities and submitted a memorandum to the President requesting him to include the Limboo community in the Schedule Tribe list of Sikkim and restoration of their seats for the Limboos in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly. The Limboo organisation, Akhil Sikkim Kirata Limboo Chumlung also demanded resignation of the Chief Minister, Bhandari (Gurung, 2011, p. 239).

On 4th November 1988, Denjong Tribal Yargay Chogpa a non-political organisation had organised First Level Convention at Gangtok in which eight points issues were adopted under the caption *'Saving the Red Penda. Saving Bhutia-Lepcha-Tsong'*. Of the eight Resolutions adopted in the convention, three resolutions (4, 5 & 7) were concerned with Bhutia, Lepcha and Limboos of Sikkim. In Resolution No-4: the organisation stated that, *'the early history of Sikkim abounds with instances of 'Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum' unity and their glorious struggle in defence of their motherland. In the Sikkim Council also seats were reserved for the Tsong community. The Tsong like Bhutia and Lepcha should be included in the list of Scheduled tribe and accordingly 6 seats should be reserved for them in the State Assembly'*. In the Resolution No-5, *'the unchecked transmigration threatens the cultural, social and political life of the Bhutia, Lepcha and Tsong minorities. Therefore, the Government should introduce the systems of Inner-Line permit to check the influx of people into the state'*. In the Resolution No-7, under; Clause (c), convention declared that *'the government should provide facilities of scholarship to the children of Bhutia, Lepcha and Tsong tribals for higher education without maintaining the merit list'*.

Clause (d), stated *'the government should reserve special seats for Sikkimese students of Bhutia, Lepcha and Tsong origin for study outside the state in the institutions of higher and technical learning'*.

Clause (e), demanded *'the government should provide Tribal Hostel to the Bhutia, Lepcha and Tsong tribals in all the places of Sikkim having secondary schools'*.

Clause (f) mentioned *'the government should provide the reservation of 50% of vacancies in all the Central Government offices and undertakings situated in the state for the members of the Bhutia, Lepcha and Tsong tribals'*.

Clause (g), demanded *'the government should provide the reservation of 50% of vacancies in all the offices and undertaking of state government for the members of the Bhutia, Lepcha and Tsong tribals'*.

Clause (h), demanded *'the government should provide vacant lands to rehabilitate the landless Bhutia, Lepcha and Tsong tribals'*.

Clause (i), organisation appealed *'the government should extend the distribution of food grains at subsidised rates throughout the state from all the Bhutia, Lepcha, Tsong and OBCs'* and the last demand which DTYC declared under

Clause (k) was *'the government sponsored Sahitya Academy should promote languages and literature of the Bhutia, Lepcha and Tsong'* (Denjong Tribal Yargay Chogpa, 4th November, 1988). Thus the Denjong Tribal Yargay Chogpa since its inception took up and gave full support to the Limboos' cause and demands as genuine issue.

The Fourth General Election to the Sikkim Legislative Assembly and the Ninth Lok Sabha Election were to be held together in November 1989. On the eve of the election, Bhandari once wrote to the Prime Minister of India recommending the Limboos' inclusion in the list of Schedule Tribe and restoration of 02 seats for the Limboos in the State Assembly (Memorandum submitted to the President of India by the delegates of Akhil Sikkim Kirat Limboo Chumlung, dated: 9th August, 1990). The Prime Minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi had also assured that their demand of giving the Limboos the status of tribal and the reservation of 06 seats in the Assembly would be given proper consideration (Thapa, The North-East Sun,

10th October, 1989). However, the move of Bhandari was just to win the heart of the Limboo community of Sikkim on the eve of Assembly and Lok Sabha Election of 1989. If Bhandari had have taken the issue of Limboos' inclusion in the list of Schedule Tribe seriously then the Limboos could have been recognised in 1987. But he did not pay much attention to the issue. In the SSP election manifesto, 1989, also no issue relating to the Limboos was mentioned. This attitude of Bhandari shows his double standard politics towards Limboos of Sikkim.

In the election the SSP made a clean sweep of both the Assembly as well as Parliamentary Elections. It captured all the 32 Assembly seats and the lone Lok Sabha seat obliterating opposition parties from the state. With this unprecedented and memorable victory for two consecutive terms both in the Assembly and Parliamentary Elections once again, Bhandari proved that he was the undisputed leader of the people of Sikkim. With this victory SSP once again came to power for the second term with absolute majority under the Chief Ministership of Bhandari and ruled Sikkim till 1994.⁹⁴

After his victory in 1989 Bhandari became more powerful as he had 32 out of 32 seats in the Assembly. There was rampant corruption and victimisation of the opposition and above all politics of divide and rule characterized Bhandari's government in the post 1989 era (Gurung, 2011, pp. 219-302). Bhandari became more authoritarian as compared to his earlier term. He did not tolerate any criticism from both within and outside the party. The press-medias were asked to behave properly or face consequences (Kazi, 1993, pp.154-172). The right of the press was curtailed. There were assaults, threats, intimidations and constant pressure over the press-media and use of force and commandos over the opposition parties. This is to say that there was an absence of democratic

⁹⁴ While forming the ministry after 1989 Assembly election, out of 13 ministers of Cabinet ranked, 6 (44.4%) was provided to Bhutia-Lepcha and only 1 (7%) to the Limboos. This distribution of portfolios for the Cabinet minister shows that Bhandari was more in favour of Bhutia-Lepchas than Limboos after 1989 Assembly election. Heavy weighted and veteran Limboo representative and community vocal, Sanchaman Limboo was dropped from Cabinet rank post and remained as MLA.

atmosphere in Sikkim. It was alleged that the administration, bureaucracy and police force were used to torture public to no end. Bhandari wanted to control all the people by coercion and physical torture. He tried to establish hegemony of one reign, one leader, one party and one language in Sikkim (Bhutia, 1999). This is how one-party-system, one-man-rule and reign of terror began in Sikkim under Bhandari regime.

On 14th June 1990, Akhil Sikkim Kirat Limboo Chumlung once again submitted a Memorandum to the President and the Prime Minister of India, reiterating the same demand ie Limboos' inclusion in the list of Schedule Tribe. The two concerned MLAs belonging to the Limboo community, Sanchaman Limboo and Birbal Limboo were also signatories of the memorandum (Memorandum submitted to the President of India by Akhil Sikkim Kirat Limboo Chumlung, dated: 14th June, 1990). Letter to the Sikkimese Limboos, on 18th August 1990, Denjong People's Chogpa, a registered political party also expressed its willingness to extend support for the recommendation of Limboos' inclusion in the list of Scheduled Tribe and include the particular issue in its election manifesto. In the letter, the President of DPC, Lachen Gomchen Rimpoche stated; *'from the historical point of view, the phrase 'Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum' stands oneness or solidarity among the Bhutia, Lepcha and Tsong. In view of the above fact, DPC strongly feels that the Tsongs (Limboo) of Sikkimese origin should be awarded with the Tribal Status'* further stated (Letter to the Limboos from the President of DPC, dated: 18th August, 1990).

As a reaction to the memorandum submitted to the President and Prime Minister of India, the Chief Minister of Sikkim, Bhandari, on 30th June, 1990, wrote an explanation letter to the two concerned MLAs belonging to the Limboo community regarding the said memorandum. The letter read; *'In your memorandum submitted to the Prime Minister of India you have said that 'Limboos are a mass of illiterate, poverty stricken and vulnerable group with no means to protest'*. How would you reconcile these two situations?

(i) How would you say that the Limboos are '*unequally yoked with the Nepali majority?*' The word 'Yoke' gives a very dangerous connotation and indicates master and servant relationship. Do you think that such relationship exists between the Limboos and the other castes in the Nepali community?

(ii) You have spoken about forgetting the history and culture of the Limboos. Who are responsible for this?

(iii) In the memorandum you have said, '*In spite of jeopardy they continue to retain atleast two members in the Legislative Assembly in every Assembly Elections*'. This only means that the two members got elected only from Limboo votes. Do you agree on this?

(iv) In the memorandum you have also said '*we had the future of retaining one MP from the state in 1979 General Elections*'. This indicates that the MP was elected only from Limboo voted and the votes of the other communities had no relevance. Was he not a candidate of any political party and that he had no support from the people of Sikkim in general?

(v) Education in Sikkim is free right up to college level. This being so how would you explain that '*most of the Tsongs or Limboos are unable to send their wards to schools not to speak of higher studies*'. Do the Limboos still follow the primitive way of life as mentioned in the memorandum? Please explain '*the threat to the purity of Limboo language and culture as alleged in the memorandum*'.

(vi) Who has pushed the Limboos to '*utter their submission and dependence*' and that '*they are threatened of their very identity*'.

(vii) You have spoken of the '*utter degradation of their self respect*'. Please exemplify. Don't you think that these are serious allegations having wide ramifications?

(viii) What status and prestige the Limboos have lost that they are now asking for their restoration?

Both of you being the signatories to the memorandum don't you think you have violated the discipline of your party, Sikkim Sangram Parishad and its policies? Answers to these queries may please be sent to the party President

within two days of the receipt of this communication' (Letter to Sanchaman Limboo from Bhandari, Ref No 291/SSP/909-91).

On 9th July, 1990, once again Akhil Sikkim Kirat Limboo Chumlung submitted a memorandum to the President of India, R Venkataraman countersigned by the General Secretary of DPC, Major Tashi Wangdi Fungpo and General Secretary of DTYC, Uttam Lepcha regarding the earlier inclusion of Limboos in the list of ST. This time the demand and interest became much forceful and stronger than earlier as Chumlung had the support of most of the Limboo leaders belonging to different political parties including the ruling SSP. The two Limboo MLAs belonging to the ruling government were also the signatories of the memorandum. The tribal-dominated political party, Denjong People's Chogpa and another vocal social organisation of Tribals, Denjong Tribal Yargay Chogpa, had lent tacit support to the Limboos' cause and demand. The Sikkimese Bhutia-Lepchas⁹⁵ also strongly supported the 'Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum' movement for unity among the Bhutia, Lepcha and Limboos⁹⁶ and demanded the earlier inclusion of Limboos in the list of Schedule Tribe and restoration of seats in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly. In the memorandum it was stated; *'In keeping with the tribal traditions, the Limboo community up-held and honour the 'Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum' agreement fully and stayed with amity with Bhutias and Lepchas of Sikkim. It was the forces of those three communities which fought valiantly in 1788 war against the Gorkha invasion of Sikkim'*. However, the reaction of the Chief Minister of Sikkim, Bhandari who championed the interests of the larger Nepali was very dramatic. He threatened to quit his post as the party chief, if his two MLAs belonging to Limboo community, Sanchaman Limboo and Birbal Limboo fail to apologise for becoming a party to the Chumlung in submitting memorandum. *'Either I will resign from the post of the President or the two signatories will have to resign for violating*

⁹⁵ Who were declared as Scheduled Tribes in 1978, three years after the merger of Sikkim with the Indian Union.

⁹⁶ Whom the historians regard as the three main communities inhabiting the state prior to the large scale Nepalese immigration into Sikkim in the latter part of the 19th century.

party conduct' Bhandari warned at the public gathering (Sunday, 7-13th October, 1990).

The threat of Bhandari, however, did not have much effect on the Limboos. This was evident from a subsequent memorandum submitted to him by the 'Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum' further demanding for the constitutional recognition of the Bhutia, Lepcha and Limboo languages along with the Nepali language. When Bhandari was campaigning for the inclusion of Nepali language in the 8th Scheduled of the Indian Constitution, requesting to all the section of the society, 51 persons representing Bhutia, Lepcha and Limboos also urged the Chief Minister to raise the demand for the inclusion of their languages in the 8th Schedule of the Indian Constitution. This linguistic issue created ideological difference and antagonism between Bhandari and a section of Bhutia-Lepchas and Limboos of Sikkim (Limboo, 2003, pp. 60-99).

Another issue on which the Limboos have become vocal was regarding the Mandal Commission recommendation. In 1990, the Limboos were included in the list of Other Backward Classes (OBC) of Sikkim by the Central Government but State Government headed by the Chief Minister of Sikkim, Bhandari refused to implement the Mandal Commission recommendation in Sikkim. The act of Bhandari's refusal to implement the recommendation of the Commission in the state has made the matter worse. In the autumn session of the Assembly, Bhandari moved a resolution against the implementation of the Mandal Commission report in Sikkim which was unanimously passed by the Sikkim Legislative Assembly.

Bhandari felt that the report which includes sections of the Sikkimese people in the list while excluding some others is 'discriminatory'. Implementation of such recommendation among the ethnic communities in Sikkim according to him was to divide them. Here it is also worth mentioning that in 1980 Bhandari himself had prepared the list of Other Backward Classes which included Limboo,

Rai, Manger, Tamang, Gurung and Bhujel. However, the Bahun, Chettri and Newars were excluded from the fold of OBCs. Racially, the communities included in the list of OBC belonged to the Mongoloid racial stock while Non-Backward Communities belonged to the Aryan racial stock. This was the reason why Bhandari did rejected the recommendation of Mandal Commission in Sikkim (Sikkim Observer, 8th September, 1990).

Meanwhile, the press statement issued by the General Secretary of ASKLC, K B Limboo, of Martam-Bermoik, west Sikkim accused the stand of Bhandari led government on the Mandal Commission recommendation as '*an act of highhandedness*' aimed at appeasing '*a very small*' section of the Sikkimese people in the state. Representing the Limboos of Sikkim, Chumlung demanded for a '*review*' of the state government's decision on the Mandal Commission issue. On the other, reflecting the sentiments of the Sikkimese Limboos, Prithviraj Limboo, founder President of the Chumlung and Vice-President of Denjong People's Chogpa claimed that the inclusion of Limboos in the list of OBCs was an act of '*injustice*' as because, the Limboos deserved the status of Schedule Tribe like the Bhutias and Lepchas of Sikkim (Sunday, 7-13th October 1990). After Bhandari failed to implement Mandal Commission in Sikkim, bitterness between the leaders of OBCs specially belonging to Limboo, Rai, Gurung, Tamang, Manger and Bhujel and Bhandari started growing.⁹⁷

With regard to the Limboos' inclusion in the list of Schedule Tribe's, in 1990s, the Chief Minister, Bhandari once again had shown his unwillingness and antagonistic view. This was clearly reflected in the letter written by Mata Prasad, Additional Secretary, Govt. of India to P K Pradhan, Chief Secretary, Govt. of Sikkim. In the letter, it was stated;

⁹⁷ The Mandal Co-ordination Committee was also constituted under the leadership of Chandra Das Rai. It became broad-based forum of OBCs of Sikkim and had the support of most of the OBC political leaders.

'the Chief Minister of Sikkim vide his letter dated 14th November, 1981 addressed to the Prime Minister recommended the inclusion of Limboo community in the list of Schedule Tribes. The State Government again in the letter No 155/SCSTWD, dated: 2nd June, 1987 recommended the inclusion of Limboo as well as Tamang communities in the list of Scheduled Tribes'. It was further stated that 'in his (Bhandari) letter addressed to the Defence Minister had suggested that Limboo and Tamang should not be included in the list of Schedule Tribes as this would divide the Nepali community'. 'Since the earlier view of the Chief Minister and present one are contradictory, may I request you to obtain the specific recommendation of the State Government in this matter so that a decision could be taken' letter further read (D.O. No. 12016/17/810S CD [R.CELL], dated: 18th December 1991).

In September 25th 1992, ASKLC submitted a representation to the Prime Minister of India requesting to consider the case of Limboos' recognition as Schedule Tribe. It was accompanied with the remarks of the Chief Minister of Sikkim, SC/ST Department and former Governor of Sikkim along with the historical testimonies like copy of 'Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum' treaty and various decrees issued by the successive Chogyals of Sikkim to the Limboos (Ref. No. ASKLC/ 100/92, dated: 25th September, 1992). In 1993, on 13th and 14th September, Resolution for the recognition of Lepcha, Bhutia and Limboo languages upto degree and post degree level and Resolution for re-scheduling of Scheduled Tribe of Limboos and Tamangs in Sikkim was placed in the August House (Sikkim Legislative Assembly) by the former Chief Minister of Sikkim, Sanchaman Limboo respectively on the subsequent days for the recommendation to the Government of India for rescheduling the Schedule Tribe list as well as the reservation of seats in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly as per the Constitution of India under Article 342 and Schedule Tribe Order 1978 (Resolution of 13th and 14th September 1993, Sikkim Legislative Assembly). But the proposed resolutions could not receive response from Bhandari.

On 20th August 1992, Nepali Language was included in the Eight Scheduled of the Indian Constitution. But this achievement of Bhandari further displeased some section of Bhutia, Lepcha and Limboo communities who wanted the Bhutia, Lepcha and Limboo languages of Sikkim to be included in the 8th

Scheduled of the Indian Constitution along with the Nepali language. In March 1994, when there was such political and leadership crisis in the state politics of Sikkim and complete lost of trust upon Bhandari, due to his taxation policy and divided Sikkimese people into Tribal and Non-tribal in terms of Central Tax payment, Bhandari, visited Delhi and met Union Home Minister for State Internal Security, Rajesh Pilot and urged him to take up the issue of including Limboo and Tamang in the list of Schedule Tribe, Delimitation of Assembly Constituencies and restoration of reserved seats of ethnic Nepali communities in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly at an early date (Sikkim Herald, Thursday 31st March, 1994). Here, it is apparently noted that when Bhandari was in power, he never took up those aforesaid issues seriously and intentionally kept unheard for more than one and half decade. But when anti-Bhandari movement took its deep root in Sikkim, he reiterated the age-old issues to normalise the situation. This is how Bhandari in the state political affairs of Sikkim acted and fooled the Limboos of Sikkim during his undisputed regime. Neither the aspirations and demands of Limboos were fulfilled nor were their rights and interests protected. Those issues relating to the Limboos were only begging bowl of votes for Bhandari. He was a leader of double standard that Sikkim had ever produced. He promised one thing and did other thing in his own way.

III

THE SSP GOVERNMENT AND BHUTIA-LEPCHAS OF SIKKIM

Sikkim became a part of India in 1975 during the tenure of Kazi led government. Some section of Bhutia-Lepchas including the monks and royal families (Bhattacharya, nd, p. 155) who wanted to maintain *status quo ante*, were displeased with the act of Sikkim's merger to the Indian Union. Moreover, in 1978, under Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribe (Sikkim) Order, 1978, eight other communities such as Sherpa, Drukpa, Chumbipa, Yalmo, Tibetan, Kagatay, Tromopa and Dophthapa were included and brought within the fold and term of Bhutias. Following this, in 1979, Presidential Ordinance seeking to amend the People's Representation Act 1950 and 1951 was issued. This Presidential Ordinance

of 1979 reduced 16 seats reserved for Bhutia-Lepcha to 13 seats envisaged by the Tripartite Agreement of 8th May 1973. The reduction of the Bhutia-Lepcha seats in Sikkim Legislative Assembly from 16 to 13 and inclusion of the eight other communities with the Bhutia became the matter of apprehension and dissatisfaction among the Bhutia-Lepcha community of Sikkim. The Bhutia-Lepcha contended that since eight other sub-groups⁹⁸ were clubbed within the definition of 'Bhutias' thus the Bhutia-Lepcha seats in the Assembly actually should have been increased. They feared the dilution of their original Sikkimese identity and further reduction of seats in case if these sub-groups of Bhutias' become politically pro-active and demand for more seats in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly.

When there was such a political crisis at the backdrop of Kazi led government, Bhandari exploited the situation and championed to raise the burning issues such as anti-merger and restoration of Bhutia-Lepcha seats abolished in 1979 and went to the Assembly election of 1979 under the banner of Sikkim Janata Parishad (SJP).⁹⁹ When Bhandari sensitised such local issues, he gained sympathy and support from all sections of the people including the monks and royal families and came to power after 1979 Assembly election winning 17 of 32 Assembly seats.

During his five years (1979-1984) rule in Sikkim under SJP, Bhandari dealt only with the language policy of Bhutia-Lepchas of Sikkim. In 1981, Bhutia and Lepcha languages were introduced upto class X as one of the optional subjects in the government schools of Sikkim. By 1983, both the languages were accepted by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and were introduced upto Class

⁹⁸ Eight sub-groups of Bhutia were the Chumbipa, Tromopa, Dophapa, Yalmo, Kagatay, Sherpa, Drukpa and Tibetan

⁹⁹ He also took up other local issues like citizenship for stateless, protection of identity of Sikkim and the rights and interests of the Sikkimese and son of the soil policy. He assured for self-respect, self-dignity to the Sikkimese and usher for the democracy, socialism, secularism and scrub corruption and also blended the issue of Sikkim for the Sikkimese (Himalayan Observer, 1979, Sept, 22, Vol-14, No-5).

XI in 1984 and XII in 1985 respectively. However, issues of 'de-merger of Sikkim' about which some section of Bhutia-Lepchas and royal families were much concerned and restoration of 16 seats reserved for the Bhutia-Lepchas in the Sikkim Assembly could not be fulfilled.

The third Sikkim Assembly election was to be held in March 1985. During this Bhandari had fought an Assembly election under the banner of newly formed regional political party, SSP. In the election manifesto, SSP had raised regional issues such as restoration of seats in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly, grant of citizenship for the people rendered stateless in Sikkim, preservation of local identity and implementation of 'Son of the Soil' policy, constitutional recognition of Nepali language and maintenance of cordial Centre-State relations (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1984, pp. 1-10). On the other, the election manifesto of SSP did not include any issue relating to Bhutia-Lepcha community. It only promised to launch various schemes and programmes for the welfare of the Tribal communities (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1984, p. 7). When Bhandari contested under SJP, de-merger of Sikkim, restoration of seats Bhutia-Lepchas and Nepalis including the Tsongs in the Sikkim Assembly were the most important issues. But in 1985 Assembly election, Bhandari was much concerned with the idea of 'Son of the Soil' policy and 'Sikkim for Sikkimese' and issues like restoration of seats in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly, grant of citizenship to the stateless person, maintenance of cordial Centre-State relations and Constitutional recognition of the Nepali language. The issue of de-merger of Sikkim was dropped. This indicates difference between SJP and SSP in their stands and Bhandari's more inclination towards Nepalis rather than Bhutia-Lepchas. In this context, Kazi (2009, pp. 94-95) opines, SSP being more rooted in favour of the Sikkimese Nepalis rather than the Bhutia, Lepcha and Limboos of Sikkim. In the view of Gurung (2011, p. 238) this shift might have occurred due to the political development of May 1984 in which Sanchaman Limboo belonging to the Limboo community and the tribal leaders belonging to Bhutia-Lepcha community Sherab Palden, Loden Tshering, Sonam

Tshering, Lachen Gomchen Rimpoche and Athup Lepcha were involved in the collapse of Bhandari's ministry.

In the Sikkim Assembly election of March 1985, the SSP won 30 of 32 Assembly seats. Thereafter, Bhandari emerged as a powerful politician in the state politics of Sikkim. It was alleged that the rule of Bhandari in Sikkim after 1985 was of worst type. He was accused of being more dictatorial, arrogant and corrupt. The democratic values and spirit were claimed to be lost during this time. The oppositions were victimised. Bhandari claimed himself to be the sole responsible and spokesperson of the people of Sikkim representing the hopes and aspirations of all the section of the people. Bhandari neither favour any social organisation functioning independently nor actively involved in the state affairs. He dubbed the social organisations actively functioning and involved in the state affairs as anti-government organisations.

In 1985, four social organisations Sikkim Tribal Welfare Association (STWA), Sikkim Lho-men Youth Council (SLYC), Rangjyong Mutanchi Rong Tarzum (RMRT) and Moyal Pronzom (MP) of Bhutia-Lepcha decided to form 'Joint Front' to work towards the formation of a strong and united tribal body to press for the genuine demands of the tribals. A Joint Action Committee headed by Passang Obed Pazo was formed to pursue the goal. The JAC under the banner of Sikkim Tribal Welfare Association (STWA) on the 9th October 1985 submitted a 6 Point memorandum to the Governor of Sikkim, B N Singh (Memorandum of JAC submitted to the HE Governor of Sikkim: dated; 9th October 1985). The Committee raised the demand for the restoration of 16 seats in the Assembly for the Bhutia-Lepchas, delimitation of Assembly constituencies for the genuine tribal representation in the House, grant of citizenship to the 'stateless persons' based on the Sikkim Subjects Recognition and extension of inner-line-permit system to check influx of outsiders.¹⁰⁰ The memorandum explicitly emphasised the need to

¹⁰⁰ Those issues were not new but as old as STWA itself which had been reiterating from time to time ever since its inception in 1978.

safeguard the rights and interests of the tribals as enshrined in Article 371F of the Constitution of India.¹⁰¹ But Bhandari did not respond to the issues raised by STWA. Bhandari disliked STWA being independently functioned or actively involved in the state affairs. Sometimes, he dubbed STWA as anti-government organisation when it became more influential among the Bhutia-Lepcha community of Sikkim.

From May 1986, the STWA could not function independently. There was continuous interference from the ruling political party. On 16th May 1986, the executive body of the STWA headed by Passang Obed Pazo was dissolved in the meeting attended by the pro-SSP tribal Ministers, MLAs, senior officials and representatives who were much closed to the ruling party. On May 23rd 1986, the election for the formation of new executive body of STWA was held. The office-bearers of the newly formed executive members of STWA were all ruling party members and supporters. Ram Lepcha was elected as the new President of the organisation, Bhandari the chief Patron, Thukchuk Lachungpa, the General Secretary, Chamla Tshering, Treasurer and Sanchaman Limboo, Karma Topden (MP), Namkha Gyaltsen and several state secretaries who were close to the party were members of the organisation. Since then the STWA continued to be dominated by the ruling political party and for long experienced political victimisation under '*one-man-rule*', '*one-man-reign*' of Bhandari.

The fourth General election to the Sikkim Assembly was held in 1989. In this election once again, the SSP swept the poll securing all 32 Assembly seats of Sikkim. While forming the ministry, out of 13 Cabinet ministers, 6 (44.4%) was provided to Bhutia-Lepchas. The allocation of portfolios for the Bhutia-Lepchas in

¹⁰¹ In 1979, 16 seats reserved for the Bhutia-Lepchas in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly were reduced to 13 including 1 Sangha seat. So in order to ensure full protection of Bhutia-Lepchas, the organisation demanded for restoration of those 16 seats that were reserved for the Bhutia-Lepchas and were abolished in 1979. On the grant of the Indian citizenship to the '*stateless persons*' STWA proposed Sikkim Subject Regulation Act of 1961 as a base for the determining degree in granting citizenship in Sikkim (Memorandum submitted to the Governor of Sikkim by the STWA, dated: 9th October 1985).

the Bhandari's ministry shows his favour towards Bhutia-Lepchas. But from the way he dealt with the issues of Bhutia-Lepchas, it reveals Bhandari's reluctance in protecting their interest and rights. The concerned political issues and demands of the Bhutia-Lepchas were restoration of 16 seats in the Assembly, delimitation of Assembly constituencies for the genuine tribal representation in the House, grant of citizenship to the 'stateless persons' based on the Sikkim Subjects Regulation Act 1961 and extension of inner-line-permit system to check influx of outsiders. Those issues were not seriously felt and taken up by Bhandari. During the two consecutive SSP led government rule under Bhandari, neither the rights nor interests of Bhutia-Lepchas were protected nor was the lost dignity brought back. Bhandari's promise of returning back Sikkim to its sovereign status and restoration of 3 lost Bhutia-Lepcha seats in the Sikkim Assembly became a far reaching dream never turning into reality.

Conclusion

The 'Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum' are the aboriginal inhabitants of Sikkim having distinct language, culture and faith and belief systems. At one point of time these communities were the dominant ones in Sikkim. But in due course of time with the rapid growth of population in Sikkim, the demographic composition and pattern underwent a change. They became one of the linguistic and religious minorities of Sikkim. They started losing their distinct identity. Realising this they have started and had been demanding for the restoration of their political rights and protection of their interests even after the merger of Sikkim with the Indian Union.

During Bhandari led SSP rule, they demanded the protection of their rights and interests. Bhandari raised the issues of Limboo, Lepcha and Bhutia's during the Assembly elections but after the elections was over, Bhandari kept quite. The issue of Limboos' inclusion in the list of Schedule Tribe and restoration of 02 Tsongs in the Sikkim Assembly and restoration of 03 Bhutia-Lepcha reserved seats in the Assembly was ignored. When organisation of these groups raised

their issues, Bhandari attempted to suppress their democratic aspirations and voices. He claimed that he was the sole representative of the people of Sikkim to fulfil their inner hopes and aspirations.

During his two consecutive terms in Sikkim, Bhandari championed only the cause of the 80000 persons who were stateless and demanded the inclusion of Nepali language in the 8th Schedule of the Indian Constitution. He failed to fulfil the aspirations and demands, the issues raised by the linguistic and religious minorities of Sikkim. Restoration of 02 Tsong Seats for the Limboos and 03 Bhutia-Lepcha seats in the Assembly and inclusion of Bhutia, Lepcha and Limboo languages along with the Nepali language in the 8th Schedule of the Indian Constitution remained just promises which were made during the time of elections.

Chapter IV

GOVERNANCE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE UNDER THE SSP REGIME

The concept of 'good governance' is very much interlinked with the institutionalized values such as democracy, observance of human rights, accountability, transparency and greater efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector as well as aid organizations of developed as well as underdeveloped countries. Therefore, the concept and meaning of 'good governance' implied or meant many different things in different contexts. In view of the above observation, the chapter has been divided into three sections. In section I attempt has been made to understand the concept and meaning of 'governance' as well as 'good governance' and then the basic elements of 'good governance'. Section II deals with 'good governance' during the SSP led Bhandari's reign in Sikkim. It seeks to look at whether Bhandari was able to ensure good governance in Sikkim. In section III attempt has been made in order to analyse the status of democracy and social justice under SSP led Government by Bhandari.

I

CONCEPT OF GOVERNANCE AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

The word 'good governance' is a term opposed to 'bad or inefficient governance' and is used to describe as how public institutions conduct public affairs and manage public resources in order to guarantee the realization of human rights and promote welfare of the people. In other word, 'good governance' is a new concept used against 'mal-governance' or 'failure of governance' or 'mis-governance' or 'mis-management' in the affairs of the public administration, performance of government, maintenance of law and order, execution of power, management of resources, observance of human rights and interests, assurance of social justice, democratic values and individual dignity. While the adjective term 'good' is added to the term 'governance' as prefix to denote or identify the quality

or degree of governance in ensuring welfare for the better quality of human life. Therefore, the term 'good' signifies the degree of performance and function that any institution or government renders for the well-being or goodness of human life. In view of the above concept, it is indispensable to define the term 'governance' alone and thereby, to measure the quality or degree of governance, it is also essential to define the concept of 'good governance' and differentiate the same from the concept 'governance'.

The term 'governance' is generally used to describe the art of governing the political, economic and social institutions. In simple language it is the matter of 'what the government usually does?'.¹⁰² Therefore, the term governance denotes as how people are ruled and how the affairs of a state are administered and regulated by the authority. It also refers to a system of politics of a nation and how political system as mechanism functions in relation to public administration and rule of law.¹⁰³

The word 'governance' is the derivation of the Greek verb 'kubernáo' which means to steer and was used for the first time in a metaphorical sense by Plato. Therefore, the origin of the word 'governance' can be traced back to the age when Plato lived. However, later on, it passed on to 'Latin' and then on to many other languages. 'Governance' as art of governing, relates to decisions that define expectations, grant power or verify performance. It consists of either a separate process or part of management or leadership processes. These processes and systems are typically administered by a government. So

¹⁰² The government might be a geo-political government (nation-state), a corporate government (business entity), a socio-political government (tribe, family etc.), or any number of different kinds of government. But governance commonly means the practical exercise of power management and policy formulation, while government is the instrument through which the power is exercised, executed and managed, the policy is formulated, implemented and decision is taken.

¹⁰³ However, the jurisdiction of the governance is confined not only to the administrative and political affairs of the nation and state, but also encompasses even the concepts which are beyond the government and not included in the political dimension of the state and civil society.

'governance' commonly means the exercise and execution of power to manage the affairs of the nations.¹⁰⁴

The World Bank defines the term 'governance' as 'the exercise of authority, control, management, and power of government'. It further defines it as '...the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development' (Cheema, 2002, p. 516). Here, the World Bank is concerned more with the economic reformation and control of social resource.¹⁰⁵ The World Bank emphasizes more on the formulation and implementation of policies, execution of the power for the proper management and utilization of both economic as well as social recourse of the country. It focuses more on the socio-economic development of the country and as well as development of civil society. As a condition for lending aids as development assistance, the Bank requires the recipient government to show effective performance and to promote further reforms. Cheema (2002, pp. 513-543) defines governance as 'the theme giving more coherence and focus to a variety of social, economic and political development activities which have hitherto been conducted in isolation from one another'. He further describes the term governance as 'a condition that ensures security, participation, co-operation, equity and sustainability'. In the notion described by Cheema, there are three facets: social, economic and political which are inter-connected in the spheres of governance. The governance in the economic setting includes the processes that affect the economic activities of a country and the relationships with the economies of other nations.¹⁰⁶ Governance in the political setting is the process of decision-making and formulation of policy and law which in turn has ramifications

¹⁰⁴Here management of nation's affairs means the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are executed and implemented in the affair relating to the public administration. It also implies to corporate, international, national, local governance or to the interactions between other sectors of the society.

¹⁰⁵ In 1992, it also underlined three aspects of society which will affect the nature of a country's governance: (i) type of political regime; (ii) process by which authority is exercised in the management of the economic and social resources, with a view to development; and (iii) capacity of government to formulate policies and have them effectively implemented.

¹⁰⁶ From the economic point of view, governance has major implications for economic equality, poverty eradication and quality of life.

for security, equity, participation and cooperation, allocation and management of resources to respond to the collective problems; it is characterized by participation, transparency, accountability, rule of law, effectiveness and equity. Governance in the social setting is the process of creating productive employment opportunity and social integration, improvement of basic services in the health, nutrition and education sectors, implication of equity and alleviation of poverty and quality of life (Cheema, 2002, p. 526).

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) defines governance as 'the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a nation's affairs at all levels'. It further defines 'it is the complex mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interest, exercise their legal rights and obligations and mediate their differences' (UNDP, 1997). The main focus of attention is three dominions of governance: the state, the private sector and the civil society.

Similarly the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) too defines governance as 'a process whereby citizens' needs and interests are articulated for the positive social and economic development of the entire society and more than the government: it refers to a political process that encompasses the whole society and contributes to the making of citizens active contributors to the social contract that binds them together. The sense of political efficiency is one of the indicators of democratic governance' (Cheema, 2002, p.517). For both UNDP and UNESCO, governance means management of nation's affairs at all levels by the authority for the socio-economic development of the entire state and civil-society and articulation of the interests and rights of the citizens and groups to ensure the democratic values for individual development.

In view of the above explanation, the concept of governance encompasses a broader range of areas, the area concerning about efficient

government, including accountability and transparency, to human rights, social cohesion, equity, democracy, participation, corruption, military expenditures, countries in crisis and last but not the least, political thought, culture and discourse. The number of organisational capacities that have an impact upon or are else associated with governance is equally broad, extending from the public sector,¹⁰⁷ the legal framework, governing institutions,¹⁰⁸ to the democratic process,¹⁰⁹ civil society organisations¹¹⁰ and the private sector.¹¹¹

CONCEPT OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

The concept of 'good governance' is of recent origin among scholars. It emerged in relation to state-society relations; management of the affairs of the public administration, function of government, maintenance of law and order, execution of power, management of resources, foster of human rights and interests, assurance of social justice, democratic values and individual respect and dignity.

Down the ages, the absence of good governance has proved as the damaging factor to the performance and role of the government. The development of the nation in both socio-economic and political spheres had been undermined by a lack of proper management of the affairs of the nation, public accountability, transparency and active participation of the citizens in the political and administrative spheres, suppression of democratic values, misrule, corruption and capture of public services by the elite class of the society. The funds allocated for the poor was misused and directed to the benefit of special interest groups and the poor had inadequate access to legal remedies. Corruption tended to weaken the ability of government to carry out their functions efficiently. Bribery, nepotism, red-tapeism, formalism and favouritism crippled administration and

¹⁰⁷ The public sector includes Government organisation-civil service-public economic/financial management-local government-public enterprises.

¹⁰⁸ Here governing institutions are Legislature and judiciary.

¹⁰⁹ The democratic process involves Election.

¹¹⁰ The civil society includes NGOs, political parties, labour unions, social movements.

¹¹¹ The private sectors are for-profit organisations and business associations.

diluted quality from the provision of government services and determined the social cohesiveness.

As a backdrop of such poor performance of the government in the affairs of governance in the state, the concept of good governance emerged against what is called '*mal-governance*' or '*mis-management*', '*bad*' or '*inefficient governance*' used to describe as how public institutions conduct public affairs and manage public resources in order to guarantee the realization of human rights and promote welfare of the people for the betterment of mankind. In other words, '*good governance*' is a new concept used against '*failure of governance*' or '*mis-governance*' in the affairs of the public administration, function of government, maintenance of law and order for peace and security, execution of power, management of human as well as non-human resources, observance of human rights and dignity, protection of interests, assurance of social justice and democratic values. In the view of Nanda (2006, p.269) good governance as 'a term came into vogue with the World Bank leading the charge and has assumed the status of a mantra for the donor agencies as well as donor countries for conditioning aid upon the performance of the recipient government'.

In the word of Hye (2002, pp. 1-31) good governance is 'more importantly about the quality of governance which expresses itself through such attributes like accountability, transparency, efficiency, empowerment, participation, sustainability, equity and justice'. In the wake of globalization where a new era of sovereignty and a particular 'human rights culture' is emerging, the notion of good governance is commonly described as a style of governance that includes democracy, the rule of law, effective bureaucracy, discretion and decentralization which is being internationally promulgated and has become a core focal point of discourse in international affairs.

In the account of Agere (2000, p. 1) good governance is a concept that has recently come into regular use in political science, public administration and

more particularly, development and management. The concept is like that of the term democracy, civil society, popular participation, human rights, social and sustainable development. Gunapala, (2002, pp. 204-215) conceives good governance as a political process that attempts to raise the living standard of the people to create an environment for them to enjoy the benefits of the freedom equally.¹¹² To Cyril congenial atmosphere is very much essential for the betterment and development of the individual in the civil society. Here congenial atmosphere refers to peace and stable environment ensured by the proper maintenance of law and order.

To Shelley (2002, pp. 165-182) good governance is more than mere sound and efficient public administration. He further conceptualises good governance as the process of building enduring and consistently used bridges between the state and society at large through an effective and people-oriented mechanism of administration. In the account of Shelley good governance, thus, is a mechanism of the people which is effectively used and dedicated for the achievement of the three great objectives of the mankind. Those three great objectives include (i) Alleviation of poverty (ii) Creation of productive employment and (iii) Social integration.

There are number of perspectives which have been emerging in the international affairs in relation to good governance. These structures of perspectives can be looked at any of the following relationships: (1) between governments and markets, (2) between governments and citizens, (3) between governments and the private or voluntary sector, (4) between elected officials and appointed officials, (5) between local institutions and urban and rural

¹¹² The political philosophy and objectives of different government, the economic policies, the internal and external security of the nation and the relationships with other nations are important aspects that shape the type of government.

dwellers, (6) between legislature and executive branches and (7) between nation states and institutions.¹¹³

Mahathir Mohamed, then the Prime Minister of Malaysia, defines good governance as the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority to manage the affairs of the nation. This includes the complex area of mechanisms, processes, relationships and institutions through which citizens manage affairs involving public life. The Ministerial Symposium of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) held on the topic 'Public Service' in Paris in March 1996, defined 'good governance' in terms of relationships which covers more than public administration and the relationships, methods and instruments of relationships between government and citizens, acting both as individuals and as part of institutions, e.g. political parties, productive enterprises, special interest groups and media (Agere, 2000, p. 2). The symposium regarded the term 'good governance' as a degree and efficiency of the governance for the proper management of the state of affairs for the prosperity of the nation and civil society. The International American Bank focused the modernisation of public administration in the modern context. Here modernisation more or less means development and advancement of people and the nation in all respects. The Department for International Development (DFID) of United Kingdom emphasised the normative aspect of good governance. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has greater emphasis on sustainable development (Agere, 2002, p.3). To Martin Minogue (1998) as Rahman, quotes (2002, pp. 231-246) good governance is both a broad reform strategy and a particular set of initiatives to strengthen the institutions of civil society with the objective of making government more accountable, more open, transparent and more democratic. On the agenda of Annual Development Economic Conference (ADEC) of World Bank 1991 'good governance' appeared as one of the themes. The Bank therein conceptualized the concept of 'good governance' as a mechanism to

¹¹³ The aforementioned perspectives which have emerged as new paradigm, locate good governance as the procedure and process which the government adopts to bring remarkable achievement in the administration and public service.

indicate the manner in which power and authority are exercised for the development and management of a country's economic and social resources.

In the purview of International Monetary Fund (IMF) good governance occupies more or less like an instrument for ensuring the implementation and adjustment of various programmes.¹¹⁴ The International Monetary Fund (IMF) declared in 1996 that 'promoting good governance in all its aspects, including by ensuring the rule of law, improving the efficiency and accountability of the public sector and tackling corruption, as essential elements of a framework within which economies can prosper'.¹¹⁵

The World Bank's emphasis has been on the economic dimensions of good governance and the state's capacity to effectively use the development assistance. It also continued to reiterate its apolitical approach to governance reform in the allocation of developmental aid by focussing effectively in public administration, rule of law, transparency and accountability as the major elements to ensure economic growth and development (Panda, 2006, p.274).

For African contributors, good governance relates to the larger issues of state-society relations and not just to the technocratic transparency-accountability mode that it eventually assumed in the international financial institutions. The actual use of the concept of good governance sidestepped the central concerns of the Africans and rendered the notion purely administrative (Mkandawire, 2007, p. 681).¹¹⁶ In the context of India, the objective of good governance according to

¹¹⁴ This means to say that good governance is an important democratic institution which is essential for the economic growth and development.

¹¹⁵The IMF feels that corruption within economies is the result of the ineffective governance of the economy, or either too much regulation or too little regulation and to receive loans from any of the financial institutions of the countries have to formulate certain good governance policies in relation to economy. In this way IMF accounts good governance more on the economic policies of the government rather than on any other aspects of the country.

¹¹⁶ It often, looked like a fallback position for failed policies. But later, the approach to good governance and economic policy that finally became dominant differed radically from that of the African contributors who were strongly opposed to adjustment policies because not only were they deflationary and thus not developmental, but also because they were externally imposed,

Pandit Nehru's soul-stirring speech in the midnight of August 14-15th 1947 is meant of '*ending of poverty and ignorance and disease and inequality of opportunity*' (Bandyopadhyay, 1996, pp. 3109-3111).

In the light of the above opinions and arguments, it is understood that definition on the concept of the good governance varies from one organization to the other and person to person, although general ideas and focus on issues are the same. However, it can generally be conceptualized that the concept of good governance emerged as a part of development process in view of bringing goodness in the nation as well as civil society. It encompasses mainly three sectors: government, civil society and corporate sector including transnational corporations. As such, the concept of good governance not only attributes to accountability, both financial and political, transparency, easy access to information, popular participation in decision-making and implementation of policies, responsiveness, efficient delivery system of goods and services, enforcement of rule of law, supplanting the rule of whims and caprices of rules whether stipendiary or elected, citizen satisfaction and an overall caring and humane ambience promoting an egalitarian and equitable social and economic order as Bandyopadhyay records (1996, pp. 3109-3114) but also means combating corruption, nepotism, bureaucracy and mismanagement or mal-governance and adaptation of proper procedures so that aid and allocated funds are effectively used to achieve the objective of reducing poverty.

BASIC ELEMENTS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

From the above discussion, we note that '*good governance*' meant for ensuring participatory, empowerment, transparency and accountable, effective and equitable government and create congenial ambience for the promotion of rule of law to foster individual as well as personal development. It ensures that political, social and economic priorities which are based on broad consensus in the

weakened the state and undermined many of the post-colonial 'social contracts' (Mkandawire, 2007, p.681).

society and that the voices of the poorest and the most vulnerable are heard in decision-making over the allocation of developmental resources. In its report, 'Governance for Sustainable Human Development', the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) acknowledged the following as fundamental elements of good governance such as: participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus orientation, equity, effectiveness and efficiency, accountability and strategic vision (Mehta, 2002, pp. 317-334).

The United Nations Organization (UNO) emphasizes on reformation through human development and political institution. According to the UNO, good governance has eight characteristics such as consensus oriented, participatory, rule of law, effective and efficient, accountable, transparent, responsive and equitable and inclusive. For achieving the best way of good governance, Agere (2000, pp. 1-21) accords the following key elements: accountability, transparency, combating corruption, participatory governance and legal and judicial framework.¹¹⁷ Kumar¹¹⁸ recognizes participation, legitimacy, accountability, competence and open and transparent. Similarly, the Commission's White Paper on European Governance published in July 2001, identifies five principles of good governance: openness, participation, accountability, effectiveness and coherence. Sivaramakrishnan, (2002, pp. 291-303) conceives alleviating poverty, developmental infrastructure, maintenance of sanitation transport and environment as tasks of the government. While Shelley, (2002, pp. 165-182) considers alleviation of poverty, creation of productive employment and social integration as three important objectives of good governance.

¹¹⁷ Apart from the key elements of good governance stated above, Agere further highlights the efficiency and effectiveness as requirement primarily placed on managers. Decentralisation, devolution, pluralism and strengthening of checks and balances focus more on structures for which responsibility rest with politicians. Participation, partnership, poverty alleviation, empowerment, ownerships, human rights, free speech and free association and democracy require the active co-operation of all.

¹¹⁸In his article, 'Local Government for Good Governance: Experience in Andhra Pradesh'(2002, pp.247-267).

II

GOVERNANCE IN SIKKIM UNDER SSP LED GOVERNMENT RULE

In the context of Sikkim, where democracy and development had been taking root after Sikkim's merger to the Indian Union in 1975, the concept of 'good governance' was very new. As such in Sikkim, key elements of good governance could extend beyond what the scholars of other countries of both developed and underdeveloped have identified and thereby good governance could be judged in terms of the performance of the government, policies it formulates and implements and the manner in which law and order is maintained. This is because Sikkim had different experiences than those of the other states of India and developing countries of the world. Sikkim under Chogyal regime remained economically underdeveloped and politically undemocratic. So later, it merged with India for the sake of democracy and development. In due recognition of Sikkim's experience and evolution of democratic values, poverty alleviation, infrastructures, sanitation, decentralisation, popular participation, rule of law, transparency, accountability, combating corruption, responsibility, freedom of press and effectiveness and efficiency can be taken into consideration in the context of Sikkim. So far as the degree of governance in Sikkim during the regime of SSP led government is concerned, it can be judged in the light of quality, efficiency, accountability, transparency and responsibility the government could maintain in the state. The performance of the government could be identified from the way it ensured human rights and dignity, democratic values, popular participation, rule of law, maintenance of infrastructures and sanitation, quality of human life, health and education, implication of poverty alleviation policies and productive employment opportunity of educated unemployed youths and management of resources and the way it dealt with the issues of the linguistic and religious minorities in Sikkim. The degree or quality of governance can be accepted from the steps taken against the mis-management, mis-governance, corruption, nepotism and red-tapeism in the state during that period of time.

In order to understand the degree of governance during the SSP led government regime, each key elements of good governance can be discussed under sub-heads:

(1) Poverty Alleviation: Poverty means the 'state of being poor' while poverty alleviation is a measure or strategy of combating 'poverty'.¹⁹ Sivaramakrishnan, (2002, pp. 291-303), argues that alleviation of poverty is one of the tasks of the government. Shelley (2002, pp. 165-182) also notes that alleviation of poverty is one of the major elements of good governance. So, on the light of the above argument of Sivaramakrishnan and Shelley poverty alleviation too, can be considered as one of the major components of good governance in the state or nation where most of the people live Below the Poverty Line.

In Sikkim, until 1974, 50.86% of the total population lived Below Poverty Line. However, in 1984, the figure of Below Poverty Line declined to 39.71% with the margin of 11.15 %. But in 1994, poverty again climbed up to 41.43% i.e, by 1.59 %. This means, in Sikkim, at the time when SSP led government came to power in 1985, 39.71% of the total population still lived Below Poverty Line. Therefore, in Sikkim, poverty alleviation measures became one of the prime concern of the planning strategy of the SSP led government.

For poverty alleviation, the state government started implementing centrally sponsored programmes and schemes like Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM), Development of Women and Children in Rural Area (DWCRA), Integrated Rural Energy Planning Programme (IREP), Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) etc.

Under IRDP, house to house survey was conducted and 10,430 families who were identified to be Below Poverty Line were assisted with ginger,

¹⁹ In other words poverty alleviation can be termed as a 'process' seeking to reduce the level of poverty in a community or amongst a group of people of the country.

cardamom, potato, orange plantation, milch cow, bullock, goattory, piggery, poultry, pisciculture and financial support in running small business and carpet, handloom, weaving, and black smithy. 3-12 months training was reported to have imparted to the rural youths belonging to Below Poverty Line in different trades like carpet, handloom, rari weaving, cutting and tailoring, knitting, carpentry, black smithy, cane and bamboo work etc under TRYSEM in between 1986 to 1989. The trainees belonging to BPL were also paid the monthly stipend @ Rs 150/- per month. The raw material along with tool kits allowance was provided. From 1985 to 1990, 1039 youths were trained in different trades out of which about 50% were provided loans with subsidy for starting self-wage employment (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, p. 119). Under DWCRA, the women and children between the age group of 18-35 years were assisted to generate income for self-reliance and self-employed. The finished products produced by them were marketed to Central Cottage Industries, Delhi. Rural Agent of marketing centre was opened in Gangtok for marketing outlet. A group consisting of 10-15 women members was constituted. Each group was provided one time grant of Rs 15000/- as revolving fund. The fund could be drawn for the purchase of animals for Animal husbandry and also raw materials for weaving carpet, handloom, raris, etc.¹²⁰

Under NSREC, beneficiaries were given 2 numbers of 3 inch diameters ACC pipes of 6 feet length and a chimney cowl at free of cost under Improved Chulla Scheme. By 1992, 4130 families were benefited by the Improved Chulla Scheme. Community size chullas were also constructed in school Hostels, Hospitals, Temples and Monastery kitchens under the same scheme. Under Biogas Energy Scheme, a biogas plant providing facilities to generate gas for cooking and lighting from animals, human waste of biomass was introduced. Families having 3-4 cattle was provided 2 Cu. m capacity gas plant to meet up

¹²⁰ In Sikkim, so far as implementation of DWCRA is concerned, it received tremendous response by 1990. More than 125 groups under various trades were formed of which 10 were from south and 115 from west Sikkim and total 2211 (40%) women were assisted and 30% was implemented for smokeless chulla, water supply etc under DWCRA of IRDP. Health camps for women were also organized in collaboration with the State Health Department under this scheme.

cooking requirement of 4-5 family members.¹²¹ The state government has also stalled 70 solar street lights and domestic lights in Panchayat Ghars, Bhawans, Hostels, Schools, Temples and Monasteries under Solar Energy Scheme (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 122-123).

In 1987, State Social Housing Scheme (SSHS) was launched under which 24 numbers of 8 feet long Galvanized Corrugated Iron (GCI) sheet were distributed to every families belonging to Below Poverty Line (BPL) to help them to build and roof their houses. In between 1987-1991, about 12,999 families belonging to Below Poverty Line were said to have been benefited under State Social Housing Scheme (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 115-117). Housing Schemes, 4132 families belonging to ST and 592 to SC were said to have been benefited and 658 houses for those belonging to Below Poverty Line were constructed under Indra Awas Yojana (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 123-125).

From 1989-1992, the state government, under Seed Multification and Distribution Programme has distributed high yielding varieties of seeds, chemical fertilizers, pesticides, manures and implements at free of cost for the benefit of the poor and rural farmers. In the villages, 26 government farms meant for multification of seeds and planting materials, conducting various adoptive research and demonstration of vegetables, fruits and crops and modern techniques of cultivation were established. Oilseed Production Programme¹²² and National Pulses Development Project¹²³ to meet the internal requirement of edible oil and to explore the production potentials was launched. During that period of time, 10500 farmers were trained and 60 village level workers were sent for 2 years diploma courses. Under Livestock Scheme, piglets, crossbred cows and poultry birds were distributed to 2500 families of economically disadvantaged

¹²¹ Family, installing biogas plant was given only substantial subsidy of Rs. 6000/- to Rs 8000/- per plant.

¹²² Oilseed Production Programme Funded by the Government of India and state Government on 75:25% share basis.

¹²³ National Pulses Development Project Funded by the Government of India and state Government of Sikkim on 75:25% share basis.

groups. In between 1989-1991, Special Livestock Breeding Programme for small, marginal and landless farmers was also launched. This scheme has benefited just 855 farmers (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 5-7).

(2) Infrastructure: Infrastructure is a basic physical and organizational structure essential for the operation of a civil society and there from infrastructural development is possible only if the government takes the concern of it and devotes its resources towards its development.¹²⁴

Sivaramakrishnan (2002, pp. 291-303) conceives infrastructure as a component of good governance. Whatsoever may be its kind or form and nature, infrastructural development in any state or country constitutes the major element of good governance and indicates the degree and quality of performance of the government. Since infrastructural development provides framework supporting an entire structure of development, hence, economic growth and development of the state or nation fully depends upon it. Infrastructure generally includes transport infrastructure, energy infrastructure, water management infrastructure, economic infrastructure, social infrastructure, cultural, sports and recreational infrastructure etc.

In Sikkim, an existence of steep and sloppy land structure with narrow gorges permanently determined the development of infrastructure. Moreover, at the time when SSP government led by Bhandari came to power in 1985, Sikkim was only ten years old that had joined the mainstream of Indian Union. So there was a need for the infrastructural development in all the sectors in Sikkim. Henceforth, Bhandari government during its first regime concentrated on infrastructural development which undertook for several years in various sectors in Sikkim. Such infrastructural development which was accomplished during Bhandari's regime can be categorized under several sub-heads for discussion.

¹²⁴ From the economic point of view, infrastructural development facilitates all sorts of services that accelerate the economic function and growth as well as well-being of the society.

(i) Transportation Infrastructure: Transportation infrastructure as part of infrastructural development forms one of the key elements of good governance. It constitutes lifeline of progress and development of the state or nation in all spheres. However, its accessibility and possibility has close connection with the governance or performance of the government.

In Sikkim, transportation infrastructure includes road and highway networks; bridges, tunnels, culverts, retaining walls, electrical systems; street lighting and traffic lights, computerized rail systems and bus transportation, flyovers, pedestrian walkways, including pedestrian bridges, pedestrian underpasses and other specialized structures for pedestrians.

After the SSP led government assumed power in 1985, initiatives were taken to make the possibility of vehicular transportation in far flung areas of Sikkim. The village roads and bridges were constructed on the basis of population, tourist potential, economic development and social welfare schemes being extended in the rural areas. In the rural areas, roads and bridges were made accessible to provide basic facilities, transport of food-grains, easy transport of patients from villages to different Health Centres, attending district and other offices as well as to transport the agricultural products to the marketing centres etc. From 1985-1992, total road increased to 2243 kilometers against 1292 of 1980 with the increased margin of 951 kms. The steep and narrow roads were widened and upgraded. Old and weak bridges were replaced by higher load capacity bridges.¹²⁵ Besides, 16 other old and weak steel bridges were replaced by permanent ones with high load and carrying capacity and altogether 21 suspension bridges were reinforced and upgraded (BESPDD, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 59-63).

¹²⁵ Among those number of replaced bridges during this particular period (1985-1994) were: Cable Stayed Akkar bridge over Rangit River at Jorethang connecting south and west district of Sikkim (1989), Legship Pre-Stressed bridge over Rangit River at Legship, connecting south and west district of Sikkim, Singshore Suspension Bridge in West Sikkim (1993) and Mamring Pre-Stressed bridge over Teesta River at Rangpo connecting east and south district of Sikkim.

Two regional motor vehicle offices, one at Gangtok for north and east districts and another at Jorethang for west and south districts were set up. New number of SNT buses and trucks were added in subsequent years to the fleet strength with the objective to provide better, cheaper and comfortable mode of transport to the general public. Within 1984-1985 to 1991-1992, number of buses increased from 18 to 148. Standard bus services were introduced within the state and for Siliguri, Darjeeling and Kalimpong of West Bengal state. Operation of direct bus service between Gangtok and Calcutta was also launched from 29th December 1991. It was claimed by the Government that Trucks and Tankers owned by Sikkim Nationalist Transport for transporting essential commodities in Sikkim have increased from 128 in 1984-1985 to 184 in 1991-1992 (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 131-136).

The Railway Out Agency at Gangtok and Jorethang for passengers travelling to Delhi, Calcutta, Chennai, Trivandrum, Bangalore, Mumbai, Cochin and other connecting routes from Sikkim was set up. One special luxury bus service was introduced between Gangtok and Bagdogra. A bus service plying between Gangtok to New Jalpaiguri was launched (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 131-136)

The pedestrian fly-overs were constructed at Gangtok to help the pedestrians to easily cross the National Highway. The town like in Gangtok and other rural marketing centres were provided streetlights along the streets and roads. Under Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) scheme 1988.33 Kms village roads and jeepable roads and 519 bridges were constructed (No-94/Home/90, Gangtok, Tuesday, 19th June, 1990, No-83).

(ii) Energy Infrastructure: Energy infrastructure constitutes one of the components of good governance in Sikkim. It includes electrical; generation plants, electrification of the state especially the rural areas, provision of LPG and mode of distribution of electricity.

Until 1985, there were 405 habitable revenue blocks that needed speedy implementation of electrification schemes for which supply of more electric power was required. For that more power plants were established to generate more and more electricity to meet the demand. Realizing the acute shortage of electric supply, the government took up implementation of Rongnichu Hydel Stage-II Scheme (500 MW) and Lingbit Hydel Stage-II (500 MW) in 1985. Two schemes were subsequently commissioned in 1988-1989. In 1986-1987, two more Hydel Schemes, viz. Mayongchu (66 MW) and Upper Rongnichu (4x2 MW) were taken up and both were fully commissioned in 1991-1992 (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 98-108).

Under Transmission and Distribution Programme, improvement works and remodelling of system at important load centres was taken up. Capacity of every transformer was augmented to meet the increasing loads. The 11 KV and LT lines were upgraded which ultimately reduced the cost of Transmission and Distribution by augmenting capacity of distribution transformer to avoid overloading. Out of 405 habitable Revenue Blocks, 400 Revenue Blocks in the state were reported to have electrified by 1992. Extensive Intensification Scheme in the already electrified villages was also taken up to cover 100% household. Under Free Electrification Programme, free electricity connection to the households who were Below Poverty Line was provided. By 1994, only 3,104 households were electrified. But 3100 households still remained uncovered (IRP, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, p. 104).

The LPG connection which was started in 1976 also improved. From 1986-1992, branch offices of State Trading Co-operation of Sikkim (STCS) were opened at Jorethang, Singtam, Rangpo, Rhenock and Pakyong to extend facility of LPG connection to those places. A new godown for the storage of LPG was set up at

Tadong Industrial Estate, Gangtok to meet the increasing demand of the consumers (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 147-148).¹²⁶

(iii) Water Management Infrastructure: Water management infrastructure forms one of the most important elements of good governance in a developing civil society or state. Water management infrastructure includes safe drinking, including water sources, system of pipes, tanks storage reservoirs, pumps, ponds, valves, filtration and treatment equipment. It also includes buildings and structures to store the equipment, used for the collection, treatment and distribution of drinking water, major irrigation systems; reservoirs, irrigation canals, major flood control systems; protection walls or dikes and floodgates as well as the use of soft engineering techniques in Sikkim (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 68-70).

In Sikkim, 440 villages were identified as problem villages which needed immediate supply of safe drinking water. The government, in between 1985-1992, a total of 958 Water Supply Scheme at a total cost of Rs 4,700.00 lakh was sanctioned. Out of 440 villages, only 369 villages were fully covered by the end of 1992. (Ibid).¹²⁷ The work of water treatment was also undertaken to ensure safe drinking water. Quality water testing was carried out in the stationary laboratory of Micro and Geology Department, Gangtok. By 1991, altogether 400 test works was done in the villages of Sikkim (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 124-125).

Under Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) scheme, 17 water ponds, 83 irrigation channels and 355 village tanks were constructed by 1992. Besides, 42 flood protection work and 62 soil conservation work were done (No.94/Home/90, Gangtok, Tuesday, 19th June, 1990, No-83). The concrete Hume pipes and HDPE pipes in the damages of the open channels due to landslides and sinking areas

¹²⁶ Two DCM Toyota trucks were purchased by the state for the distribution and replacement of old gas tanks

¹²⁷ Remaining 71 villages were assured to be covered by the government during Eight Five Year Plan (1990-1997).

were extensively used. Under Seventh Five Year Plan, additional irrigation potential of 6359 hectares was created and corresponding to 5530 hectares of potential was utilized. Nearly 375 numbers of channels totalling approximately 455 Kms in length was also created (Sikkim Herald, 26th January, 1993, Vol-37, No-4). The river bank protection works to various towns and bazaar like Melli, Singtam, Jorethang, Rongli, Kalej Kholā, Sirwani, Dikchu, Reshi, Legship and Sumbuk Kartikey was done (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 69-70).

Major works in the town of Gangtok and other rural marketing centres was also taken up. In Gangtok, on the basis of estimated population forecast at 45,000 heads, augmentation water supply was done by laying three numbers of 6" dia GI pipes to increase the capacity from 1 MGD to 3 MGD. By 1992, the government sanctioned Rs 4.12 crores for the augmentation of further 5 MGD. The work of augmentation of 2 MGD and filtration plant of equal capacity was also taken up at Selap. With the expansion of the town in Gangtok, the government expanded the supply of safe drinking water in the areas of Sichey, Syari, Tathangchen, Chandmari, Tibetology, Deorali during the period from 1985-1990. A tank of 1 MGD capacity at Selap for the distribution of safe drinking water was constructed in between 1985-1990. At Singtam, first water treatment plant was started with the augmentation of safe drinking supply in 1985. The water source from Rungdung side was tapped on Naya-Bazar Legship roads. The augmentation of water supply at Rongli, Pakyong, Ranipool, Yangyang, Melli and Dikchu was also done by the government during the period from 1980-1991. The government sanctioned Rs 5 crores for taking the work laying of pipe for 45 kms and supply of drinking water at Namchi Bazar, South Sikkim from period 1985-1986 (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 111-114).

(iv) Economic Infrastructure: Economic infrastructure has close connection with economic development and growth which is possible only with the implementation of proper economic policies by the government. Economic infrastructure includes manufacturing industries, basic materials used as inputs in

industry, industrial activity and industrial production agricultural and fisheries infrastructure, including specialized food and livestock transportation and storage facilities, major feedlots, agricultural price support systems,¹²⁸ agricultural health standards, food inspection, experimental farms and agricultural research centres, system of licensing and quota management, financial system, including the banking system, financial institutions, financial regulation as well as accounting standards and regulations etc.

Until 1985 there were 23 small scale Industrial Units registered with the Directorate of Industries. The performance of those Industries was also very poor. The five prominent Industrial units, Government Fruit Preservation Factory (1954), Sikkim Distilleries (1956), Sikkim Jewels Limited (1972), Temi Tea Estate and Sikkim Time Corporation (1976) functioning under public undertaking sector and 23 small scale Industries were the avenues for unemployed educated youths in Sikkim at that period of time.

So, at the outset, financial assistance was extended to these industrial units in Sikkim in the form of state loans at a subsidized rate. Apart from the financial assistance from the state, other Central Industrial Units like Small Industrial Services Institute (SISI) under the Ministry of Industry also provided technical inputs and assistance like the preparation of project report, consultancy, references and training facilities. The National Bank for Agriculture and Development (NABARD) established (1985) also started financing agriculture and other allied sectors. All India Handicraft Board (AIHB) was set up for the promotion of the Handloom and Cottage Industries. In between 1980-1989, the government also made provisions for the central investment subsidy applicable to the industrial units and hotels. Under the provisions, the units were entitled to get 15-25 % as outright subsidy not exceeding Rs 2.5 million. In Sikkim, the various units received Rs 61.1 million (Lama, 2001, p. 72). Similarly, under the Central Transport Subsidy Scheme (CTSS) the industrial units in Sikkim had reimbursed the cost of

¹²⁸ Agricultural price support includes agricultural insurance.

transportation of raw material and finished products to the extent of 75-90%. From 1985-1990, this amounted to Rs 63.11 million. Till 1985-1986, only 17% of the investment subsidy was utilized by the entrepreneurs. In 1991, the Government adopted liberal policies to attract entrepreneurs and investment in the industrial units in Sikkim (Notification No 27/DI/89-90 (III) 7452 dated March 13th 1991). Any Industrial unit in Sikkim under the schemes could avail subsidy on captive power generating set, cost of transformer and power line, consultancy services, power, interests on working capital, registration fee of promotion council, Indian Standard Institution, Commodity Boards, Chamber of Commerce, Publicity and Advertisement, Study Tour and Implant Training, price preference, concession on sale tax, determent of excise duty, special incentives for high value and Low Volume Production Units and units utilizing local raw materials (Lama, 2001, p. 73). The government in the Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-1990) allocated an amount of Rs 4.0% for industrial units out of Rs 2824 million of the total Plan outlay and in the Eighth Five Year Plan (1990-1997) Rs 3.85% was allocated for the industrial sector out of a total Plan outlay of Rs 7245 million respectively (Lama, 2001, pp. 69-71).

In 1986, a branch office of Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) was also set up at Gangtok to provide financial assistance exclusively to small scale and tiny industries under various schemes. District Industrial Centre was established at Gangtok to provide all the required services, support and assistance to the entrepreneurs and artisans of all small scale units of north and east districts under one umbrella. The Directorate of Handicrafts and Handlooms at various places of Sikkim like Kewzing, Okhrey, Lachung, Lachen, Chungthang, Lindong, Pelling and Namchi were established (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 59-63).

An agreement between the government of Sikkim and Indian Telephone Industries Limited, Bangalore was signed for setting up a unit for the manufacture of Microwave Integrated Circuits at a project cost of Rs 1.5 crores. The scarce

materials like paraffin wax, palm fatty acid distillate iron and steel material etc were provided to the industrial units. The government also launched various schemes and programmes to motivate and encourage the entrepreneurs and investors. In between 1985-1993, about 1200 entrepreneurs were trained and 75 rural artisans were sent outside Sikkim to study, tour and implant training for skill development and capacity building (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 59-63).

From 1986-1991, the Industry Department provided financial assistance amounting to Rs 80 lakhs to 409 artisans and entrepreneurs through various Financial Institutions and Sikkim Khadi and Village Industries Board. The Sikkim Industrial Development and Investment Corporation Limited also provided financial assistance to more than 1000 industrial units, hoteliers and taxi operators. Composite loans, term loans, loan under single vehicle operation scheme amounting to Rs 24 crores were sanctioned and disbursed. Under self-employment scheme, 267 educated unemployed youths were provided financial assistance amounting to Rs 50.00 lakhs for starting their self-employment ventures in business, services and industrial ventures (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 59-63).

In between 1985-1994, the government has established about 185 Small Scale Industries (SSI) or Tiny Industrial Units which in return, have contributed Rs 5.2 million to the income of the state in 1985-1986. However, in between 1990-1996, there was a slight decline of industrial production. In 1990-1991, the contribution of industrial units to state's income was recorded at Rs 3.7 million and Rs 2.2 million in 1995-1996. Thus, the figures indicate the poor performance of SSP led government in the industrial sector.

For the benefit of the weaker section, the government launched various schemes. Piglets, crossbred cows, poultry birds were distributed to 2500 families of economically disadvantaged group. In 1989-1991, another programme, Special Livestock Breeding Programme for small, marginal and landless farmers was also

launched as a result of which 855 farmer got benefit within 2 years. Under Livestock Scheme, 2,500 Schedule Tribe and Schedule Caste families were distributed piglets, crossbred cows, poultry birds. The Frozen Semen Station, Veterinary Hospitals, Veterinary Dispensaries, Stockmen Centres, Livestock Farms, Poultry Farms; Disease Checkpost and Laboratory of diseases and Nutrition, Stockmen Training Centres etc were established. Sikkim Milk Unions and Fluid Milk Plants were formed in Sikkim to sustain and increase productivity of livestock (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 5-7).

The government also adopted uniform pricing policies considering the benefit of the consumers irrespective of location and for the control of market monopoly, black marketing and hoarding. For the storage and maintenance of regular supply and buffer stock of essential commodities, godowns in various places of four districts of Sikkim were constructed. From 1985-1993, 14 new food godowns with a total storage capacity of 5273.5 Metric Tonnes; 4500 Rice, 600 Wheat and 173.5 Sugar were constructed (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 39-41).¹²⁹

(v) Social Infrastructure: Social infrastructure as a kind of infrastructure constitutes one of the elements of good governance. It is concerned more with the social welfare and social well-being of the society. In Sikkim, administrative buildings meant for public use, health care system,¹³⁰ educational institutions¹³¹ and social systems¹³² can be included within the purview of social infrastructure.

¹²⁹ The government introduced uniform rate and policy for the distribution of rice and wheat in December 1985. The areas under Schedule Tribe reserved constituency and Tribal predominant revenue blocks were covered under the distribution programme (ITDP). About 2.04 lacs of consumers living in 197 revenue blocks were benefited with subsidised rice, wheat, sugar, kerosene under ITDP. The rationing system was implemented for maintaining equitable distribution in ITDP areas. From 1985-1992, 35,000 ration cards were issued covering 197 revenue blocks and two towns; Gangtok and Jorethang respectively. With the view to protect the consumers from unscrupulous, traders and hoarders, the Government of Sikkim constituted State Consumers Protection Council on 1st July 1987 and State Commission and District Forums and enforced Consumers Protection Act 1990 (Ibid).

¹³⁰ Health care system includes hospitals, Family Health Centres, Primary Health Centres and Primary Health Sub-Centres, financing of health care, including health insurance, systems for regulation and testing of medications and medical procedures, system for training, inspection and professional discipline of doctors and other medical professionals, public health monitoring and regulations, coordination of measures taken during public health emergencies such as epidemics.

The government undertook a number of developmental works for the development of infrastructure in Sikkim. The Krishi Bhawan and College Building at Tadong, Police Head Quarter, Yata Yat Bhawan, STCS Building, OPD ward in STNM, New Sikkim Legislative Assembly Building, Civil Engineering Department, Mechanical Workshop Complex for PWD, Yatri Niwas, MLA Hostel at Gangtok, Forest Secretariat Building at Deorali, Modern Jail Complex at Rongay and New Sikkim House at Delhi were constructed. The government also constructed quarters at Gangtok and Sub-Divisional Offices and quarters at Soreng, Pakyong and Ravangla, District Administrative Centres at Namchi, Geyzing and Mangan, Administrative Office for SNT at Ranipool, Police Housing at Jorethang, Melli and Pangthang, Community Hall at Geyzing and 14 more food godowns having the capacity of 5273.5 metric tonnes in various places of Sikkim.

For health care and welfare, the government is said to have constructed just hospitals, Family Health Centres, Primary Health Centres and Primary Health Sub-Centres in the state. In between 1985-1992, a new 75 bedded hospital at Singtam and 100 bedded Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital at Namchi with specialized services in the field of surgery, gynaecology, ophthalmology, medicine and orthopaedics and another 100 bedded district hospital at Geyzing and 60 bedded hospital at Mangan, 07 Family Health Centres, 23 Primary Health Centres and 141 Primary Health Sub-Centres were constructed. The Central Referral Hospital was upgraded to 300 bedded from 250 beds. For providing temporary hospitalization to the leprosy patients and for the treatment of Tuberculosis patients, 20 bedded Pt. G.B.Pant Leprosy Hospital at Sajong and 60 bedded District Tuberculosis at Namchi were established. Mini District Tuberculosis Centres with 10 bedded were also constructed in other three districts of Sikkim (Ibid). Under (ICDS), 482 Anganwadi Centres were established by 1992 at the village level.

¹³¹Educational Institutions including elementary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, research institutions, systems for financing and accrediting educational institutions.

¹³² Social System includes both government support and private charity for the poor, for people in distress or victims of abuse.

The Sheltered Workshop for Disabled was set up to impart training in cane and bamboo works to disabled trainees. By 1992, 528, Pre-Primary Schools, 266 Lower Primary Schools, 246 Primary Schools, 127 Junior High Schools, 53 Secondary Schools and 15 Senior Secondary Schools were set up. During this period, College Building at Tadong was constructed and various streams like Arts, Science and Commerce was introduced in the college. Other institutions such as Sikkim Law College, District Institute for Education and Training (DIET) and Teachers' Training Institute (TTI) for teachers' training, Polytechnic Institute and Industrial Training Institute for the vocational education were also established by the government.

(vi) Cultural, Sports and Recreational Infrastructure: Cultural, sports and recreational infrastructure forms a part of good governance. This includes sports and recreational infrastructure such as parks, sports facilities etc. cultural infrastructure includes concert halls, museums, libraries, theatres, studios, and specialized training facilities, business travel and tourism infrastructure, convention centres, hotels, restaurants and other services that cater mainly to tourists and business travellers etc.

For cultural, sports and recreational infrastructural development, playgrounds, Community halls, Panchayat Ghars, Play Fields, Swimming Pools, Gymnasium, Youth Hostels and Stadium were constructed and made accessible to all in between 1985-1992. Youth Hostels and Hostels for the working women, Girls Hostels, Guest House at Bagdogra and Tourist Lodge at Rangpo and Recreation Parks at Baluakhani and Paljor Stadium, car parking in and around Gangtok Bazar and near Rajya Sainik Board, MG Marg, Lall Market, Development Area and West Point School were developed. The shopping centres and parking facilities in four of the districts, Destitute Homes, Day Care Centres and Recreation Centres for nursing and caring of infants of working mothers, Creches for the children of working mothers and Blind School for the blind children were also established (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 137-142).

(3) Sanitation: Sanitation is related to public health and hygiene. As a part of good governance, it promotes human health through prevention of human contact with the hazards of wastes. Hazards can be physical, microbiological, biological or chemical agents of disease. Wastes that can cause health problems are human and animal faeces, solid wastes, domestic wastewater,¹³³ industrial and agricultural wastes.

Sikkim lacked the systematic disposal and management of wastes, human and animal faeces, solid wastes, domestic wastewater etc. This was a threat and problem to public health. In view of this threat and problem, sanitation measures were taken both in the urban and rural areas. Massive Rural Sanitation Programme (MRSP) was launched in 1985-1986 under which single seater latrines for each family belonging to Below Poverty Line were constructed at the cost of Rs 1200/- including fitting and fixing of pass and water seal. Under Minimum Needs Programme (NWP) and Central Rural Sanitation Programme (CRSP) a total of 7898 rural sanitary latrines were constructed at the total cost of Rs 93.57 lakh by the end of 1992 (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, p. 126).

In the towns, sewerage system was maintained. The work for laying of main trunk from Hospital junction, Gangtok to Adampool and construction of sewerage treatment plant at Adampool was carried out. In most of the congested areas,¹³⁴ work for the construction of main and sub-mains trunk of sewerage was also carried out. As the treatment plants the capacity to cater 1.26 MGD, branch trunk line was laid along the Indra Bye Pass to cater the sewage of Upper Sichey, Development Area and TNHS complex. So far as the sewerage scheme is concerned, government had covered 30,000 heads by 1993 (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 111-114).

¹³³ Domestic wastewater includes sewage, sullage and greywater.

¹³⁴ Like Lall Bazar, New Market, Old Market, Kazi Road, Nam Nang Road, Arithang, Deorali, DPH and Housing Colony and Tadong.

(4) Decentralisation: Decentralization is the process of dispersing decision-making governance closer to the people. It is the transfer of responsibility for the planning, financing and management of public functions from the central government or regional governments and its agencies.¹³⁵ Generally, it aims to give people or their elected representatives more power in public decision-making and there is the flow of decision-making power from bottom-to-top as well as active involvement and empowerment of the grassroots people.

In order to ensure democratic decentralisation in Sikkim, the SSP government firstly aimed at strengthening the people through 'Panchayati Raj Institutions'. In 1982, Sikkim Panchayat Act was enacted and in the same year Sikkim Panchayat Election Rules was framed. Under the proviso of the Act, 1982, two-tier system of Panchayati Raj Institution¹³⁶ was introduced for revitalizing the Panchayati Raj Institutions. On the basis of the Act, 1982, Panchayat Elections were held in 1983 and 1988. After the enactment of 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, Sikkim Panchayat Act, 1982 was re-amended in 1993 (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, 2001, pp. 206-208). Under this Act, two-tier system of Panchayati Raj Institution in Sikkim was further strengthened. But, no reservation of seats for the women and ST and SC was made by the state government to ensure their representation in the Panchayati Raj Institution. The government only nominated women members in the Gram Panchayat during International Year for Women in 1990-1991. In between 1985-1990, reorganization of Gram Panchayat was carried out. Thereby 153 Gram Panchayat units were reduced to 148. Each Gram Panchayat units were given wider area of operation. An annual grant of Rs 10,000/- was allocated to all the Gram Panchayat units to carry out their day to day functions. The Zilla Panchayats were provided developmental funds to carry out the developmental works in the districts and to formulate district plans covering

¹³⁵ Agencies include to local governments, semi-autonomous public authorities or corporations, or area-wide regional or functional authorities.

¹³⁶ Gram Panchayat at the village level and Zilla Panchayat at the district level was introduced.

all the departments. Zilla Bhawans at Geyzing and Mangan were constructed beside 51 Panchayat Ghars (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 115-117).¹³⁷

(5) Political Participation: Political participation is a kind of participation in the process of governance whereby the citizens exercise influence over public policy formulation and decision-making. In other words, political participation means involvement of people in the process of decision-making and policy formulation and implementation either directly or through legitimate intermediate institution that represents the interest of the citizens. It mainly focuses on the empowerment of citizens in the governing process. According to Birch 'political participation is participation in the process of government and the case for political participation is essentially a case for substantial numbers of private citizens to play a part in the process by which political leaders are chosen or government policies are shaped and implemented' (2001, pp.104-118). Therefore, political participation not merely is confined to the opportunity to vote in periodic competitive election but goes beyond the scope of this limitation. The main forms of political participation are: (i) voting in local or national elections, (ii) voting in the referendums like in Switzerland, (iii) canvassing or otherwise campaigning in elections, (iv) active membership of a political party, (v) active membership of a pressure group, (vi) taking part in political demonstrations, industrial strikes with political objective, rent strikes in public housing and similar activities aimed at changing public policy, (vii) various form of civil disobedience, such as refusing to pay taxes or obey a conscription order, (viii) membership of government advisory committees, (ix) membership of consumers' councils for publicly owned industries, (x) client involvement in the implementation of social policies and (xi) various forms of community action, such as those concerned with housing or environmental issues in the locality (Birch, 2001. pp. 104-118).

¹³⁷ Besides, 100 Black and White Television sets and 20 Colour Television sets were distributed to all Gram Panchayat units to view TV programmes and films relating to various developmental schemes.

In the case of Sikkim political participation under the regime of Bhandari led government could apparently be witnessed not only in the form of voting in the local and national elections but also in the form of active involvement of the people in election campaigning, party meetings, enrolment of oneself in the party as a member, contesting in the Panchayat elections through the affiliation of various political parties, demonstrations, procession and rallies shouting slogans for both SSP and opposition parties during the elections and mass rallies.¹³⁸

In the Eighth Lok Sabha election of December 1984, there were eight contestants.¹³⁹ Bhandari was one of the independent candidates. During this, the voter's turnout was recorded at 86094 [57.64%] of 149256 total votes in the state. Bhandari secured 56614 [68.50%] of the total votes casted. His nearest rival, Pahalman Subba of the Indian National Congress secured 21324 [25.81%] of the total votes polled. Similarly in the Lok Sabha election of 1989 altogether 04 candidates had contested the election.¹⁴⁰ In this election, 138698 [72.06%] voters out of 192619 had voted. Amongst, 91608 [68.52%] voted for SSP, 28822 [21.56%] for INC, 12858 [9.62%] for RIS and 411 [0.31%] for the Independent candidates. Likewise, in the Fourth Assembly election of March 1985, there were 195 contestants¹⁴¹ to contest the election.¹⁴² In the voting, 99435 [64.73%] voters had exercised their franchise in 290 polling stations. The SSP secured 60371 [62.20%] votes out of 99435 valid votes polled. Similarly in the Fifth Assembly election of 1989 too, 1 National Party, 2 Regional Parties, 4 unrecognized parties and 20 Independent candidates had contested the election. In the event, total number of 139227 [72.28%] had voted of which INC captured 24121 [18.05%], RIS 11472 [8.59%], SSP 94075 [70.41%], 4 unrecognized political parties 298 [0.22%] and 20

¹³⁸ An eminent journalists, Kazi (1993, p. 161) accused Bhandari of using both muscle and money power during elections to comeback to power.

¹³⁹ Among which 3 were from National parties- INC, CPM and JNP and 5 Independent candidates participated in the election

¹⁴⁰ Out of these 2 were from the regional parties, 1 from National party and 12 Independent candidates.

¹⁴¹ There were 94 independent candidates including 11 women.

¹⁴² In the election, 04 National political parties - CPI, CPI (M), INC and JNP and two state political parties; SPC and SSP participated in the election.

Independent candidates 3650 [2.73%] (Election Commission of India, New Delhi, 1985, pp.1-45 and 1989, pp. 1-45). During the elections, there was no report of any major party clash, booth capturing and break down of law and order in Sikkim. Free and fair election was ensured.

(6) Accountability and Responsibility: In a democratic set up, both accountability and responsibility constitutes the most important part of the good governance. Accountability means holding responsible by the elected politician or appointed civil servant of government whoever is charged with a public mandate to account for specific actions, activities or decisions to the public from whom they derive their authority.¹⁴³

So far as accountability of Bhandari led SSP government is concerned, there were only developmental works in the spheres of agricultural, industrial, services, educational and health sectors. But all these achievements do not indicate the seriousness and accountability of the government towards the fulfilment of aspirations of the people or state. Simply making education free, universal and accessible to all, upgradation of existing schools, setting up more schools and colleges in Sikkim, providing safe drinking water to the people, electrification of rural areas, extension of basic health care and social welfare, establishment of hospitals, Primary Health Centres, Sub-centres, free medical facilities and mid-day-meals for school-going children up to class V and launching various schemes and programmes for old Aged, Disabled, Destitute, minorities and educated unemployed youths alone do not fulfil the criteria of accountability of the government. Accountability in democratic set up also means the protection of rights and interests as well as fulfilment of commitments of the government and inner hopes and aspirations of the people.

¹⁴³ It is often used synonymously with such concepts as responsibility, answerability, liability and other terms associated with the expectation of account-giving in relation to the public administration, governance of state or national affairs and legislative bodies such as State Legislative Assembly and State Legislative Council in the state and Parliament at the Union level in India.

(7) Transparency: Transparency is another element of good governance. Transparency means public knowledge of the policies of government and confidence in its intentions.¹⁴⁴ In common word transparency is an understanding or knowing about what the government does and functions in relation to the public administrative affairs.

So far as transparency of affairs of the public administration is concerned, during two consecutive tenure of SSP led government, there were news dailies, journals and other forms of printed and electronic materials brought out by Information and Public Relation, Government of Sikkim and private institutions that had record and report. Those materials usually highlighted the performance of the government regarding its day to day function and various policies, programmes and schemes launched by it. There were also government circulars and government Gazette Notifications brought out by the Home Department, Government of Sikkim which notified various policies formulated and implemented and decisions taken by the government. Besides, there were other local and national news papers owned by the private individuals and radio, televisions which reflected the policies, programmes and decisions of the government in that particular period of time.

(8) Effectiveness and Efficiency: As an element of good governance, effectiveness and efficiency have more importance and relevance. The two words effectiveness and efficiency denote competence or proficiency in relation to the work culture within the administrative process. In other words both effectiveness and efficiency means the capability or ability to formulate and implement effective policy and take decisions as per the need of hour and demand of the situation with regards to the administrative affairs of the nation or state and achieve the efficient delivery of public services.

¹⁴⁴ It implies that the governed shall have access to all the information and records of public importance. Also there should be a proper forum for discussing the issues wherein public interest is involved.

With regards to the effectiveness and efficiency of the government during the period from 1985-1994, it can be judged from the performance and achievement made by the SSP government during its two consecutive tenures. In each and every sector under which the study is being carried out, we find some achievements and fulfilment of the promises and assurance the party made in its manifestoes (1984 & 1989). Had the government not been effective and efficient, infrastructural development in economic, social, energy, transportation, cultural, sports and recreational, education, agricultural and industrial spheres could not have been achieved.

(9) Rule of Law: Rule of law commonly means the restriction of power by well-defined and established laws of a country. In any country, law is pre-eminent and can serve as checks against the abuse of power under the rule of law. As such, rule of law is considered as one of the key elements for determining the quality and good governance of a country. It is rule of law that ensures peace and order in the society, state and nation by avoiding anarchy.

During the first term of SSP led government (1985-1989), there was no report of communal riots and ethnic conflicts and tension in the state. The government is reported to have maintained peace and harmony. However, after 1990 due to the continual loss of democratic value; Sikkim witnessed strikes, agitations, protests and resentment of the people and growing political tensions. The political situation under Bhandari regime after 1989 Assembly election was accused of being '*worse than during the Chogyal regime*' by L D Kazi (Kazi, 1993, pp. 18-36). It is reported that in Sikkim there was violation of rule of law and loss freedom after 1989. It is alleged that the people lived in constant fear. There was a suppression of democratic aspiration of the people by the ruling party politicians.

(10) Combating Corruption: Corruption generally means abuse of public office or fund for an individual or a private gain while combating corruption is a key

indicator of commitment of government to good governance. Therefore, for promoting the spirit of good governance in the management of the public administrative affairs, anti-corruption policies of the government plays a very important role. Strong and powerful government policy to fight against corruption contributes to an effective, efficient, responsible and transparent public administration and enhances good governance.

So long as combating corruption and anti-corruption policy during SSP led government is concerned, Bhandari himself could not remain clean against corruption. One of the reasons for Bhandari's dismissal on 11th May 1984 was on the corruption charges and possession of disproportionate properties. Soon after the ouster of Bhandari from chief ministership,¹⁴⁵ the cabinet unanimously passed a resolution asking the CBI to investigate against Bhandari. The CBI raided his residence and made detailed inventory of articles recovered in his building, Arithang, Church Road, Gangtok. On 15th June, 1984, he was granted anticipatory bail by the division bench of Calcutta High Court comprising of Justice P C Borooah and Justice Sukumar Chakraborty. Although Bhandari came to the Assembly after the 1985 election with majority, the CBI continued to investigate corruption cases registered against Bhandari in connection with the imported cement, allotment of contract works relating to water supply schemes in rural areas without calling tender for his monetary gains, issue of licenses to cigarette manufacturers to set up dummy factories in Sikkim to dodge tax and the building of a palatial building in Gangtok during his tenure as Chief Minister since 1985.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵ The decision to register criminal cases against Bhandari came in a meeting held in the former Chief Minister, B. B. Gurung's residence at 8.30 P M in May 1984. In the meeting it was alleged that Bhandari had acquired properties disproportionate to his known sources of income in his name and in the name of his second wife, Dil Kumari Bhandari.

¹⁴⁶ He was also accused to have involved in many other corruption cases relating to Health Department, Power Department, Forest Department of Sikkim, gift racket and acquired land at Ranipool, Tadong, Nam Nang, Daragoan, Tadong, building at Arithang Church Road, properties in MG Marg and market areas and flats in Delhi and Gangtok. He is reported to have had shares with the firms and companies such as M/s Pines Printers situated at Arithang, Gangtok, M/s Lila Tea Company Private Limited, M/s Aaj Ko Sikkim, M/s Saya Patri Private Limited, M/s Sikkim Film Company Pvt. Limited, M/s Trinetra International Pvt. Limited etc (Bhutia, 1999, pp. 1-45).

Even today one can find Bhandari attending the High Court of Sikkim and sometimes being imprisoned for his corruption charges.

(11) Freedom of Press: The press is a watching-dog of democracy and good governance. Therefore, the role of press in a country is vital and wields tremendous power in safeguarding the fundamental rights of the people and building public opinion. But until freedom of press is assured, the freedom of speech and expression remains silent. So, if freedom of press is maintained then public opinion grows stronger and fundamental rights receive significance. But this is possible only in the atmosphere where government can assure democracy and good governance in the state.

During SSP led government, the freedom of press and media was reported to have been curtailed. It is alleged that the press and media had to face threat of life and property. They were asked to behave properly otherwise have to face consequences. There was assault, threats, constant pressure, ransack, arrest and use of commandos over the press and media.¹⁴⁷ The people had lost the sense of freedom of expression and had to live in constant fear. The press which did not function according to the government directives was called as '*anti-sangrami press*'. While the press which worked in favour of the government was '*sangrami press*'. Bhandari dubbed '*anti-Sangrami press*' as '*anti-people elements*' or '*anti-government elements*'. The government authorities through various agencies and individuals kept a watchful eye on anyone who was associated with the press and media. To cite some example; The Editor of '*Janpath Samachar*' Rajendra Baid was kidnapped by the Sikkim police in Siliguri on 6th November, 1991 and brought to Gangtok and detained at the Sardar Thana police station and was tortured to no end unless hospitalized at STNM hospital and referred to AIIMS hospital, Delhi on the ground that the pamphlet was printed in the press owned by him.¹⁴⁸ On 26th

¹⁴⁷ Subba (1999, p. 90) reports that circulating of any paper which was against Bhandari government was equal to inviting death.

¹⁴⁸ Actually the pamphlet was published nowhere but at the very press owned by Dil Kumari Bhandari, wife of Bhandari (Subba, 1999, pp.94-95).

June, 1993 (7.30 am) the press owned by Bhim Chettri was ransacked with rods and hammer (Subba, 1999, pp. 105-109).

III

DEMOCRACY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE UNDER SSP REGIME

The term '*democracy*' is the most popular concept and honorific word used to denote the form of '*government*' in the present political context. The term '*democracy*' is derived from two classical Greek words '*demo*' (people) and '*kratia*' (ruling) meaning 'the government in which the ruling power resides in the hands of the people'. In such a system of government, the people are the supreme and sovereign. They make decisions, amend and execute laws, formulate and implement policies and control the government either directly like in Switzerland or indirectly through their elected representatives like in other countries where representative democracy prevails. Hence, in a democracy, the citizens have an equal say in the decision and law making policy formulation and implementation.

Commonly, it is believed that the term '*democracy*' had its genesis in the '*polis*' the city-state of ancient Greece and there from democratic ideals had have been handed down to us from that time. In ancient Greece, democracy involved periodic meetings held by citizenry to discuss the problems of the '*polis*' and decide on a solution by voting directly on alternatives. So, it was a sort of political way of life of the Greek people in the '*polis*'. However, the Greeks only coined the word '*democracy*' for granting the right of direct political participation in decision-making in the small city-state of Greece but did not provide what exactly should be the model of democracy like it exists today in the modern world. As such, ever since its inception, the term '*democracy*' has changed its meaning from '*way of political life*' to '*a form of government*' down the ages of the history with the change of time and circumstances.

To Gettle, 'democracy is that form of government in which the mass of the population possesses the right to share in the exercise of sovereign power' (Dhal, 2002, pp. 1-9). In such kind of government, the people have the voice and weight which is articulated through the accredited and elected representative of the people sitting in the assembly or Parliament. In the word of Abraham Lincoln democracy is 'the government by the people, for the people and of the people'. Sorensen (1991, p. 18) defines democracy as 'a way of organizing government and people's participation in it'.¹⁴⁹ Gupta, (2008, pp. 1-48) conceives that the state is called 'democratic' if its government is accountable to the people through competitive election to the public office, where all the adults have an equal right to vote and to stand for election and where civil and political rights are guaranteed.

On the basis of the discussion we arrive at the conclusion that present democracy is representative democracy where people elect their representatives through whom decisions are made and taken, laws are amended and executed and policies are formulated and implemented for the people. So, such kind of democracy is characterized by the following features: (i) the rulers are elected by the people (ii) formation of the government is based on a free and fair election where those currently in power have a fair chance of losing (iii) each adult citizens have one vote and each vote has one value (iv) the government rules within the limitation set by the constitutional law and rights of the citizens and (v) the people will be encouraged to have a freedom of speech and expression. However, in such context, it does not mean that the interests and rights of minorities are not protected and valued. The majority of votes are valued and the opinion of the minority will highly be valued and protected as well.

In Sikkim, democracy, as we know evolved through the interaction of several factors such as the revolt against the tyranny of the monarch, desire for

¹⁴⁹ To Sorensen, the democratic way of organizing government and participation involves competition for the major position of the government power, participation in the selection of leaders and it involves a number of civil and political liberties.

sharing power, the need to delegate authority and facilitate administration through representation, abolition of landlordism, desire for security of life and property inherent in a society, fundamental rights, one-man-one-vote based on Universal Adult Franchise, establishment of independent judiciary and responsible government and desire for satisfying and fulfilment of urges for human dignity and well-being.

During the SSP regime, democracy remained under threat and suppression. After 1985 Assembly election, Bhandari became an undisputed leader. He grew more powerful, authoritative and tyrant. There was an absence of strong opposition political parties in Sikkim. In the Assembly, there were only two non-sangrami MLAs; one belonging to Indian National Congress Party and other Independent. Such political situation led to the continual erosion of democracy in the state. Opposition parties and social organizations were not allowed to function independently in ventilating the interests and rights of the people. They either had to join or face serious consequences. It is alleged '*the rule of Bhandari after 1985 was of bad type*'. He was accused of being more arrogant and corrupted. There was a loss of democratic value even within the cabinet and party functioning. The elected representatives had to remain faithful and loyal '*yes man*' of Bhandari for their existence.

The political situation of Sikkim under the 1st SSP led Bhandari regime, after 1985 Assembly election was accused of being of bad type while the 11nd regime, after 1989 Assembly election was '*worse than during the Chogyal regime*'. It was said that the people had lost the sense of freedom and they were living in constant fear. There was a suppression of democratic aspiration of the people by a handful of politicians, bureaucrats and businessmen (Kazi, 1993, pp. 18-36). Freedom of speech and expression were curtailed. There was rampant corruption

and victimization of the opposition.¹⁵⁰ The press which did not function according to the government directives was called as 'anti-sangrami press'. The press which supported the government was 'sangrami press'. Bhandari dubbed 'anti-Sangrami press' as 'anti-people elements' or 'anti-government elements'. The government authorities through various agencies and individual kept a watchful eye on anyone who was associated with the press and media. The press and media had to face threat of life and property. They were asked to behave properly otherwise will have to face consequences.¹⁵¹ There was assaults, threats, constant pressure and ransack over the press and media. Circulating political paper in Bhandari's regime was equal to inviting death (Subba, 1999, p. 90). The administration, bureaucracy and the police force were used to torture the public to no end. Bhandari wanted to control all the people by coercion and physical torture. He tried to establish hegemony of one reign, one leader, one party and one language in Sikkim. Bhutia (1999) accused Bhandari of being a tyrant, seditionist, intolerant, dictator and corrupted leader.

Since the 1990s, Sikkim witnessed the loss of democratic values and suppression of democratic aspirations. Several prominent leaders of the opposition parties¹⁵² were arrested in connection with the publication of scandalous pamphlet entitled 'Barrel Saaf'. In the pamphlet it was alleged that Bhandari was suffering from AIDS.¹⁵³ On 21st October 1991, K C Pradhan (former Minister), Dawa Gyalpo Kazi, Aitasing Tamang and Chhakanlal Sardar were arrested and put in prison charging them of reading the pamphlet. On 24th October 1991, Duknath Nepal, State Secretary CPI (M) was arrested and detained in the Sardar Thana by the police. On 25th October 1991, Hem Lall Bhandari on false

¹⁵⁰For instance, government employed staff who supported the opposition parties either were transferred to the remote areas or called for explanation. Similarly, the people who supported opposition parties were deprived of social benefits such as housing etc.

¹⁵¹For instance, on 26th June, 1993 (7.30 am) the press owned by Bhim Chettri was ransacked with rods and hammer.

¹⁵² The leaders were Duknath Nepal, State Secretary of CPI (M), Hem Lall Bhandari, Lawyer and Convener, Citizens for Democracy, James Basnet, Joint Secretary, SPCC (I) and Major Tashi Wangdi Fonpo, General Secretary of Denjong Peoples' Chogpa.

¹⁵³ AIDS stands for Acute Integrity Deficiency Syndrome.

charges of anti-national activity was handcuffed, paraded along the Gangtok town barefoot and preceded to the court. Thereafter Tashi Wangdi Fenpo was arrested and detained in the Sardar Thana.¹⁵⁴ Those detained in the Sardar Thana were physically tortured and harassed by the police (Kazi, 1993, pp. 1-7 & Subba, 1999, pp. 90-91). The Editor of '*Janpath Samachar*', Rajendra Baid was kidnapped by the Sikkim police in Siliguri on 6th November, 1991 and brought to Gangtok and detained at the Sardar Thana police station and was tortured to no end until hospitalized at STNM hospital and referred to AIIMS hospital, Delhi. He was arrested on the ground that the pamphlet was printed in the press owned by him.¹⁵⁵ On 13th December, 1991 Shiv Sankar Dhakal,¹⁵⁶ was kidnapped from his residence at 2.30 pm by a gang of boys and plastered his mouth with both his hands tied together. His clothes were stripped in the Gypsy car (SK-02/2332) in which he was picked up and pushed out of the car in the middle of the market in Gangtok, naked (Subba, 1999, pp. 96-100).

It is alleged that Bhandari targeted everyone who dared to oppose his autocratic regime, arrested and tortured by the police under his personal instruction and supervision. On 24th June 1993 at 6 pm, Biraj Adhikari¹⁵⁷ was arrested by the Sardar police without any warrant and detained in the Thana on the ground that he violated the basic human rights and disturbed the constitutional rights of the people. In the locked up room at 1.20 pm tied down by the bed with his heels facing the ceiling and was thrashed in his heels with a rod with a L-shaped nail fitted at the end of the cane.¹⁵⁸ He was tortured so much so that he was admitted in AIIMS hospital, Delhi. Bhandari alleged that the people

¹⁵⁴ While Fenpo was in prison, his house was raided and a licensed pistol and *pattang* were seized. His father was arrested for possessing explosive materials in his house (Subba, 1999, p. 91).

¹⁵⁵ Actually the pamphlet was published nowhere but at the very press owned by Dil Kumari Bhandari, wife of Bhandari (Subba, 1999, pp. 94-95).

¹⁵⁶ Dhakal once upon a time was a close friend of Bhandari and got separated over petty differences and joined the CPI (M).

¹⁵⁷ Biraj Adhikari had joined the newly formed SDF as a General Secretary at the time when he was arrested.

¹⁵⁸ Mr Adhikari was also threatened to quit SDF party otherwise he would face the consequences (Subba, 1999, pp. 110-115).

supporting SDF are anti-nationals. Even Bhandari is accused of having hand in Dharmadatta Sharma's murder of 2nd February 1988.¹⁵⁹

Subba (1999, pp. 17-19) accuses Bhandari of misusing his office position to throttle the voice of the people and Independence of the Judiciary. On the strength of muscle power, money power, deceit and intrigue, the judiciary was rendered impotent, used government machinery to his own advantage and threw the state economy in a state of disarray and confusion. He strangled democracy to trample anti-sangramis. He is also accused of forcefully propagating one region, one party, one leader and one language hegemony in Sikkim to brutally suppress the existence of other opposition parties. He wanted to control all the people by coercion and physical torture. This is how the spirit of democracy was hijacked and suppressed when one-man-rule and one-man-reign under Bhandari regime.

Throughout his regime, Bhandari is noted to have suppressed democratic aspiration and inner-voices of the people of Sikkim. The Bhutia-Lepchas of Sikkim had been demanding for the (i) Restoration of 16 seats in the Assembly for the Bhutia-Lepcha communities of Sikkim, (ii) Delimitation of Assembly constituencies for the genuine tribal representatives in the House, (iii) Grant of Citizenship to the 'stateless person' based on the Sikkim Subject Resolution Act of 1961, and (iv) Extension of Inner-Line-Permit system to check influx of outsiders since 1976. The same demand was reiterated by the Bhutia-Lepchas even during SSP led government regime but was never fulfilled. The Limboos had also been demanding for their inclusion in the list of Schedule Tribe and restoration of their 'Tsong Seat' in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly since 1976, but Bhandari ignored their demand. The demand for the inclusion of communities such as Limboo, Manger, Rai, Tamang, Gurung and Bhujel in the list of Other Backward Class (OBC)

¹⁵⁹ Dharmadatta Sharma was a popular Panchayat President of Timburbung Unit, Soreng Constituency to which Bhandari belonged. He was the General Secretary of Sikkim Congress Youth Branch as well as Publicity Secretary of Sikkim Pradesh Congress at that time (Subba, 1999, pp. 24-73).

was another issue but that too was rejected by Bhandari on the ground that such recommendation among the ethnic communities in Sikkim was 'discriminatory'. Such act of government clearly proves that there was suppression of democratic values and aspirations of the people under the Bhandari regime.

Now we come to the question of social justice. Social justice generally refers to the idea of creating a society which is based on the principle of right, security, equality and justice with the aim to ensure human value, dignity, empowerment and development of personality as well as individuality. The principle of social justice also involves a degree of economic egalitarianism through progressive taxation and income distribution. It aims to achieve more equality of opportunity for the development and progress of an individual in the civil society. But social justice exists where democracy is valued, nurtured and safeguarded by the constitutional provisions and law of the land. Thus, social justice is concerned much with the promotion and development of human personality and dignity through the protection of right, liberty, equality and justice.

In the context of Sikkim, socio-economic and educational development, general welfare and upliftment of Schedule Tribes, Schedule Castes, Other Backward Communities, women and children, old persons with no family support, destitutes, orphans, children of conflict with law, disabilities¹⁶⁰ and children of conflict with law¹⁶¹ come under the purview of social justice.

The SSP led government during its regime, recorded to have ensured social justice. The various schemes like Old Age Pension scheme, Subsistence Allowance to Disabled, Award of Scholarship to Disabled, Sheltered Workshop for Disabled, Supply of Aids and Appliances to the Disabled, Integrated Education for Disabled, Grant-in-aid to other Destitute Homes, Day Care Centres and Recreation

¹⁶⁰ It includes loco-motor, visual, hearing, speech and mental, disabilities.

¹⁶¹ It includes juvenile delinquents/ vagrants, drugs addicts, alcoholics, sex workers, beggars.

The Destitute Homes of Chakung, Kaluk, Gangtok, Pelling and Mangan was provided Grant-in-Aid. On 50:50 share capital bases by centre and state government, more destitute homes for the orphans were constructed. Grants were extended to the Douglas Memorial Children Home at Namchi and Wangdi Children's Home, Mangan.¹⁶⁵ Day Care Centres and Recreation Centres for nursing and caring of infants of working mothers was established at White Hall, Gangtok and Blind School in Namchi was constructed for the blind children. More than 115 Creches for the children of working mothers were also established (Sikkim Herald, 20th January 1988, Vol-33, No-5).

The government, in 1991, established Hostels for the Working Women at Namchi and Gangtok, at an estimated cost of Rs 18.32 lakh. Grants were also extended to the womens' organizations like, Sikkim Women's Council, Samiti and other Organizations of Sikkim for conducting training in different vocations. Training in cutting, tailoring, knitting, embroidery, weaving, pickle making, chips and wafer making etc was imparted to the women. Grant was also released to the Sikkim Branch of association for the Blind, Dharma Chakra Centre, Rumtek and Sikkim Branch of Indian Red Cross Society (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 137-142).

Social Defence Programme (SDP) was another legal sanction initiated by the government for the care, welfare, protection, education, training and rehabilitation of neglected and delinquent juveniles. According to Supreme Court of India's direction and Act 1986 '*no child under any circumstance shall be put in police lock up jail*'. So to enhance the Act 1986, the Institutions like, Observation Home at Rongyek for temporary reception of juveniles, Juvenile Home and Special Home for the care, protection, education, training of neglected delinquent, competent Authorities like Juvenile Welfare Board, Juvenile Court were established (Sikkim Express, 16th -22nd August, 1991).

¹⁶⁵ From 1991-1992, the number of Destitute Homes increased to 05 against 02 of 1979-1980.

For the school going children of Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribe communities, only pre-matric and post-matric scholarship was awarded. No other benefits were launched by the government.¹⁶⁶ Under Housing Assistance and Economic Grant Scheme, 345 and 88 ST and 33 and 97 SC families were benefited respectively. More than 4132 ST and 592 SC families were provided GCI sheets for house roofing till the end of 1992 (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 128-130).¹⁶⁷ For the upliftment of poor ST and SC families, piglets, bullocks, milch cows were distributed and under Tools and Implements Scheme, sewing machine and black smithy tools were provided to the Schedule Castes (Sikkim Observer, 14-20th Feb, 1987, Vol-1, No-22). From 1985-1992, about 738 SC and 776 ST families were covered under this scheme.¹⁶⁸ The government constructed just Girls Hostels at Khamdong and Rhenock for the students belonging to Schedule Caste and at Chungthang, Hee Gaythang, Ravangla, Tingbong and Phodong for the students of Schedule Tribe. However, the SSP government felt only the need of the children of ST and SC but never realised the need of children of other communities who were in dire need of help from the state government. The government neither constructed separate hostels nor launched any sort of schemes for the students of other backward communities.

Despite of all the above accomplishments made in Sikkim, Bhandari also had certain loopholes in assuring social justice. He was aware that the Sikkimese Limboos deserved their inclusion in the list of Schedule Tribe but he denied them. He also failed to include Bhutia, Lepcha and Limboo languages in the 8th Schedule of the Indian Constitution along with the Nepali language despite there being continuous request from the three communities. The communities such as Limboo, Manger, Rai, Tamang, Gurung and Bhujel had been demanding for their

¹⁶⁶ In between 1985-1992, just 3511 and 2735 children belonging to Schedule Tribes and Scheduled Castes were said to have been benefited with the scholarship scheme respectively.

¹⁶⁷ Besides, financial housing assistance along with pecuniary assistance (SCA), was provided (Sikkim Herald, 28th May 1985, Vol-28, No-48) to the STs and SCs.

¹⁶⁸ Iron Workshop-Cum-Training Centre at Nagi was also established to undergo skill development training for SC young youths. Training programme on knitting, tailoring, carpet weaving, cane and bamboo work and blacksmith under TRYSEN, NREP, and RLEGP was also imparted to the STs and SCs (Sikkim Herald, 28th May 1985, Vol-28, No-48).

inclusion in the list of OBCs but when the questions of implementing the recommendations of the Mandal Commission came to Sikkim, he rejected on the ground that such recommendation among the ethnic communities in Sikkim was 'discriminatory'. Hence, so long as Bhandari ruled Sikkim, he did not feel the inner hopes and aspirations of the socially deprived communities which indicate that there was a denial of social justice.

Conclusion

Thus what we note is that in Sikkim, democratic values and social justice was trampled under the SSP led Bhandari rule. Opposition parties and social organizations were not allowed to function independently in ventilating the interests and rights of the people. He was arrogant, tyrant and corrupt. There was a complete loss of democratic spirit even within the cabinet and party functioning. The elected representatives had to remain faithful and loyal 'yes man' of Bhandari for their existence.

In the II Bhandari regime he was more autocratic, tyrant, seditionist, intolerant, dictator and corrupt. The political situation of Sikkim under Bhandari regime after 1989 Assembly election was accused of being 'worse than during the Chogyal regime'. The people had lost the sense of freedom and they were living in constant fear. There was a suppression of democratic aspiration and curtailment of freedom of speech and expression. There was rampant corruption and victimization of oppositions. The press and the media had to face threat of life and property. There was assault, threats, constant pressure and ransack over the press and media, arrest and use of commandos over the opposition political parties. The administration, bureaucracy and the police force were used to torture the public to no end. Bhandari controlled people by coercion and physical torture. There was hegemony of one reign, one leader, one party and one language in Sikkim. Bhandari strangled democracy to trample anti-sangramis.

During his two consecutive terms, Bhandari not only suppressed democratic institutions but also failed to ensure social justice. He failed to fulfil the aspirations and inner hopes of the people of Sikkim and failed to protect the rights and interests of linguistic and religious minorities. Bhandari during his regime failed to fulfil most of the issues he raised. His government was dismissed on the charges of corruption and charges that Bhandari possessed disproportionate properties. He is accused of selling of reserved seats for the Sikkimese students to the non-locals, allotment and distribution of sites and trade licence to non-locals, discrimination regarding the grant of scholarships to the students, refusal to allot work for the local contractors on tender basis, favouritism, red-tapism and nepotism concerning jobs in the government service and back-door leverage for non-locals to share in the state's administrative and economic development plans. These are some of the activities which contradicted the principle of social justice. He also had double standard politics; projecting himself as a Congressman at the Centre and attacking the Congress unit in the State.

Chapter V

THE AGRICULTURAL, EDUCATIONAL, INDUSTRIAL AND SERVICE SECTORS IN SIKKIM UNDER THE SSP REGIME

In Sikkim, Agriculture, Education, Industry and Service sectors are the most important sectors which form the backbone of the society and economy. However, Sikkim being a landlocked state, situated on a difficult terrain with sloppy and steep hills, it is not too conducive for industrial development. It is predominantly an agricultural economy where about 49.48% of the total area of land is under cultivation and 80% of the total population depend on agriculture and allied activities. Transport and communication is also entirely determined by its topographical location and as such it fully relies on road transportation. Similarly, education which is an instrument of significant socio-economic transformation has a direct bearing on the quality of life, life expectancy, infant mortality, population and many other aspects of people's life. In the state like Sikkim, which became a part of the Indian Union 37 years ago, organised modern education has not yet taken its deep root and proper shape. Therefore, in this chapter of the thesis, divided into four sections we discuss in length the policy and performance of the SSP led government in the Agricultural, Educational, Industrial and Service sectors.

Section I deals mainly with the agriculture sector in Sikkim, agrarian structure and land ownership, productivity, agricultural policies of the SSP led government and its achievement in this front. Section II, discusses the educational sector, historical overview of education in Sikkim in the pre and post merger period, various policies adopted by the SSP led government and achievements in this sector from 1985 to 1994. Section III attempts to discuss the industrial sector in Sikkim, its scenario in the pre and post merger period, various policies formulated and implemented by the SSP government for industrialisation in

Sikkim and the achievement of the government in this sector. In Section IV, attempt is made to study and look at the service sector, its condition during the Chogyal era in Sikkim, development and improvement after Sikkim's merger with the Indian Union especially during the SSP led government in Sikkim.

I

THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR UNDER SSP LED GOVERNMENT

Sikkim is predominantly an agricultural state in the eastern Himalayas. About 80% of the total population are dependent on agriculture and its allied activities and 49.48% of the total area of Sikkim is under cultivation. Hence, in Sikkim agriculture forms the backbone of the state's economy and livelihood.

AGRARIAN STRUCTURE AND LAND OWNERSHIP

Prior to the nineties of the nineteenth century the mode of agriculture in Sikkim was unsettled with the practices of zoom and shifting cultivation. Most of the area had low density in population and abundant in bio-diversity of plants and animals. The people during that period lived mostly on hunting and food gathering. The cultivators did not possess any title to the land. They could clear and settle down in any unoccupied land and cultivate it without going through any formality.¹⁶⁹ The cultivators had tenancy right over the settled land and could adopt system of farming and introduce agricultural development. The land was not assessed by the state but the cultivator himself used to assess and render service to the Chogyal according to the condition determined by the latter. There was no revenue system as such. The Chogyal who was considered to be the lord of Sikkim used to receive revenue from the cultivators himself in the form of agricultural products and transit duties. While paying the revenue in the form of agricultural products, the cultivators kept certain portion for themselves for a particular year. Apart

¹⁶⁹No one except the Chogyal could remove him or her from that particular land occupied by him/her.

from this, the cultivators had to give all kinds of service to the Chogyal whenever demanded. For those who graze cattle in Sikkim, had to pay revenue in kind i.e, in butter and cheese to the value of Rs 6/- annually (Kharel, 2002, p. 161).

The head of the state was Chogyal who was the source of law of the state. Under him, there were twelve Kazis and several other officers of various names who assisted the Chogyal in day to day administrative affairs. Those Kazis and officers were empowered with the jurisdiction over the specific areas of land and were assigned to collect revenues from the people settled in the land within their jurisdiction. Sometimes, they kept greater portion of revenues collected from the people themselves and paid over to the Chogyal a certain fixed contribution.¹⁷⁰

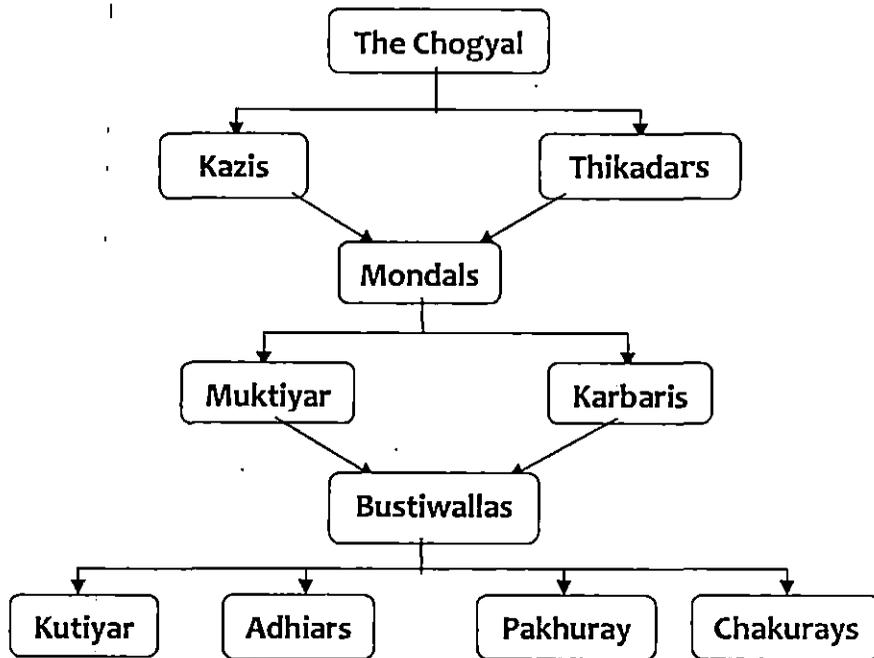
Settled agriculture with terrace cultivation commenced in the 1890s.¹⁷¹ Elsewhere it is stated that during Claude's stay in Sikkim for nearly 20 years he brought a number of socio-economic and political reformations. Since the economic condition of Sikkim under successive Chogyals was very deplorable, therefore, he adopted certain economic measures and policies. That also released the need for the state funds for development. For this, he created a new form of feudal system and introduced taxation in Sikkim. The Chogyal remained as a supervisory authority. The newly created feudalistic class consisted of the Kazis and Thikadars followed by Mondals, Muktiyars and Karbaris in the linear order. At the bottom of the hierarchical structure of feudalism were Raiyats consisting of Kutiyars, Adhiars, Pakhurays and chakurays.¹⁷² The organogram presented below indicates the hierarchical position of feudalistic structure that existed during Chogyal's time in Sikkim.

¹⁷⁰ The main crops sown during this time as Subba, J.R. (2008, p. 62) records were; murolimakai, pangdur, ellaichi, ghaiygadhan, aduwa, kankra, kalobhatmas, iskus, sillam, buckwheat, dallekhorsani, kerala, soanp, dungdungeysag, latterag, rayosag, suntata etc.

¹⁷¹ After the appointment of John White Claude as a British Political Officer to Sikkim.

¹⁷² Chakurays were tenants and sub-tenants.

Organo-gram showing hierarchical position of feudalism in Sikkim



Source: Field Survey.

The Kazis and Thikadars were entrusted with both judicial and executive powers in the rural areas to realize different kinds of taxes and to frame the rules for taxation (Kharel, 2002, p. 161). The Mondals were to collect the revenues and consign it to the respective Kazis and Thikadars. The Muktiyars and Karbaris were supposed to assist the Mondals in any kind of work as entrusted to them by the Kazis. The whole state was divided into Elakhas and Elakhas were further divided into Blocks. Each Elakhas were placed under Kazis or Thikadars and similarly the blocks were under the Mondals and some areas under Muktiyars and Karbaris.

The land holding pattern in Sikkim during the Chogyal regime was skewed. The Kazis or Thikadars alone held land upto 200 acres and Mondals, Muktiyars and Karbaris upto 30 acres and Bustiwallas from 5 to 20 acres of land (Sankrityayana, 1994, p. 212). The Raiyats which includes Kutiyars, Adhiars, Pakhurays and chakurays were most unfortunates class of Sikkim's feudalism. They were tenants and sub-tenants.

Until the 1980s, the average size of land holding in Sikkim was only 1.95 hectares and the distribution of land holding among different size classes was highly uneven. The small and marginal farmers who together constitute 67.86% of total holdings possessed 28.44% of total land area. The semi-medium groups, holding between 2 to 4 hectares and medium groups 4 and 10 hectares constituting 19.64% and 10.71% of the total land holding respectively and jointly owned 58.71% of the total area. The big farmers having more than 10 hectares of land and above formed less than 2% but they cultivate about 13% of the total land area with an average size of 14 hectares (Das, 1994, p. 137).

After Sikkim merged with the Indian Union in 1975, the state Government has taken up survey and Settlement of the agricultural land in order to initiate a meaningful programme of land reform. The implementation of this scheme commenced in the later part of 1976-1977. In the next year, 1977-1978, 15000 hectares of land, out of an estimated 162000 hectares to be surveyed was covered. In 1977-1978 and 1979 the survey targeted 31000 hectares of land and meanwhile the number of teams also increased from 75 to 100 (Ray, 1980, pp. 8-15).

BUDGET ALLOCATION FOR THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR (1954-1997)

In Sikkim, since the overwhelming majority of the people are dependent on agriculture a considerable amount of land i.e, about 62% have been devoted under the cultivation of food grains and the remaining 38% of the area is under the non-food grain crops.

The report published by the Publicity Department, Sikkim Darbar (1963, p. 5) records that the principal crops sown were maize, paddy, millet, wheat, barley, cardamom, apple, orange, potato and buckwheat.¹⁷³ The cereals shared maximum

¹⁷³ The maize (1,35,000) acres, paddy (30,000) acres, millet (12,500) acres, wheat and barley (11,000) acres, cardamom (15,000) acres, apple (2,000) acres, orange (5,000) acres, potato (40,000) acres, and buckwheat (200) acres.

area of land in Sikkim among the principal crops sown followed by cash crops like spices, fruits etc.¹⁷⁴

The Budget Planning System in Sikkim was launched for the first time in (1954) with the financial and technical assistance of the Indian Government.¹⁷⁵ During this time, the total outlay of budget was 32.4 million out of which 21.5% was allocation for Agriculture (Sikkim Darbar, 1963, p. 10). Since then Five Year Plans in Sikkim continued. In the Second Five Year Plan (1961-1966), the budget allocation for the agricultural sector was 20.0% of 82.7 million total Budget, in the Third Five Year Plan (1966-1971), 15 % of 97.1 million, in the Fourth Five Year Plan (1971-1975), 14.2% of 203.6 million total budget, in the Fifth Five Year Plan (1975-1979), 15.9% of 401.00 million, in the Sixth Five Year Plan (1979-1985), 26.0% of 1478.0 million, in the Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-1990), 21.1% of 2824 million and in the Eighth Five Year Plan (1990-1997), budget allocation for the agricultural sector was 13.6% of 7245.00 million total Budget Sikkim respectively.

Table-C: 1
Allocation of Budget under Five Year Plan for Agriculture
and allied activities, 1954-1997.

Plans	Year	In %	Out of
First Plan	1954-1961	21.5%	32.4 million
Second Plan	1961-1966	20.0%	82.7 million
Third Plan	1966-1971	15.0%	97.1 million
Fourth Plan	1971-1975	14.2%	203.6 million
Fifth Plan	1975-1979	15.9%	401.0 million
Sixth Plan	1979-1985	26.0%	1478.0 million
Seventh Plan	1985-1990	21.1%	2824.0 million
Eight Plan	1990-1997	13.6%	7245.0 million

Source: Sikkim Darbar, 1963, p. 10 & Lama, (ed) Sikkim Human Development Report, Govt. of Sikkim, 2001, p. 18.

¹⁷⁴ But during this time, mono-cropping being the traditional farming, the productivity was very low and state had to depend upon imported food-grains. Maximum areas of land remained fallow with no irrigation facilities.

¹⁷⁵ This Plan was named as First Seven Year Plan and was initiated in 1954.

After Sikkim became a part of the Indian Union in 1975, the government adopted the Regional concept of agricultural development and divided the state into 9 regions and sub-regions, each having seed multiplication farms for seed multiplication and distribution to the farmers (Roy, 1980, pp. 8-14). Improved and hybrid seeds at large scale was introduced for cultivation. Use of fertilizers and pesticides was at maximum during this period. Multiple cropping and rotation cropping were encouraged. More than 900 hectares of land was brought under minor irrigation and 2800 hectares were under medium irrigation (Singh, & Singh, 1978, p. 16 and Roy, 1980, p. 12).

AGRICULTURE: POLICIES AND PERFORMANCE OF THE SSP GOVERNMENT

Given the agricultural condition and structure of terrain, the total area of the state available for the cultivation is less. The per capita availability of cultivable land is further lessened due to the pressure of the over increasing population. Such situation calls for scientific land management practices of adopting high yielding crop varieties combined with the application of the right inputs and cultivation practices so that the net productivity of land is considerably enhanced. Effective utilization of irrigation potential, measures for the control of soil erosion as well as correction of adverse soil characteristics and overall improvement in farm management practices including post-harvest technologies are the areas, which have to be well coordinated. The area of dry land farming will also have to be accorded adequate attention.

Realising all these problems and issues pertaining to agriculture and allied areas, SSP made a number of promises and assurances in this front. Since the majority of the poor and downtrodden people of the society were basically dependent on agriculture therefore, pro-poor and pro-agriculturalist policies formulated and commitments made by the party were in the interest of the majority. The main policies; to maximize productivity through scientific land

management, application and practices of High Yielding and Improved Varieties of Seed, utilization of irrigation potential, control of soil erosion, use of fertilizers and pesticides, farmers training and education, establishment of Regional Agriculture Centres, Sub-Centres, Village Level Work Centres for the distribution of fertilizers, pesticides, HYIVS seeds and grant of loans to the poor farmers were some of the promises of the SSP (Sikkim Herald, 19th January 1985, Vol-29, No-5). It also promised to give equal emphasis to the areas including production of commercial crops such as cardamom, turmeric, ginger as well as horticulture crops of exotic, non-traditional varieties including floriculture. Vigorous consumption of chemical fertilizers like urea and potash and adaptation and promotion of modern technologies involving upgradation of farms management practices were some of the other assurances that SSP had made.

After the Sikkim Assembly election of March 1985, SSP came to power with thumping majority in the Assembly. Therefrom, in 1985, SSP led government passed an Act so called '*Cultivators Protection Act*' for the protection of agricultural farmers as well as for the improvement and promotion of agricultural productions. The government also allocated the Budget outlay of 21.1% out of 2824 million in the Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-1990) and 13.6 % of Rs 7245.00 million in Eight Five Year Pan (1990-1997) for agriculture and allied sectors.

The importance and need for High Yielding and Improved Varieties Programme was highly felt to increase agricultural productivity. Therefore, the target for the popularisation of High Yielding and Improved Varieties of Seeds was made and scientific method of cultivation was encouraged by the government. During 1985-1986 the government brought 38100 hectares of land with 8600 HYIVS under maize, 15900 hectares of land with HYIVS 3400 under paddy and 7200 hectares of land with 6800 HYIVS under wheat. Similarly, in 1990-1991, the government brought 40780 hectares of land with 14000 HYIVS under maize,

18610 hectares of land with 5400 HYIVS under paddy and 7950 hectares of land with 7500 HYIVS under wheat as shown in Table-C: 2.

Table-C: 2
Coverage of HYIVS in the state of Sikkim: 1985-86 to 1995-96.

Year	Crop	Area Coverage in (hec)	Difference of land coverage	HYIVS	Difference of HYIVS coverage	Coverage In %
1985-1986	Rice	15,900	---	3,400	---	21.38%
	Wheat	7,200	---	6,800	---	94.44%
	Maize	38,100	---	8,600	---	22.57%
1990-1991	Rice	18,610	2710	5,400	2000	29.01%
	Wheat	7,950	750	7,500	700	94.33%
	Maize	40,780	2680	14,000	5400	34.33%
1995-1996	Rice	15,940	-2670	6,778	1370	45.52%
	Wheat	8,240	390	8,200	700	42.43%
	Maize	39,400	-1380	16,720	2720	42.43%

Source: Lama, (ed) Sikkim Human Development Report, 2001, p. 47.

The target of coverage under Improved Varieties of pulses, oilseeds, vegetables, potato, millet and barley was also enhanced significantly to achieve higher production during 1985-1986. The seeds of suitable crops to be multiplied in the government farms as well as in the farm fields under the Certified Seed Programme was finalised and initiated during 1985-1986. In order to increase production from the kharif crops, the Agriculture Department distributed 320 quintals of maize, 105 quintals of blackgram and 14 quintals of summer vegetables during the month of March alone (Sikkim Herald, 14th March 1985).¹⁷⁶

The routine work for seed testing, soil testing and pathological tests was carried out at the laboratory level. Programme of planting material propagation, adaptive research, farmers' training, vegetables marketing, demonstration, dry

¹⁷⁶ The government also made a target to cover 1800 hectares of land under potato vegetable in the high altitude areas.

farming, rejuvenation, soil reclamation and assistance to small and marginal farmer were implemented at the field level.

During the SSP led Government rule in Sikkim, the Plan expenditure on Agriculture rose from Rs 2190 in 1980-1981 to Rs 24300 in 1985-1986 i.e, by 5.87%. In 1990-1991, it increased up to Rs 25825 against Rs 24300 of 1985-1986 i.e, by 3.39%. Even Non-Plan expenditure has shown a steep rise.¹⁷⁷ As Budget Expenditure in both Plan and Non-Plan in 1980-1981 were Rs 2190 and Rs 3247 respectively as indicated in Table-C: 3.

Table-C: 3
Budget expenditure on agriculture from 1980-1981 to 1995-1996
(in thousand).

Year		1980-81	1985-86	1990-91	1995-96
State Budget	Plan	2190	24300	25825	25440
	Non-Plan	3247	8047	17885	23557
Total Budget	Plan	202400	413800	760000	1520000
	Non-Plan	372193	414255	906615	4767808
% of Total	Plan	1.08	5.87	3.39	1.67
	Non-Plan	1.60	1.94	1.97	0.49
% Total	—	0.95	3.91	2.62	0.77

Source: Lama, (ed) Sikkim Human Development Report, 2001, p. 48.

Despite Sikkim being terrain and sloppy in its land structure and the limitation in cultivation, considerable progress was made in the agricultural sector during the last ten years rule of SSP led government. Then government established Soil Testing Laboratory, more numbers of Village Level Work Centres and Farms. Regional concept for the development of agriculture and floriculture was adopted and introduced for various agro-climatic zones of the state. New techniques of cultivation and High Yielding and Improved Variety of Seeds (HYIVS) such as

¹⁷⁷ In comparison to the Budget Expenditure on Agricultural Sector, in between 1980-1981 and 1995-1996, the government is found to have given more priority to the Agriculture and its allied activities.

maize, paddy, wheat, blackgram, rajmah, rapeseed, soyabean and mustard, fruit and vegetable were introduced.¹⁷⁸

During the ten years of SSP rule, the emphasis was laid mostly on the production of food-grains to make the state self-sufficient.¹⁷⁹ In food-grain production, remarkable achievement was made during the SSP led government. In maize, the production had increased from 47000 tonnes in 1985-1986 to 58810 tonnes in 1990-1991, rice from 16500 tonnes to 25300, wheat from 16200 tonnes to 21600 tonnes, barley from 1400 tonnes to 2860 tonnes, buckwheat from 2000 tonnes to 2540 tonnes, pulses from 10010 tonnes to 15020 tonnes and fingermillet from 4300 to 7310 tonnes in 1990-1991 (Table-C: 4). During this time, food-grains in Sikkim accorded an average annual growth rate of 12.2 percentages.

Similarly there was also a significant increase in the production of oilseeds. Its estimated production was 5900 tonnes in 1990-1991 against 4400 of 1980-1981 and 5700 of 1985-1986. In fruits also considerable achievement was made. The production increased from 6350 of 1980-1981 to 8200 in 1985-1986 and 10500 in 1990-1991 in tonnes. The average annual growth rate of fruits was estimated as more than 12.68%. Similar achievement was also noticed in the areas of cash and commercial crops like vegetable, spices etc. The production of vegetable climbed up from 3400 tonnes in 1980-1981 to 13900 in 1985-1986 and from 15000 of 1990-1991 to 28000 in 1995-1996. Potato also increased from 6646 tonnes in 1980-1981 to 24000 tonnes in 1995-1996. Similarly spices like large cardamom increased to 3900 tonnes in 1985-1986 against 3500 of 1980-1981. But in cardamom, there was a decline in 1990-1991 to 2600 tonnes and 3800 tonnes in 1995-1996. In the respect of ginger, there was considerable increase from 3200

¹⁷⁸ More areas of land were brought under major and minor irrigation and multiple and double cropping system. Use of more chemical fertilizer and pesticides was encouraged.

¹⁷⁹ The production and marketing of cash crops and commercial crops, fruits and vegetables and development of horticulture and floriculture were also encouraged

tonnes in 1980-1981 to 10900 in 1985-1986 and then 24000 tonnes in 1995-1996 (Table-C: 4).¹⁸⁰

Table-C: 4
Production of food-grain, oilseed, fruit, vegetable and spices:
1980-1981 to 1995-1996 in tonne.

Crops	Years			
	1980-81	1985-86	1990-91	1995-96
Maize	28930	47000	58810	56560
Rice	10630	16500	25300	21880
Wheat	13310	16200	21600	15300
Barley	460	1400	2860	1570
Buckwheat	1380	2000	2540	1740
Finger millet	3840	4300	7310	4750
Pulses	3320	10010	15020	5920
Oilseeds	4400	5700	5900	6500
Fruits	6350	8200	10500	12000
Vegetables	3400	13900	15000	28000
Potato	6646	16400	18000	24000
Cardamom	3500	3900	2600	3600
Ginger	3200	10900	16000	24000
Turmeric			90	100
Roots & Tubers	200	400	600	1000

Source: Lama, (ed) Sikkim Human Development Report, 2001, p. 47.

Various programme relating to agriculture and allied agricultural activities also made considerable progress and achievement. The programme included seed distribution and multiplication, application of manures and chemical fertilizers, farmers' training and education, oilseed Production Programme, National Pulses Development Project, Plant Protection etc and other agricultural allied programmes. It received primary attention from the government. The seed production of 279 tonnes in 1980-1981 had crossed the level of 4000 with the increase margin of 372.1 tonnes in 1990-1991. Similarly the seed distribution had

¹⁸⁰ In addition, propagation of flower and ornamental plants and cultivation of mushroom have been intensified in the later years.

also gone up from 785 tonnes in 1980-1981 to more than 2000 tonnes i.e, with the margin of 1285 in 1990-1991 (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 1-4).

The chemical fertilizers consumption had increased by 68% ie from 985 tonnes in 1980-1981 to 1658 tonnes in 1990-1991. The consumption of balanced nutrients was also promoted by improving the distribution system, opening more sale points, organization of large scale demonstration and development of storage facilities. The government also realized the importance of extension of education for agriculture development and henceforth Agriculture Department conducted farmers' training. Till 1980-1981, there was only one Farmers' Training Centre in Sikkim and about 4000 farmers were trained in scientific methods of cultivation and application of chemical fertilizers, pesticides and High Yielding and Improved Varieties of seeds. During the ten years of SSP led government in Sikkim, 10500 farmers were trained in four districts of Sikkim, one more Farmers' Training Centre was established at Gangtok and one Composite Farmers' Training Institute was also set up in South Sikkim. During this time, 60 Village Level Officers (VLOs) were given two years Diploma Course in agriculture and its allied activities. Besides, more than 26 government farms were strengthened meant for the multiplication of seeds and planting materials, conducting various adaptive research and demonstration of improved technologies of farms. The government also launched Oilseeds Production Programme funded by the Indian Government with 75.25% of share basis in 1990-1991 in order to meet the internal requirement of edible oil.¹⁸¹ The government also launched National Pulses Development Projects with its 75.25% share. This project was one of the National Programme emphasized by the Government of India to explore the production of pulses potentiality. Under Plant Protection Programme (PPP), the state government made remarkable achievement. The area coverage under plant protection had increased from 17.14 thousand hectares in 19980-1981 to 50.40 thousand hectares in 1990-1991. The government provided systematic plant protection programmes to tackle diseases; pests problem associated with cash and commercial crops, like

¹⁸¹This programme was firmly implemented with sizeable annual allocation.

large cardamom, ginger, orange, apple, potato, and off-season vegetables. An urgent need was felt to be undertaken to control the pests to prevent food grains from damages and loss. The pesticides were provided to the farmers. During this, the consumption of pesticides, fungicides and other plant protection materials had increased by 65% over the last ten years from 20 tonnes in 1980-1981 to 33 tonnes in 1990-1991 (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 1-4).

II

THE SSP GOVERNMENT AND EDUCATION IN SIKKIM

Education as an instrument plays a significant role in ensuring socio-economic transformation and human resources mobilisation and development. It has a direct impact on the quality of life, life expectancy, infant mortality, population and other aspects of human life.

DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN SIKKIM: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

In Sikkim, it was the British Administration which encouraged the establishment of schools. Until late in the 19th century, education system in Sikkim was traditional, Lamaistic in nature.¹⁸² The Lamaistic institutions (monasteries) imparted education for the preparation of monks for priesthood. In those days, Tashiding, Pemayangtse, Tulung, and Sanghachoeling were the main teaching centres of Lamaistic education (Lama, 2001, pp. 28-29).

In 1872-1873, a Missionary, Rev. Macfarlane,¹⁸³ visited Sikkim and is said to have established few missionary schools in various parts of Sikkim. Later, when the missionaries moved from village to village, those schools were said to have run by them or on the basis of grant-in-aid. The medium of instruction was Hindi. In 1880, there were three primary schools in Khamdong,

¹⁸² It was confined to the study of Buddhist teaching, chanting prayer, painting, sculpture, astrology, medicine, philosophy, mathematics, Tantra etc in the various monasteries.

¹⁸³ Who was also a pioneer of modern education in Darjeeling.

Song and Mangan. By 1884, Scottish missionaries had started eleven (11) primary schools (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, 2005, p. 9).

It is also worth mentioning that the modern system of education in Sikkim could set its proper threshold only after 1889. Since White Claude had an intention to bring educational reformations in Sikkim, so he firstly decided to educate and mould the ruling class and the influential section of the society to spread western ideas.¹⁸⁴ The course contents in the government schools and missionary schools were same as it was in the schools of neighbouring states of Bengal and English was a compulsory subject that was taught. However, in the schools maintained by the landlords and privately managed, teaching of Nepali was introduced in 1924 (Kharel, 2002, p. 191).

As stated earlier that the British Administration had initiated the establishment of English schools in Sikkim in the beginning of the 20th century. John White Claude realized the urgent need for schools in Gangtok to fulfil the requirement of the administration and improve the administrative structure at the capital, Gangtok. With this view, he established the first English school at Upper Baluakhani, Gangtok in 1906. This school was known as Bhutia Boarding School. It was of Middle English school standard and had 47 students out of which 27 were boarders and 24 were financed by the Government of Sikkim. One year later, in 1907 another school emerged at Lall Bazar, Gangtok. This school was named as Nepali Boarding school with the strength of 54 students out of which 5 were boarders (Kharel, 2002, p. 203). In 1909, the Chogyal Sidkeong Tulku founded Enchay School.¹⁸⁵ Both the schools received financial support annually from the Darbar of Sikkim. While retrospectively the education system and its historical profile in Sikkim, those two educational institutions seem to be the pioneering

¹⁸⁴As a result, during the British Administration, three types of schools- (I) Government Schools, (II) Missionary Schools and (III) Schools maintained by the landlords and the private people of the villages were established to impart modern education.

¹⁸⁵ In its initial stage, in both the Bhutia Boarding School and Nepali Boarding School, English, Mathematics, Tibetan and Hindi were taught. Co-curricular activities like playing drill and gymnastics were also included.

schools in setting new milestone of modern education system and John White Claude was its forerunner to foster the education system in Sikkim.¹⁸⁶

In May 1924, Marry Scott was allowed to open a school for the girls in Gangtok. The first batch of matriculation (four) students passed the examination in 1945 and the school continued to grow, becoming a recognized Higher Secondary school in 1961. The main feature of this school was that even industrial teaching namely sewing and knitting and other vocational training was included in the curriculum for the girls (Lama, 2001, p. 29).

In the same very year (1924), Teaching Training Institute which was felt very essential was started with K L Kapoor as its first Headmaster. In its initial stage, Teachers Training Course was called the Village Teachers Training Course (VTTC). The norms of formal Basic Training Institute demanded new infrastructure for running a regular Course for teachers which made the government to shift the Institute to Temi in 1956. Shree Padam Singh Subba who was the first Sikkimese to have undergone Teachers' Training Course at the Mahatma Gandhi Teachers Training Institute at Wardha, Gujarat was appointed as the principal of this institute in 1959 (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, 2005, p. 11).

Both the regular government school teachers and committee school teachers had to undergo one year training in this institute. They were paid training allowance of Rs 10 per month. In 1969, this Basic Teachers' Training Institute was shifted to Pelling, West Sikkim and attached with Pelling Senior Secondary School as Teacher Training Institute (TTI).¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁶ The educational expenditure borne by the Sikkim Darbar at the time of 1907-1908 in Bhutia Boarding School was Rs 3900, Nepali Boarding School Rs 2500 and Missionary School Rs 1400, totalling Rs 7800.

¹⁸⁷ This imparted training both in pedagogical and related areas. Practical like, crafts, gardening, agriculture etc formed important parts of the curriculum.

In 1925, two pioneering schools maintained by the Darbar of Sikkim: Bhutia Boarding School of Upper Baluakhani and Nepali Boarding School of Lall Bazar were merged together and new school named Tashi Namgyal High School emerged. This school was affiliated to Calcutta University in 1930 and was directly managed by the Darbar of Sikkim.¹⁸⁸ The first Headmaster of this school was C E Dudely who also acted as superintendent of Public Institutions in Sikkim (Kharel, 2002, p. 203). In 1966, this Tashi Namgyal High School was split into Tashi Namgyal Academy (TNA) and Tashi Namgyal Secondary School (TNSS).

From the 20th century onwards, educational institutions in Sikkim gradually started emerging and by 1947 there were altogether 37 schools. Out of these, 5 schools maintained by the Government, 14 schools run by the Scottish Missionaries, 04 by the Scandinavian Missionaries and 14 village schools by the landlords and private people of the villagers.

In the beginning of the First Seventh Year Plan of Sikkim, 1954, the number of schools in Sikkim increased up to 88 against 37 of 1947. During this First Seven Year Plan (1954-1961),¹⁸⁹ out of Rs 82.07 millions total budget outlay, Rs 9.80 million (11.94%) was allocated for education in Sikkim (Sikkim Darbar, 1963, pp. 2-3). In the year 1961, i.e, at the end of the First Seventh Year Plan period, the number of schools in Sikkim climbed up to 182 ie by 48% against 88 of 1954 in Sikkim (Lama, 2001, p. 29).

According to the census of 1971, the literacy rate among the population aged 7 years and above was only 17.74%.¹⁹⁰ With the dawn of democracy in Sikkim in 1975, Sikkim has witnessed a vital revolution in the sphere of education.¹⁹¹ This has led to the increase of schools, teachers and other infrastructural development allied to the educational institutions.

¹⁸⁸ The school sent its first batch of matriculation examination in March, 1933.

¹⁸⁹ This was initiated with the financial assistance of India.

¹⁹⁰ Organized modern education in Sikkim is comparatively a thirty years phenomenon.

¹⁹¹ Since the merger of Sikkim with the Indian Union, the demand for education is steadily growing in the state.

When Kazi government came to power in 1974, the enrolment of students in the schools of Sikkim was just 32279.¹⁹² But within the span of five years of popular democratic rule in Sikkim, the enrolment of students went up to 45758, with a marginal difference of 13480. The extension of educational opportunities to every child in the age group 6-14 had been one of the long term principal goal of educational planning in Sikkim. Meanwhile the enrolment of the primary stage (I-V) increased to 39000 in 1979 against 18000 of 1975. Similarly, the enrolment of the Junior High School stage of (VI-VIII) also increased up to 5168 in 1979 against 2100 of 1975 (Roy, 1980, pp. 34-37). The sharp rise in enrolment of students at every stage of education necessitated the increase in the strength of the teaching personals by more than 50% from about 1200 in 1975 to 1919 in 1978. It also necessitated expansion of schooling facilities, infrastructural development and rise of expenditure in the educational sector.

Along with this, the Plan Expenditure on education also increased from Rs 63.95 lakhs of 1975-1976 to Rs 99 lakhs in 1977-1978 and from Rs 133.6 of 1978-79 to Rs 391.0 lakhs in 1979-1980. Similarly, Non-Plan expenditure also increased from Rs 37 lakhs of 1975-1976 to Rs 73 lakhs in 1978-1979. The Budget outlay for the year 1978-1979 was Rs 1.35 crores and 1979-1980 was Rs 2.10 crores for educational sector (Roy, 1980, pp. 34-37).

During the period (1975-1979) Sikkim had serious shortage of qualified teachers. In order to ensure regular and qualified teachers to impart education in the schools of Sikkim, the government established full-fledged State Institute of Education (SIE). The state government made education free for the boys up to class-VIII and for girls up to the class -X level. The government also provided books to the students at half the cost. Free boarding schemes for the children of the weaker section of the society to study in Junior High Schools, High Schools and Higher Secondary Schools

¹⁹² Out of which 21,868 were boys and 10,411 were girls.

was launched in order to make education more universal and accessible to all. With the help of Rural Work Department (RWD), the supply of drinking water was made available to school children at the schools.

The production of school text books in Nepali, Tibetan, Lepcha and Limboo Languages, establishment of text book units under Directorate of Education and appointment of Language experts as text book writers on four Languages had been a remarkable achievement of the Education Department during that time. The text books in Lepcha and Limboo Languages have been produced for use in class I-VII. Besides text books, dictionaries in those languages had also been produced by the Text Book Unit of Education Department.

To facilitate higher education, a regular Government Degree College was set up in Gangtok in 1977. It provided three streams, Arts, Commerce and Science. The Night College which was established in 1972 also continued to exist to benefit those who were in the middle of their under-graduate course (Roy, 1980, pp. 34-37).

At the primary level, one teacher each was provided by the government in 47 private primary schools. Ten primary schools were upgraded to Junior High schools, five Junior High Schools to High Secondary schools and altogether 264 schools were set up (Singh & Singh, 1978, p. 6). In September 1975, an elaborated programme of Non-Formal Education (NFE) was launched in Sikkim with the assistance of the Central Government. Within a span of four years, 424 sub-centres were opened.¹⁹³ The enrolment of the students in these 424 sub-centres increased up to 13000 with 430 part-time teachers working in those 424 sub-centres of Non-Formal Education.

¹⁹³ The centres were meant for catering to continuing education of dropouts.

Although the Sikkim Congress Government under the leadership of Lhendup Dorjee Kazi, Khangsarpa made considerable progress and achievement in the field of education during its five years rule yet, it was rejected by the people and voted out of power in the second Sikkim Assembly in 1979. Kazi, was badly defeated by Sikkim Janata Parishad (SJP) under the leadership of Bhandari.¹⁹⁴

THE SSP GOVERNMENT AND EDUCATION IN SIKKIM

On the eve of the Assembly election of March 1985, the SSP led by Bhandari made a number of promises and assurances for making education free, universal and accessible to all. It also promised to upgrade the existing schools and set up new schools and colleges in Sikkim and provide free education up to class XII with free text books and exercise books with highly subsidized rate (Sikkim Herald, 5th July 1985). With those promises and assurances, the SSP led by Bhandari came to power after the third Sikkim Assembly election of 1985.

During the SSP led government rule, education in Sikkim seemed to have received top most priority in the state. The Budget allocation and expenditure incurred during the Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-1990) and Eighth Five Year Plan (1990-1997) clearly indicate that the government's was concerned over the educational sector in Sikkim. There was a quantum jump in the expenditure in the education sector during the last two Five Year Plan periods. In the Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-1990) the expenditure in the educational sector was Rs 394.62 million against the budget allocation of Rs 264.00 million and in Eighth Five Year Plan period (1990-1997) was Rs 872.19 million against the budget allocation of Rs 606.00 million (Table-C: 5).

¹⁹⁴ There was a tight corner fight and SJP formed a new government securing 17 seats out of 32 seats in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly. Sikkim Janata Parishad had a number of impressive slogans such as ushering democracy, destroying communalism and give Sikkimese people back their self-respect and sense of dignity. But Sikkim Janata Parishad led government declined after the dismissal of Bhandari from the Chiefministership in May 1984.

Table-C: 5

Budget allocation and expenditure made for education in the Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Five Year Plans (1980-1981 to 1990-1997).

Plan	6th Five Year Plan	7th Five Year Plan	8th Five Year Plan
Year	1980-1985	1985-1990	1990-1997
Budget Allocation	18.3 million	264.0 million	606.00 million
Expenditure	145.87 million	394.62 million	872.19 million

Source: Lama, (ed) Sikkim Human Development Report, 2001, p. 30.

In 1985, the position of the schools in Sikkim was: Pre-Primary Schools 198, Lower Primary Schools 218, Primary Schools 239, Junior High Schools 91, Secondary Schools 37 and Senior Secondary Schools 11 with the total institutions 794. Similarly, the enrolment of the students at the Pre-Primary stage was 5000, Primary stage (I-V) 60821, Middle stage (VI-VIII) 13423, Secondary stage (IX-X) 3165 and at the Senior Secondary stage (XI-XII) was 928 with the total strength of 83337. The total number of teachers working in various schools was 4298.¹⁹⁵

The SSP after coming to power, proposed for 720 pre-primary schools, 231 Lower Primary Schools, 255 Primary Schools, 155 Junior High Schools, 69 Secondary Schools and 19 Senior Secondary Schools, total 1449 to be achieved by the end of Eighth Five Year Plan (1990-1997). The government also proposed to increase the enrolment of the students to 27900 at the Pre-Primary stage, 80000 Primary stage (I-V), 22000 at the Middle Stage (VI-VIII), 11450 at the Secondary stage (IX-X) and 5600 at the Senior Secondary stage (XI-XII), totalling 146950 including the existing position. Similarly, 720 school mothers for the Pre-Primary stage, 4369 Primary teachers for the Primary stage (I-V), 1199 graduate teachers at the middle stage (VI-VIII), 724 graduate teachers at the Secondary stage (IX-X) and 211 Post-Graduate teachers at the Senior Secondary stage (XI-XII) were proposed to be achieved by the end of Eighth Five Year Plan

¹⁹⁵ Out of which 198 were school mothers, 3044 primary teachers, 639 graduate teachers for the middle stage, 280 graduate teachers for the Secondary level and 137 Post-Graduate teachers for the Senior Secondary level.

So, at the end of Seventh Five Year Plan Period (1985-1990) Pre-Primary Schools have increased from 198 to 528, Lower Primary Schools from 218 to 266, Primary Schools from 239 to 246, Junior High Schools from 91 to 127, Secondary Schools from 37 to 53 and Senior Secondary Schools from 11 to 15. Similarly, the number of teachers have also increased from 198 to 531 with the difference of 333 at the Pre-Primary level, from 3044 to 4064 with the difference of 1020 at the Primary level, from 639 to 949 with the difference of 310 at the Middle stage, from 280 to 584 with the difference of 304 at the Secondary level and from 137 to 168 with the difference of 31 at the Senior Secondary level. There was also sharp increase of students' enrolment from 5000 to 13193 at the Pre-Primary level, from 60821 to 71515 at the Primary level, from 13423 to 14591 at the Middle stage level, from 3165 to 5719 at the Secondary level and from 928 to 1868 at the Senior Secondary level with the total increased of 106886 against 83337 of 1980-1985. By 1991-1992, the number of schools increased to 1343 schools¹⁹⁶ against 794 schools of 1980-1985, the enrolment of the students increased to 113849¹⁹⁷ against 83,337 of 1980-1985 and the number of teachers from 4298 of 1980-1985 to 6546 in 1991-1992 as shown in Table-C: 6.¹⁹⁸ During this particular period of SSP led government rule in Sikkim, the literacy rate of Sikkim also increased from 34.05% in 1981 to 57% in 1991 and Sikkim recorded the second highest literacy rate among the north-eastern state. At the same time, the female literacy rate also went up from 8.9% of 1981 to 46% in 1991. The East district of Sikkim accorded the highest literacy rate, 65.1% followed by the south district with 61.4%. The highest proportion of the literates were those with the below primary level of education, 36% and very low proportion of literates were education level of graduation and above, 3.4% (Lama, 2001, p. 30).

¹⁹⁶ Those schools include 794 schools of 1980-1985.

¹⁹⁷ Out of 113849, 61437 were male and 52412 female.

¹⁹⁸ Of these, 528 were school mothers, 4008 Primary teachers, 1015 graduate teachers of middle stage, 685 graduate teachers of Secondary level and 310 were post-graduate teachers of Senior Secondary schools.

Table-C: 6

State-wide six-wise enrolment of teachers and students: 1991-1992.

Teachers	Male	Female	Total	Students	Male	Female	Total
Pre-Primary		528	528	Pre-Pry Level	8381	6754	15135
Primary	2737	1271	4008	Pry Level	39296	34028	73324
Middle	618	397	1015	Middle Level	8329	7669	15998
Secondary	402	283	685	Sec. Level	3845	3130	6975
Sr.Sec. level	199	111	310	Sr. Sec. Level	1586	831	1417
Total	3956	2590	6546	Total	61437	52412	113849

Source: IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, 2003, p.79.

An interview in connection with the establishment of schools and promotion of modern system of education in Sikkim, during the SSP led government was taken with one of the retired school teacher and another senior local gentry of Yangthang Constituency. While responding to the question as to whether education was accessible in all the rural areas during those ten years rule of SSP led government (1985-1994) in Sikkim? The interviewee replied, 'Though Bhandari is accused of being a dictator during his 15 years rule in Sikkim (5 years under SJP and 10 under SSP), Sikkim witnessed rapid development of infrastructure which it had never experienced during 5 years rule of L D Kazi'. With regards to the development and accessibility of education, he added, 'after SSP came to power in 1985, education system in Sikkim could set its proper milestone. Many schools were established in the villages and remote areas of Sikkim. The schools run and managed by the village committees were converted to government schools. The students were provided text books and exercise copies free of cost. They were not charged any tuition fee except admission fee. Even the children of poor families could attend schools and avail education. So, gradually in Sikkim, modern education became more accessible to the village children and children of poor section of the society of Sikkim'.¹⁹⁹ Another interviewee added, 'Before 1980s, no matter there were schools, but only in the far-flung distance and children had to walk for more than an hour. Therefore, the children from the rural areas hardly had an opportunity to

¹⁹⁹ Passang Tshering Lepcha of Darap, retired and senior most teacher, dated: 1st March, 2010.

attain education. After SSP Government led by Bhandari came to power, education became more accessible and universal to all the children of Sikkim'.²⁰⁰

A remarkable achievement was also attained in the higher education sector. The single institution of higher learning in the form of Sikkim Government Degree College got new buildings and various streams. Sikkim Law College, B.Ed College and Indra Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) were also established. The Government also constituted a higher level committee and invited a central team to explore the possibility of opening University of Sikkim. To mobilize resources for the development of education, centrally sponsored and central planed schemes like Operation Blackboard, District Institute of Education and Training (DIET), Science Improvement, Rural Functional Literacy Programme (RFLP) and Jana Siksha Nilayams (JSN) were launched. Hindi Teachers to teach Hindi were appointed. Vocational Education, Maintenance of Tibetan Refugee Children in Enchay School was implemented.²⁰¹ Three languages formula English as language-1, Regional language as optional language and Hindi as compulsory subject from class IV-VIII was introduced in the schools and curriculum was framed by the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT).

During 1987-1988, the Sahodaya Programme (SP) sponsored by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) was launched.²⁰² The recruitment rules and norms were also framed and procedures were streamlined to improve the quality of teachers. The government also accorded highest priority to the programme of teacher's education. The facilities of education were expanded and varieties of programmes and schemes were diversified and increased. The Teachers' Training Institute was converted into District Institute for Education and

²⁰⁰ A B Subba of Lingbit, one of the senior most citizens, dated: 4th June, 2010.

²⁰¹ About 98% of the educational institutions managed and funded by the government were provided universal free education including free supply of text books and mid-day meal to all the primary school children

²⁰² The main aim of the programme was to ensure that no school located in the remotest areas of the state suffer from a sense of deprivation and neglect to maximize the functional efficiency of school by sharing physical resources and exchange of teaching and teachers' resources among the schools in the complex.

Training under a centrally sponsored programme. In 1988, both academic and Non-academic post was created to provide necessary teaching and administrative man-power to this institute. For making education more accessible, universal and free to all the poor, the government launched great incentive schemes such as exemption of students from the payments of fees like examination fee, games fee, laboratory fee etc. In 1987, the scheme of free education was extended to the College level. The text books were made freely available to all up to class XII. The class as a pilot project was also launched in two of the Senior Secondary Schools to impart computer education in 1985-1986. Later on it was extended to almost all 18 Senior Secondary Schools. The government also introduced Vocational Education Course in seven selected Senior Secondary Schools of Sikkim for the benefit of the students of class XII and dropouts of pre-Secondary stage. This course included steno, typing, Radio and Television repair, medical laboratory techniques and photography etc (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, p. 23).

For creating self-employment opportunities for the dropouts, Vocational Education Courses were conducted in Printing Technology at the Sikkim Government Press, traditional art in collaboration with the Ecclesiastical Department in monastic schools, training of horology²⁰³ at the Sikkim Time Corporation (SITCO), Deorali in each course. Ten youths were inducted into Sikkim Jewels for two years. To tackle the unemployment problems and impart technical education to the educated youths in the state, the government established Polytechnic Institute and Industrial Training Institute at Rangpo.²⁰⁴

²⁰³ Training of horology included assembly and repair of watches.

²⁰⁴ So far as the achievement of the government in Education Technology Programme is concerned, the government provided all the Pre-Primary and Junior High Schools with 800 two-in-one tapes. Software like nursery rhymes in Nepali language produced by the Education Technology Cell (ETC). The video cassettes on '*Glimpses of Sikkim*' and '*Festivals of Sikkim*' were produced with the help of local talent artists. BBC micro computers, 16 mm Cine Projectors, PA equipments, colour Television and VCP were provided to almost all the Senior Secondary Schools. Nursery rhymes and folk songs in Limboo, Lepcha, Bhutia and Nepali languages were also produced for mass distribution to the children of the age group 4-10 years in the schools of Sikkim (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, p. 24).

The government also made the provision of Rs 40-50 lakhs annually for the implementation of the various programmes of scholarships and stipends to encourage and support talents, meritorious and students belonging to the weaker section of the society. It also provided grant-in-aid to the non-governmental institutions of various standards and assistance to 1 Madarsa, 9 Sanskrit Pathshala, 37 Monastic schools and 2 Public schools. During 1991-1992, alone a budgetary provision of Rs 134 lakhs was provided for that purposes. The government also focused its attention on revamping of the Educational Administration.²⁰⁵ Status of District Education Officers was upgraded to Joint Directors as the head of the Department in the Districts. Account sections were opened in the Districts Education Officers with the view to decentralize the account management and ensure payment at the District level. Apart from what have been discussed so far, the government also launched centrally sponsored schemes and programmes such as State Adult Education Programme (SAEP) in 1991-1992, Rural Functional Literacy Programme (RFLP) in 1989-1990 and Jana Siksha Nilayams (JSN) in 1991-1992 to encourage Adult Education in the state (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 20-27). Here it is also worth mentioning that during the 10 years of SSP led government, three indigenous languages of Sikkim; Limboo, Lepcha and Bhutia also made tremendous progress and reached to the standard of class XII as core subject.

III

THE INDUSTRIAL SECTOR IN SIKKIM UNDER THE SSP LED GOVERNMENT

Industrialization plays a crucial role for economic growth and employment generation. But in the state like Sikkim, the topographical location of the state, limitation of natural resources, lack of skilled manpower and technology

²⁰⁵The planning and accounts sections of Education Department were strengthened, new section of engineering, National Service Schemes and Statistics (NSSS) were opened, sports affair section was also opened at the Districts level.

determines the process of industrialisation. However, attempts have been made for the establishment of small scale industries and improvement of already existing industries.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN SIKKIM: A HISTORICAL VIEW

The industrial growth and activities during the pre-merger period had in fact been very limited to the production and development of traditional crafts such as weaving of carpets and wooden blankets, wood carving, painting, bamboo crafts, paper making. In 1954, for the first time, under the First Seven Year Plan (1954-1961), the Darbar of Sikkim allocated 4.3 % of RS 32.4 million of total Budget of Sikkim for industrial sector. Since then there had been proper allocation of Budget for the industrial sector in Sikkim in each and every Plan. In the Second Five Year Plan, the Budget allocation for Industrial sector was 5.01 % of Rs 82.7 million. In the Third Five Year Plan, 6.7 % of Rs 97.1 million, in the Fourth Five Year Plan, 3.5 % of Rs 203.6 million, in the Fifth Five Year Plan, 6.6 % of Rs 401.0 million, in the Sixth Five Year Plan, 4.2% of Rs 1478 million, in the Seventh Five Year Plan, 4.0 % of Rs 2824 million and Eighth Five Year Plan, it was 3.85% of Rs 7245 million respectively.

In 1954, for the first time, Sikkim Distilleries was set up in Sikkim to ensure quality liquor for the people of Sikkim at a reasonable price. In this, Darbar of Sikkim had 47% shares.²⁰⁶ Therefrom in 1956, Government Fruit Preservation Factory was established. In 1957, under the patronage of the Chogyal of Sikkim, Palden Thendup Namgyal Institute of Cottage Industries was set up in Gangtok (Sikkim Darbar, 1963, p. 10). In the subsequent year, other weaving and handloom schools were also established to impart training to the Sikkimese girls and boys in the local handicrafts including carpentry, handmade paper, carpet, doll making, painting, embroidery, dyeing etc (Sikkim Darbar, 1963, p. 15). Under the industrial scheme, the private entrepreneurs were given financial assistance in the form of loans by the government. Under the said scheme, those units which manufactured wire nails, opened motor garages and floriculture centres were

²⁰⁶ By 1971, it provided jobs to 30 managers and 130 labourers.

assisted (Publicity Department, Sikkim Darbar, 1963, p. 15). Besides, Sikkim Mining Corporation Limited, and Temi Tea Estate and Sikkim Jewels Limited (1972) were also set up. Sikkim Jewels Limited aimed to fulfil the demand of watch jewels and cup jewels.²⁰⁷

After Sikkim became the constituent state of Indian Union in 1975, all four districts; west, south, East and North districts were declared as industrially backward and a Directorate of Industries was established in 1976. An experienced officer drawn from the central government was appointed as the Director of the Directorate. Since then the Directorate of Industries started focusing on creation of proper administrative machinery by establishing full-fledged Directorate of Industries at Gangtok and its Centre in Jorethang. Within two-three years of its establishment, two District Industrial Centres (DIC), one at Gangtok and another at Jorethang, were set up in Sikkim for the convenience of the entrepreneurs and also to bring the concept of industrialization to the people.²⁰⁸ Further provisions for the incentives such as capital grant and subsidy for backward areas, transport subsidy on consumption of power, exemption from sale tax and income tax, marketing assistance etc were made and planned by the Directorate of Industries to encourage the industrial units in Sikkim.

In order to formulate projects for industrial growth on scientific and advanced lines, the government conducted number of surveys through various agencies from Development Commissioner, Small Scale Industries, New Delhi (1975-1976), National Industrial Development Corporation, New Delhi (1975) Industrial Development Bank of India (1977-1978), High Powered Team of the Ministry of Industry, New Delhi (1977-1978), Government of Handlooms (1977-

²⁰⁷ Initially, Sikkim Jewels Limited could produce 2 lakhs of cup jewels and 3 lakhs of watch jewels per month. Now its capacity has increased to 3 lakhs of cup jewels and 332 lakhs of watch jewels per month (Lama, 2001, p. 73).

²⁰⁸ The centre set up in Gangtok had to cover north and east districts of Sikkim and then Jorethang the west and south districts.

1978), Government Fruit Preservation Factory (1977-1978), Roller Flour Mill Project, New Delhi etc (Dasgupta, 1992, pp. 120-121).

In 1976, the Sikkim Time Corporation (SITCO) as an Industrial Unit was set up in technical collaboration with the Hindustan Machine Tools (HMT) for the assembly of watches.²⁰⁹ In 1977, Sikkim Industrial Development and Investment Corporation (SIDICO) was established as a financial institution at the state level to promote and finance the industrial units through loans and also to procure and distribute raw material for selective industries and activities.

Due to strong political will and liberal industrial policy of the government, Sikkim could set a path towards industrialisation after it became a part of the Indian Union. According to Sikkim Human Development Report, 2001, there were about 1360 units big and small scale industries in Sikkim which were granted provisional registration by the Directorate of Industries from 1976 onwards. Out of these, 300 had been registered as small scale Industries (SSI) tiny units and have begun to operate. Over 9.76% of these small scale industries were located in the west district, 72.05% in the east district, 17.17% in the south district and 1.01% in the north district of Sikkim.²¹⁰

THE SSP GOVERNMENT AND THE INDUSTRIAL SECTOR

Although Sikkim is topographically a terrain state, limited in its natural resources, human skills and technology, there was still pressing need for the development of more industries. There was a sharp increase of unemployment problem of the educated youths. For this the government wanted to create avenues for job opportunities. Moreover, the government also intended to raise the state's per

²⁰⁹ In its initial stage, about 2.5 lakhs of watches were assembled and had about 25 workers. In 2001, there were 380 workers and 4 units: Mechanical watches, Semi-conductor, Digital watches and watch crowns.

²¹⁰ In between 1975 and 1980, the important products produced in Sikkim were washing soaps, coke briquette, matches, candles and leather. Besides, swan timber (Bagey Khola) cables, aluminium utensils, detergent, and cotton fabrics with power loom and bread and biscuits were produced (Singh & Singh, 1978, p. 18).

capita income to improve the living standard and well-being of the people of Sikkim. As such, the industrial sector was a prime concern of the government in Sikkim.

When the SSP was formed in 1984, the industrial sector was the prime concern of the party. During the eve of third Sikkim Assembly of 1985, SSP made a number of commitments for solving the problems of unemployment of educated unemployed youths. The party also promised to extend necessary assistance for self-employment through various industrial units and agencies and formulate effective industrial policies keeping in view the availability of limited natural resources, skilled man-power and the topographical location of Sikkim.

In the Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-1990) the government allocated 4.0% for industrial units out of Rs 2824 million of total Plan outlay. Similarly, in Eighth Five Year Plan (1990-1997), 3.85% of Rs 7245 million total budget outlay was allocated for the industrial sector. In contrast, the Budget outlay for industrial sector in those two consecutive Plans of 1985-1990 and 1990-1997 were consistently low, never exceeding 5% of the total plan outlay.

In between 1985-1994, about 185 Small Scale Industries or Tiny Industrial Units were established in addition to those existing Small Scale Industries (SSI) prior to 1985.²¹¹ During this time, a branch office of West Bengal Consultancy Organisation limited was set up at Gangtok for providing the required technical guidance, consultancy services besides preparation of project profiles, project reports etc. To provide plant and machineries to entrepreneurs on hire and purchase basis and also to help the units in marketing of their products, a branch office of National Small Industries Corporation Limited (NSICL) was set up at Gangtok. In 1986, another branch office of Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) was also set up at Gangtok. This institution

²¹¹ Out of these 185 Small Scale Industrial Units, 140 (75.67%) were located in the East District, 32 (17.29%) in the South District, 20 (10.8%) in the West and 03 (1.62%) in the North Districts of Sikkim

provided the necessary financial assistance exclusively to small scale and tiny industries under their various schemes. One more District Industries Centre was also established at Gangtok to provide all the required services, support and assistance to the entrepreneurs and artisans of all small scale units of north and east district under one umbrella. In Jorethang, a Mini Industries Estate was established with 12 sheds of different sizes with the objective of providing readymade accommodation to the industrial units at highly subsidized rents. At Tadong, Gangtok, an industrial area was also developed to accommodate Sikkim Flour Mills and Automobile Workshops. For manufacturing items like vanaspatti, beer and silicon, semi-conductor devices, medium scale units were set up. For manufacturing items such as talcum powder, pharmaceuticals, glass, bottles, pilfer proof caps, HDDE woven sacks, PVC wire, wire nails and binding wire, AAC/ACSR conductors, tin containers, exercise books, printing job books, wooden and steel furniture, bakery and confectionery items, snack foods, mosaic tiles, wooden electrical accessories, readymade garments, silica chips, dolomite powder, RCC span pipes, candles, washing soaps, cattle feed, socks, black and white TV sets, spices, ayurvedic medicines, plastic products small scale industrial units were established. In conformity with the privatization policy of the Government of India, the Government Fruit preservation Factory and Flour Milling units of Sikkim Flour Mills Limited were leased out with a view to getting assured returns on the investment made by the Government in these two units (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, p. 61).

Financial assistance from the state has been extended to those industrial units in Sikkim in the form of state loans at a subsidized rate. Over 54% of the entrepreneurs or industrial units for which financial assistance from the state has been received were located in the east districts and 10% in the north district of Sikkim. Apart from the financial assistance from the state, other Central Industrial Units like Small Industrial Services Institute (SISI) under the Ministry of Industry also provided technical inputs and assistance like the preparation of project report, consultancy, references and training facilities. The National Bank for

Agriculture and Development (NABARD) established in 1985 also started financing agriculture and other allied sectors. Under All India Handicraft Board (AIHB) steps were taken to promote the handloom and cottage industries in Sikkim. Under the provision of central investment subsidy applicable, various industrial units and hotels were financially benefited. In between 1980-1989, various industrial units and hotels were entitled to get 15-25 % as outright subsidy not exceeding Rs 2.5 million. The various industrial units in Sikkim received Rs 61.1 million under this provision. Similarly, under the Central Transport Subsidy Scheme (CTSS), the industrial units in Sikkim had reimbursed the cost of transportation of raw material and finished products to the extent of 75-90%. During the year 1985 to 1990 this amounted to Rs 63.11 million. Till 1985-1986, only 17% of the investment subsidy was utilized by the entrepreneurs.²¹² In 1991, the Government adopted liberal policy to attract the entrepreneurs and investment in the industrial sector in Sikkim (Notification No 27/DI/89-90(III) 7452 dated: 13th March 1991). Any Industrial unit in Sikkim under these schemes could avail of subsidy on captive power generating set, cost of transformer and power line, consultancy services, power, interests on working capital, registration fee of promotion council, Indian Standard Institution, Commodity Boards, Chamber of Commerce, Publicity and advertisement, Study Tour and Implant Training, price preference, concession on sale tax, deterring of excise duty, special incentives for high value and Low Volume Production Units and units utilizing local raw materials (Lama, 2001, p. 73).

Besides watch assembly unit, two more units for manufacturing of watch crowns and discrete silicon, semi-conductor devices were constructed under Sikkim Time Corporation Limited in Sikkim. The government also invested the sum of Rs 7.21 cores under Sikkim Jewels Limited for the completion of expansion-cum-diversification (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, p. 63). The Government established branches of the Directorate of Handicrafts and Handlooms at various places of Sikkim. For setting up a unit for manufacturing of Microwave Integrated Circuits

²¹² This clearly shows the slow reaction and less interest of the local entrepreneurs towards the incentive schemes.

at a project cost of Rs 1.5 cores, the government entered into an agreement with the renowned Indian Telephone Industries Limited, Bangalore. As per this agreement, the government provided scarce materials like paraffin wax, palm fatty acid distillate, iron and steel material etc to the industrial units for manufacturing items based on the aforesaid raw materials. The Project Report on cane and bamboo, ginger, handicrafts, solvent extraction plant, broom industry etc were prepared. During this period (1985-1994), Temi Tea Estate stepped up in production of tea from 50000 kilograms to 100000 kilograms. 75% of the tea was exported earning valuable foreign exchange.²¹³. In order to motivate and encourage the interpreters and investors, government of Sikkim launched various schemes and programmes under various departments. More than 50 Entrepreneurship Motivation and Development Programme were conducted and 1200 entrepreneurs were trained in different parts of Sikkim, 75 artisans were sent outside Sikkim to study, tour and implant training. For skill upgradation, rural artisans were trained in the various parts of all the four districts of Sikkim in trades and cane and bamboo crafts, thanka painting, carpet weaving, handloom weaving, pangden weaving, motor mechanic, wireman, plumber etc (Lama, 2001, p. 69-74).

The Directorate of Handicrafts and Handlooms is a premier institute in the state. It looks after the preservation and promotion of traditional arts and crafts in Sikkim and several branches in all parts of Sikkim. This institute imparted training to the young girls and boys of Sikkim in crafts and handlooms and later engage those as paid workers on piece rate basis or gave them permanent employment in the various branches of institute which are scattered in all parts of Sikkim like Kewzing, Okhrey, Lachung Lachen, Chungthang, Lindong, Pelling and Namchi. The training was imparted on Sikkimese crafts and handlooms to those educated unemployed and dropouts youths.

²¹³ Temi-Tea gained demand from customers for its superior quality which called for expansion of tea garden.

The Department of Industry also organized a Credit-Cum-Motivation Programme in which 409 artisans and entrepreneurs were provided financial assistance amounting to Rs 80 lakhs through various Financial Institutions and Sikkim Khadi and Village Industries Board. The Sikkim Industrial Development and Investment Corporation Limited had provided financial assistance to more than 1000 industrial units, hostellers and taxi operators. Composite loans, term loans, loan under single vehicle operation scheme amounting Rs 24 crores were sanctioned and disbursed. Under the scheme of self-employment to Educated Unemployed Youth, 267 candidates were provided financial assistance amounting Rs 50.00 lakhs for starting their over self-employment ventures in business, services and industrial ventures. The Sikkim Khadi and Village Industrial Board had 25 Training-Cum Production Centres in the different parts of the state. Through centres, training was imparted to the unemployed youth. Apart from this, Sikkim Khadi and Village Industries Board provided financial assistance to the institutions or persons engaged in the development and operation of village industries (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, p. 63). The government also under the various Departments organized number of Seminar and Workshop on the courses, '*Working Capital Assessment and Management*', '*Management and Cost Accounting*', '*Marketing Management*', '*Production Management and Quality Control*', and '*Intensive Packaging Programme*' etc. The Department also brought out booklets to give information and guidance on the procedures for setting up industries, facilities and concessions available for agencies which were active in the state for the promotion of industries and other relevant detail (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 59-63).

As a result of the massive entrepreneurship development drive, motivation and incentives, more than 1050 small scale industrial units and entrepreneurs were issued provisional registration by the Department of Industry by 1992. About 185 industries were permanently registered in Department of Industry and about 4000 persons were provided employment in those various industrial units or sector (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, p. 60). The contribution made

by the various industrial units to the state's income during this period was recorded at Rs 5.2 million in 1985-1986, 3.7 million in 1990-1991 and Rs 2.2 million 1995-1996. However, the contribution of industrial units to the state's income declined from Rs 5.7 million in 1980-81 to Rs 2.2 million in 1995-1996 with the margin of Rs 3.5 million in fifteen years of gap as indicated in Table-C: 7.

Table-C: 7

Share of manufacturing in Net State Domestic Product (NSDP).

Industry of Origin	1980-1981	1985-1986	1990-1991	1995-1996
NSDP(Rs in millions)	489.8	1133.06	2129.5	4459.7
Manufacturing Sector	2.79 (5.7)	5.9 (5.2)	7.82 (3.7)	10.03 (2.2)

Source: Lama, (ed) Sikkim Human Development Report, 2001, p. 71.

Note: Data within bracket is percentage of total.

IV

THE SSP GOVERNMENT AND THE SERVICE SECTOR

Transport and communication are the two important components of the service sector. It is through transport and communication network that trade flourishes and economic growth and development takes place. In the rural areas of Sikkim, transport and communication ease the hardship and inconveniences of the people in delivering goods and providing transport services. Sikkim being a landlocked state with no air, water and rail transport system available it depends entirely on road transportation. In other words both transport and communication in Sikkim takes place through road.

SERVICE SECTOR IN SIKKIM: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The service sector in Sikkim during the reign of the monarchy was not well facilitated and convenient as it is today. There was neither railway nor airways. The road communication was the main mode of transportation linkage of

Gangtok, the capital of Sikkim with rest of the country like India and Tibet (Sikkim Darbar, 1963, p.7). The Truck Department which was known in the earlier days brought Nationalised Road Transport Service (NRTS) in Sikkim during the reign of Chogyal, Sir Tashi Namgyal. In those days only 10 number of FORD (military type) trucks with a payload capacity of 15 CWT each were obtained after availing a loan of Rs 140000 from the Rationing Department, Darbar of Sikkim. Until 1950, the routes were limited to the Gangtok-Teesta-Kalimpong and Gangtok-Gellikhola road and therefore operation of the Truck Department was confined to only FREIGHT (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, 2005, p. 100).

In 1950-1951, the Truck Department was converted into Sikkim State Transport Service (SSTS) and passenger service was extended upto Siliguri. Between 1952 and 1954, first petrol pump was installed at Rangpo. The Namgyal Highway in Sikkim was nationalised by Sikkim State Transport Service. The first TATA MERCEDES BENZ, model L312/36 was utilised on the Rangpo-Gangtok Road. Landovers were introduced from Gangtok to Darjeeling for daily passenger's service. During 1955-1956, Sikkim State Transport Service was once again converted and redesignated as Sikkim Nationalised Transport (SNT). At the end of the First Seven Year Plan, 1961, there were about 475 miles of road opened to vehicles traffics and 130 miles of village paths (Sikkim.Darbar, 1963, p. 7).²¹⁴ There was regular vehicular and mule traffic carrying goods between Sikkim and Tibet until 1962. In railhead at Siliguri, 72 miles and airport at Bagdogra, 80 miles from Gangtok were adequately served by road communication from Gangtok along which ply SWT 5 vehicles as well as other private vehicles. In the same year, 1961-1966 during the Second Five Year Plan, the Department introduced five schemes: Nationalisation, Dieselisation, Expansion, Training and Construction. The petrol fleet plying on the routes like Gangtok-Siliguri, Gangtok-Rangpo, North Sikkim Highway and Namgyal Highway was replaced by 35 seater buses, TATA MERCEDES BENZ (TMB) and TMB freight carrying vehicles. The Jorethang-

²¹⁴ During the Second Fifth Year Plan (1961-1966), it was proposed to add another 326 miles of road in Sikkim.

Namchi, Legship-Geyzing and Jorethang to Sombaria roads were nationalised. The office buildings were constructed in Jorethang, Melli, Legship, Singtam and a warehouse at Pradhan Nagar, Siliguri (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, 2005, p. 101).

POLICIES OF THE SSP LED GOVERNMENT TOWARDS THE SERVICE SECTOR

In Sikkim, road transportation is the only means of transport and communication. It is road transport which plays a crucial role in delivering goods and services, easing the living way of life of the people and accelerating economic growth and development in the state. As such in Sikkim, after 1975, responsibility of the Government increased manifold towards the maintenance and construction of roads. The workload to concentrate on the development of infrastructure to cope with the increasing volume of works and to modernise the transport system also increased gigantically. During 1975-1979, Sikkim Nationalist Transport was the sole responsible and means of passengers and goods transport (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, 2005, p. 102).²¹⁵ The roads were not well knit and bridges too needed to be maintained. As years passed by, gradually the fleet strength required to be increased, more road and bridges needed to be constructed and maintained to meet the high demand of the situation and public welfare. When Bhandari was the Chief Minister under the Sikkim Janata Parishad (SJP) from 1979-1984, he had bitter experience and realisation of the importance and problems pertaining to the service sector; specially transport and communication. Thus, he committed to have well organised transport and communication in Sikkim and make it accessible to all the people through the construction of as many new roads as possible, upgration of deficient/low standard one, reinforcement or replacement of existing weak and low standard bridges and promote Sikkim Nationalist Transport by adding more buses and trucks/tankers for the convenience of passengers and transportation of goods.

²¹⁵ At that time there were only 58 buses and 85 trucks/tankers and it had to run the activities with those very limited number of buses and trucks.

The service sector, transport and communication gained momentum of progress and development after 1985, when the SSP led government assumed power. Top most priority was given by the government to provide vehicular accessibility to far flung areas. The village roads and bridges were constructed on the basis of their higher population, tourist potential, economic development and social welfare schemes being extended in the rural areas. Roads and bridges were constructed to provide them basic facilities, transport of food-grains, easy removal of patients from villages to different Health Centres, attending District and other offices as well as to transport the agricultural products to the marketing centres etc. In 1979-80, there was 1292 kilometres of roads. Of which 40 kms was National Highway, 584 State Highway, 347 major district roads and 321 other district roads. But in 1991-92, the total road increased to 2243 kilometres, out of which 40 kms was National Highway, 937 kms including 788 surfaced and 157 unsurfaced State Highways, 446 major district roads, 266 surfaced and 180 unsurfaced and 820 other district roads, 144 surfaced and 706 unsurfaced roads. Out of these, 552 kms in east district, 180 north, 140 west and 17 kms in the south district of Sikkim. However, the National Highway in Sikkim remained the same, could not be extended beyond ie 40 kms (BESPDD, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 59-63).

Even steep and narrow roads constructed prior to 1975 at the lowest cost were widened and upgraded under various schemes to fulfil required specifications which could take higher load vehicles as well as higher traffic density. Old and weak bridges were replaced by higher load capacity bridges. Among those number of replaced bridges during this particular period (1985-1994) were: Cable Stayed Akkar bridge over Rangit River at Jorethang connecting south and west districts of Sikkim (1989), Legship Pre-Stressed bridge over Rangit River at Legship, connecting south and west districts of Sikkim, Singshore Suspension Bridge in West Sikkim (1993), and Mamring Pre-Stressed bridge over Teesta River at Rangpo, connecting east and south districts of Sikkim. Besides, 16 other old and weak steel bridges were replaced by the permanent ones with high load and carrying capacity and altogether 21 suspension bridges were reinforced and

upgraded. The Department of Motor Vehicles, Government of Sikkim also framed rules to reinforce the provision of Central Motor Vehicle, Act 1988 and Sikkim Motor Vehicle Taxation Act 1982. The Government established two regional motor vehicle Offices, one at Gangtok for north and east districts and another at Jorethang for west and south districts of Sikkim.²¹⁶ During this period the number of vehicles registration and tax collection also increased remarkably. In 1979-1980, there were altogether 543 vehicles in Sikkim.²¹⁷ But in 1991-1992, the number of two wheelers went up to 1645, government and private car, van, jeep and gypsy to 2858, goods carrier, truck, DCM, Toyota and Nissan to 825, contract carriage, buses, taxis and local taxis to 1146 and tractor/roller to 13 totalling 6287 (BESPDD, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 63-64). At the same time the tax collection also increased from Rs 22.00 (in lakhs) of 1988-1989 to Rs 26.00 in 1989-1990, Rs 30.00 and Rs 37.49 (in lakhs) in 1991-1992 with the marginal difference of Rs 4.50, Rs 8.00, Rs 15.49 in lakhs respectively.

It has already been mentioned earlier that the Sikkim Nationalised Transport was the means of transport and communication in Sikkim in those days. The government added new number of buses and trucks in the subsequent years to the fleet strength and old vehicles were discarded on a routine scale with the objective to provide better, cheaper and comfortable mode of transport to the general public. The number of buses increased from 18 of 1984-1985 to 148 in 1991-1992 with the marginal difference of 67. Standard bus services were introduced within state and for Siliguri, Darjeeling and Kalimpong in the state of West Bengal. Operation of direct bus service between Gangtok and Calcutta was also launched from 29th December 1991. Trucks and Tankers owned by Sikkim Nationalist Transport to cater the essential commodities in Sikkim also increased from 128 of 1984-1985 to 184 in 1991-1992 (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, p. 131). At the same time,

²¹⁶The Department also took serious steps to create public awareness with regards to traffic rules and discipline. Observation of Annual Road Safety Week was initiated in the state with corporation of Non-Governmental Organisations.

²¹⁷ Of which 265 two wheelers, 239 private and government vehicles like car, jeep, van and gypsy, 33 goods carrier, truck, DCM, Toyota and Nissan, 05 contract carriage, buses, taxis and local taxis and 01 tractor /roller registered in the Motor Vehicle Department.

the passengers and goods traffics also went up to Rs 17.76 in 1989-1991 against Rs 13.50 of 1985-1987 and Rs 15.73 of 1987-1989 with the marginal difference Rs 4.20 and Rs 2.03 in lakhs respectively. The goods traffics also went up to 4.45 tonnes in 1989-1990 against 3.05 tonnes of 1985-1987 and 3.77 tonnes of 1987-1989 respectively (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, p. 132).

The government also established Railway Out Agency at Gangtok, Jorethang for passengers travelling to Delhi, Calcutta, Chennai, Trivandrum, Bangalore, Mumbai, Cochin and other connecting routes from Sikkim. This facility was a boon to the rail bound passengers from the state. A five storied building; Yatayat Bhawan was constructed at a cost of Rs 41.50 lakhs at Gangtok. For quick repair and maintenance of vehicles, Central Workshop equipped with modern machines and tools was set up at Ranipool at a cost of Rs 114 lakhs. Quarters for the officers and staffs at Pradhan Nagar, Siliguri, Jorethang, Geyzing and Sombaria to accommodate 100 personnel and 40 personnel at Ranipool workshop were constructed. In 1987, four storied RCC building at Geyzing and three storied building at Sombaria was constructed. In 1991-1992, Procured Cold Resoling Unit was set up at Ranipool at a cost of 6.50 lakhs. This provided job opportunities to the local educated unemployed youths. Bus Terminus along with the booking counter and Entrance Gate at the SNT complex, Siliguri was constructed at a total cost of Rs 6.41 lakhs. For the benefit of the passengers, one special luxury bus service was introduced between Gangtok and Bagdogra. For train passengers, a bus service plying between Gangtok to New Jalpaiguri was launched. A new express bus service between Jorethang and Siliguri and similarly two new bus service between Gangtok to Siliguri and between Reshi and Rinchenpong covering Mangalbarey-Hatidunga in the west district of Sikkim were introduced.

Traffic Inspectors were posted at Rangpo, Melli and Reshi to check unauthorised transportation of goods and materials. One Traffic Officer, one Deputy General Manager and ten Traffic Inspector posts were created in order to strengthen the checking squad. 280 Muster Roll and Workcharged including 100

senior and experienced drivers were regularised. In order to make the management of transportation more scientific and systematic, a computer was also installed at a cost of Rs 1.80 lakhs from April 1991.

CONCLUSION

In the new state of India, Sikkim, development of every sector was fundamental. Hence, developmental work on various spheres was highly felt by the government. Amongst the sectors agriculture, education, industrial, welfare and service sectors were the main areas on which it concentrated.

During its ten years of rule in Sikkim, the SSP led government attempted to improve and maximise agricultural productivity through the application of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, manures, adaptation of new techniques and scientific methods of cultivation and utilisation of High Yielding and Improved Varieties of Seeds. The government allocated the Budget outlay of 21.1% out of 2824 million in the Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-1990) and 13.6% of Rs 7245.00 million in Eight Five Year Pan (1990-1997) for agriculture and allied sectors. As a result, the food-grain, in Sikkim accorded an average annual growth rate of 12.2%, fruits more than 12.68%. Similar achievement was also noticed in the areas of cash and commercial crops like vegetable, spices etc. Similarly, there was also remarkable achievement attained by the government in the field of education. Education became more accessible and universal to all the children of Sikkim as compared to Kazi government's time. In the Seventh Five Year Plan, the expenditure in the education sector was Rs 394.62 million against the budget allocation of Rs 264.00 million and in Eighth Five Year Plan it was Rs 872.19 million against the budget allocation of Rs 606.00 million. Within the span of ten years, the literacy rate of Sikkim also increased from 34.05% in 1981 to 57% in 1991 and Sikkim recorded the second highest literacy rate among the north-eastern state. The female literacy rate also went up from 8.9% in 1981 to 46% in 1991.

In the industrial sector also, the SSP government is observed to have given much focus, next to education and the agriculture sectors. For the establishment of a number of industrial units in Sikkim, the government allocated 4.0% of 282.4 million and 3.85 % of Rs 724.5 million of the total budget outlay in the Seventh and Eighth Five Year Plans respectively. Within ten years, more than 1050 small scale industrial units and entrepreneurs were issued provisional registration by the Industrial Department. About 185 industries were permanently registered in Industrial Department and about 4000 persons were provided employment in those various industrial units or sectors. The contribution made by the various industrial units to the state's income during this period recorded at Rs 5.2 million in 1985-1986, 3.7 million in 1990-1991 and Rs 2.2 million 1995-1996. In the service sector, transport and communication gained momentum of progress and development after 1985. The construction of new roads and maintenance of old roads and bridges in the rural areas was facilitated. The basic facilities like transport of food-grains, easy removal of patients from villages to different Health Centres, attending District and other offices as well as to transport the agricultural products to the marketing centres was also made possible in the villages of Sikkim. The Sikkim Nationalised Transport was the sole means of transport and communication in Sikkim in those days so more buses were added to meet the dire need of transportation facilities.

Chapter VI

WELFARISM UNDER SSP GOVERNMENT

'Welfare' is a new concept that emerged after the World War-II. Since the emergence of the concept of 'welfare' there has been hot debate and diverse interpretations regarding its meaning. However, no universally acknowledged definition of the concept of 'welfare' as well as 'welfare state' has come out till date. Therefore, in section I of the chapter, an attempt is made to understand the concept of 'welfare' as well as 'welfare state'. To some extent the historical context of the growth and development of the concept of 'welfare' and 'welfare state' in the developed and the Third World countries, especially India is also briefly discussed. It also sheds some light on the emergence of 'welfare state' in Sikkim during the monarchical as well as in the post-merger era.

Section II analyses the commitments and pledges made by the SSP led by Nar Bahadur Bhandari in the Election Manifestoes of 1984 and 1989 with regards to welfare policies, programmes and poverty alleviation schemes for the benefit and well-being of the people of Sikkim in general and upliftment of the poor sections of the Sikkimese society in particular. In section III, we discuss the various policies and programmes launched by the SSP after it came to power in 1985. It also examines as how SSP led Government performed in the state of Sikkim with regard to the welfare of people. The chapter further examines whether promises made by the SSP in its Election Manifesto's of 1984 and 1989 towards health and family welfare, social welfare, welfare of the Schedule Tribe and Schedule Caste and welfare of the government employees as well as educated unemployed youths and economically backward classes of Sikkim could be achieved during its 10 years of rule in Sikkim. Lastly, section IV examines the various poverty alleviation policies as well as rural development programmes and schemes launched by the SSP led Government. It looks at whether SSP was able to make Sikkim a poverty free State and fulfilled its promises and assurance through the

launching of various programmes and schemes in the state. All these will be done in various sections of the chapter.

THE CONCEPT OF WELFARE

Ever since the emergence of the term '*welfare*', the concept of '*welfare*' has not only been the subject matter of hot debate and diverse interpretation but also there is a lack of universally acknowledged definition. In other word although the term '*welfare*' is widely used yet, rarely defined and therefore the use of the expression, '*welfare*' has not been an exact. According to Lund (2002) 'Welfare has numerous meanings but it has co-opted to refer to specific elements of public policy'.²¹⁸ The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines Welfare as 'satisfactory state, health and prosperity well-being'. In this sense welfare can be described as incorporating and embracing everything that can distinguish one social state from another. Cole (1980, p.7) views that the term 'welfare is used with or instead of repression as a way of trying to achieve social order'. The American Economic Review (1931, Vol-XXI, No-2, p. 210) conceptualises Welfare as a 'matter of standard of living and standard of living contrary to the conception of most writers on the subject is a matter not only of amount and kind of goods and services consumed but of the kind amount of labor and other sacrifice involved in their production'. Hurka (2006, p. 604) considers the term welfare as 'a very specific value-concept which does not include everything worth promoting'. Rose and Shiratori (1986, p. 3) defines welfare as 'a product of the whole society'. The author further argues that the market produces welfare; employers can provide pensions, health care and training for their workers and families can purchase education, health care and pensions. Allardt (1986, p. 118) makes an argument that the amount of welfare in a society cannot be directly equated with the activities of the welfare state or of the welfare programs. This is true whether we

²¹⁸ In America, the term is constructed narrowly as relating to the means-tested, residual, 'assistance' dimensions of state provision whereas, in United Kingdom and most of the other European countries, it has acquired a broader meaning.

define welfare by the amount of need satisfaction in a population or by individuals' possession of those resources by which they can master their own better lives.²¹⁹ Zapf (1986, p. 141) defines welfare as 'the combination of objective living conditions and subjective well-being, which, by definition and by experience implies that role of the welfare state in welfare production is limited'. A welfare concept that combines objective living conditions and subjective well-being might guard the mankind from an overestimation of the welfare state's role in providing individual welfare. Public goods and services are important part of people's welfare and are in spite of all criticism, accepted and demanded as entitlements. But overall, welfare is produced by the interaction of market, state, associations and primary goods. In the view of Overbye (1995), 'Welfare' is 'a vague and value-laden word'.²²⁰ Martin and Sue (1998) consider welfare 'as a label for a complex and unstable mixture of relationships, experiences, processes and structure'. In the opinion of Barry (2002) welfare is that concept which 'describes well-being, satisfaction, the relief of deprivation beyond the realm of almost irresolvable disputes'. Bilski (1976) regards welfare as 'a part of the government's social and economic policy, and as such it should take its appropriate place in the order of priorities'.

In a broad sense the term welfare encompasses the well-being and interests of larger number of people, including their physical, mental, emotional, spiritual and economic needs²²¹. So, while stressing upon the concept of welfare, the state or government becomes indispensable as in this front, state or

²¹⁹ Even when the welfare aims at comprehensiveness only a part of the welfare is produced by the state comprehensiveness simply means that the rights to a normal living standard are independent of market criteria and that everybody is insured against income loss and hardships. In all societies only a part of total welfare in the sense of need satisfaction or the possession of necessary resources is produced by the state.

²²⁰ In the US debate, it is customary to draw a dividing line between social security and welfare expenditure (of which the most important are public assistance, allowances for single-parent families and health assistance). In the European debate, by contrast, 'welfare' is often used as an all-encompassing concept, which besides spending on health, pensions, single-parent families and also includes labor market retraining programs as well as programs aimed at improving housing conditions.

²²¹ In general, it refers to the number of methods by which the state through the host of different services tries to raise the standard of living of the population and help people to meet their various problems through which most of human being has to pass at one time.

government is concerned with for more than needy. It is integrated into the basic structure of society in a way that influences the lives of all groups, the poor and the rich minorities and those in power. The main function and concern of welfare is to help for well-being, betterment, satisfaction etc. which would lead to the rise of living standards in the society. The people may need rehabilitative, supportive, crisis needs and curative and protective services. Thus in a nutshell, the term welfare means exemption from misfortunes, sickness, hardship, calamity or evil, enjoyment of good life, happiness as well as health and common facilities for better life. In other words, welfare implies freedom, physical well-being, economic well-being, social security and maximum opportunities for creative living.

Drawing the view from the above, it can be said that the welfare enshrines protective, creative and supportive measures to the poor and needy for their well-being and betterment in ensuring the standard of living in their lives. But those measures which are essential for the needy people are possible only through the involvement of state or government. Therefore, the use of the term 'State' along with the term 'welfare' as the suffix of the latter is an acknowledgment of the active involvement and part played by the state in the welfare spheres. So, while talking about welfare, state constitutes an inevitable and indispensable mechanism without which the former remains much seldom and far from being successful. As the matter of this fact, the 'welfare' and 'state' form the two sides of the same coin, giving to new concept so call 'welfare state' in the present democratic and socialistic as well as capitalistic pattern of society.

CONCEPT OF WELFARE STATE

The term 'Welfare State' refers to the state which looks after both the general welfare of the citizens by making adequate arrangement for their employment, housing, education, health, recreation and social security against contingencies of life as well as maintains internal law and order. The welfare state connotes not only the political and legal activities but also to the social and economic activities of the state.

The term 'welfare state' has no precise meaning and it has been variously defined. In the view of Atherton (1989) the term 'welfare state' does not mean the same thing to all who use it. There are different ways in which the term 'welfare state' is used, and each has different implications for public policy. According to Concise Oxford Dictionary welfare state is 'a polity so organised that every member of the community is assured of his/her due maintenance, with the most advantageous conditions possible for all'. Piet Thoenes regards welfare state as 'a form of society characterised by a system of democratic, government-sponsored welfare placed on a new footing and offering a guarantee of collective social care to its citizens' (Robson, 1976, p. 14 & Ahmad, 1988, pp. 5-7). Myles and Quadagno (2002, p. 37) consider welfare state 'as the inevitable product of large economic forces beyond the control of policy makers and publics that compel a common response'. Gedam (1995, p. 8) regards the welfare state as 'a system in a country seeking to ensure welfare of all citizens by means of government operated social services'. Since the basic needs and satisfaction of basic needs by individual efforts is difficult, therefore, evil forces need to be controlled by the intervention of state to ensure timely satisfaction of basic needs of the poor people.

Hayek (2000, p. 90) argues that the phrase welfare state 'is sometimes used to describe any state that concerns itself in any manner with problems other than those of the maintenance of law and order'. Halldenius (1998) understands a welfare state as 'a democratic state where the inhabitants have strict claims to welfare, as a matter of legal right, against the government'. What the welfare rights entitle one to depend upon the distributive principles endorsed by the state; the distributive principle may be, for example, satisfaction of basic needs, compensation for loss of income, or socio economic equality. In the word of Briggs (2000, p.18) welfare state is 'a state in which organised power is deliberately used through politics and administration in an effort to modify the play of market forces in at least three direction-first by guaranteeing individuals and families a minimum income irrespective of market value of their work or their property; secondly, by narrowing the extent of insecurity by enabling individuals

and families to meet certain 'social contingencies'²²² which lead otherwise to individual and family crises; and thirdly, by ensuring that all citizens without distinction of status or class are offered the best standards available in relation to a certain agreed range of social services'.

Welfare state as Robson (1976, p. 18) opines is 'a state in which public policy is predominantly concerned with the welfare of the members of the society'. Bruce (1973) considers welfare state as 'a system of social responsibility for certain minimum standards of individual and community welfare, without, however, the more through political and social control of a socialist or a communist state'. In the opinion of Ahmad (1988, p. 5) welfare state refers to both the negative and positive functions of the state. In the negative function, the author identifies fundamentally the maintenance of internal law and order and defence of its territories and on the other hand positive function means looking after the general welfare such as employment, housing, education, health etc. Pierson (2006, p. 10) refers welfare state to the state measures for meeting key welfare needs.²²³ The provision may take the form of either *services*²²⁴ or *income transfers*. In the article, 'Citizenship and Welfare' (2002, p. 263) Fullinwider, conceives welfare state as 'a form of investment'.²²⁵ Blau (1989) considers welfare state as 'a vehicle for gradual reform'. The main purpose of the welfare state is poverty reduction through various programs which forms the component of welfare state as retirement pensions, workmen's compensation, invalidity benefit, child benefit and unemployment insurance etc (Atkinson, 1995, pp. 5-6).

²²² The sickness, old age and unemployment are the example of social contingency.

²²³ Key welfare needs is often confined to health, education, housing, income maintenance and personal social services.

²²⁴ Service provided by or funded by the state.

²²⁵ Such investment, in the opinion of the author, has both negative and positive aims. Investment to secure for as many as possible the conditions and opportunities for legitimate work conducive to social peace and has the negative aim of minimizing crime and disorder without resort to draconian police-state measures. Investment in education, health, and opportunity has the positive aim of increasing social production

Whatsoever may be the view of the different scholars, philosophers and thinkers on the concept, definition and component of welfare state but generally it is accepted that welfare state is that state which is concerned about the welfare, well-being, goodness, happiness, and satisfaction of the people. It is through the active involvement of the state, the welfare policies, programmes and schemes can be adopted, formulated, and implemented for the benefit and betterment of the needy people in the need of the hour. Therefore, the state is the mechanism through which various reformations take place in the democratic and socialistic as well as capitalistic pattern of society. However, for the success of welfare, the state has to be more democratic. In other words the government must be freely chosen by the citizens and change it peacefully through democratic means if the citizens are dissatisfied with its performance. But on the other hand, the government must be tolerant and unrestricted of public criticism against its undemocratic activities, policies and programmes.

Etymologically, the term 'Welfare State' is a derivative of the German terminology, 'Wohlfahrtstaat' which was very much in vogue in Germany for a long time. The German socialist, Lassalle is regarded as the originator of the idea of the welfare state although he did not coin the term (Ahmad, 1988). Thereafter, in writing, William Temple used the term 'Welfare state' for the first time when Archbishop of York published 'Citizen and Churchman'. In that 'Citizen and Churchman' he contrasted the 'power' states of the dictators with the 'welfare' states emerging in democracies (Pierson, 2006, p. 105). Eventually in 1955, the word 'welfare state' entered the Oxford English Dictionary aptly describing as 'a polity so organised that every members of the community is assured of his/her due maintenance and the most advantageous conditions possible for all' (Lund, 2002, p. 107). Lassalle regarded state as merely 'the night-watchman state' and asserted that 'if not made use of the state as an instrument' for promoting the cause of general welfare, 'will confront it as an obstacle', had become the precursor of modern welfare state (Ahmad, 1988, p. 7 & Pierson, 2006, p. 107). Hence, the concept of welfare state for the first time emerged in Germany, then

in other European countries like Great Britain, Sweden, New Zealand, Australia, Denmark, Switzerland, Italy, Austria, France, Belgium, Norway, United States of America and over the time in Eastern and Third World countries.

Prior to World War II in 1870s, the German Socialists adopted and developed the concept of welfare state which became more visible when welfare programme was introduced by Bismark of Germany in 1880s and implemented the first system of compulsory social insurance for the workers in 1883.²²⁶ In Sweden, too, prior to the World War-II, the mitigation of extreme need and suffering was the part of welfare policy. But in the post-war period, major pension reform was implemented, indexing its program of demogrants and making it universally available, then adding a family allowance system in 1947 (Quadagno, 1987, p. 111). In New Zealand, relieving of destitution, abolition of poverty and social security was component of welfare policy and programme. The USSR has made substantial and sustained progress in many spheres of social welfare, including health, education, leisure, greater equality of remuneration and social security in the post-World War-II (Robson, 1976, pp. 12-16).

By 1911 every country in Western Europe had some form of workers' compensation scheme. In 1913, Sweden was the first country to introduce a pension insurance scheme covering the entire population. Thereafter, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, New Zealand and Great Britain also had made some provision for pensions. By 1913 Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland and Britain all had some form of sickness insurance which financed both cash benefits and some medical care services. Membership of the schemes was compulsory for certain categories of workers in Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and Britain; elsewhere

²²⁶ By 1900, sickness insurance, industrial accident insurance and old-age pensions had already been introduced and implemented in Germany (Zapf, 1986, p. 128). In the post-war era, in Germany, social programs were transformed into more comprehensive systems of universal benefits, guaranteeing workers a basic standard of living.

membership was voluntary but with subsidisation from the state (Johnson, 1987, p. 5).

In Great Britain, the concept of '*welfare state*' remained unaltered until 1940s. It embodied a British tradition in political philosophy born in the nineteenth century. For centuries, the term '*needy*' in the society was major concern (Bruce, 1973, pp. 1-21) and state was regarded as the embodiment of the '*common good*' with specific welfare programs which had to be in the interest of the citizens (Lund, 2002, p. 1).²²⁷

Under Elizabethan Poor Law, the government designed to provide relief for the lame, impotent, old and blind and such other being poor and not able to work, to set to look the able-bodied without occupation, to apprentice or find work for the children who had no one to care them and established places of inhabitation for impotent poor- all within the framework of a stress on family responsibility and on the punishment of those menaces to society, idle and vagrant who would not apply themselves to honest labour (Bruce, 1973, pp. 1-2). In 1911, Great Britain introduced unemployment insurance. Later on, the same was introduced and implemented in Germany in 1927, United States of America in 1937 and Canada in 1944 (Johnson, 1987, p. 5). However, in the post-war era, in the Great Britain, number of socio-economic problems relating to the Public Health, Public Housing, Unemployment, Old Age, Poor Law, Insurance, Contributory Pension, Old Age Pensions, Family Allowance and Child Care etc increased unprecedentedly. These circumstances eventuated for the amendment of number of legislations by the British Parliament as well as number of reformation and

²²⁷ Historically, in Great Britain, the welfare state originated in two separate spheres of action. One of them comprised the social services which Parliament initiated during the nineteenth century to deal with public health, education, factory conditions and housing. The other was the action taken in the twentieth century to relieve or to prevent destitution. The aims of these two streams of policy was; initially to prevent destitution and poverty; to prevent and cure disease; to protect employees against sweating, bad or unhealthy working conditions, and other forms of exploitation; to abolish slums and squalid living quarters; to eliminate ignorance and illiteracy; and to remove the grosser forms of inequality and privilege. These very purposes were accepted necessary and desirable (Robson, 1976, p. 15).

transformations. The Family Allowance Act (1945) for the benefit of the family as a whole, A New Policy for the Deprived Children Act (1948) to assure care of children, treatment of children under the care of local authorities, National Insurance (1946) for couple living together for a single adult, for employment, sickness, widows, pensions and retirement pensions, for the dependent, children allowance, for the first child in the family and other family allowance etc. The National Insurance Act (1946) for providing pecuniary payments by the way of unemployment benefit, sickness benefit, maternity benefit, retirement pension, widow's benefit, guardian's allowance and death grant etc, National Health Services (1945) for general epidemiology, maternity and child welfare, food and nutrition; National Health Service 1948.

The Beveridge Report of 1942 which proposed a national minimum benefits to guarantee freedom from want for all citizens, stimulated legislation for family allowances, old age pensions and health insurance in Great Britain (Bruce, 1973, pp. 1-288). In the United States of America, however, the beginning of large scale federal involvement in welfare services came only after the New Deal of 1930s, although states and localities had been involved from much earlier date (Johnson, 1987, p. 5). The introduction of Social Security Act (1935) was sort of welfare programme under National welfare system. Under this programme, only old age insurance was implemented and unemployment insurance, old age insurance, old age assistance, and aid to dependent children were all joint federal-state programs, which left the determination of eligibility criteria to the states. Most of the states maintained traditional relief requirements, including local administration, means test, and family responsibility clauses (Quadagno, 1987, p. 111). In other words, the welfare program could not take concrete shape even in USA until 1950s. It was in the 1950s, when Clement Attlee adopted the phrase 'welfare state' as a campaign slogan in the General Election and became

widespread in use (Lund, 2002, p. 107).²²⁸ In America, the programs that today constitute welfare measures are Medicaid, Medicare, Food Stamps, public housing, student loans, and a variety of veterans' programs in addition to the New Deal programs. Many programs, such as Social Security, distribute money; many others, such as Medicare, provide aid in kind. Some programs are means-tested; others are not. Programmes aimed at low-income families constitute a small proportion of federal spending on social welfare i.e, about 1/5 in 1980. Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) probably the single program was often identified with 'welfare' in the United States which accounted for less than 2% of federal spending on social welfare in 1983 (Lund, 2002, p. 1).

In the Scandinavian countries like Finland and Iceland, the welfare state has been seen as natural and normal; the state intervened in order to guarantee a modicum of welfare and social security for all (Allardt, 1986, p. 107). In Japan, the social policy developed only after the industrialisation.²²⁹ The development of welfare state in Japan, appeared in three phases; firstly, the health insurance and national pension schemes for the working class was enacted before World War-II, secondly, the development of welfare state in Japan began after World War-II with the enactment of antimonopoly law, abolition of traditional class distinctions, organisation of trade unions and establishment of joint consultation systems between employers and employees in the large private companies and thirdly, the progression towards welfare in Japan began in 1973 which was named 'Fukushi Gannen'.²³⁰ However, the social security which included both pension and health insurance in Japan are comprehensive, in the sense that all Japanese are covered.

²²⁸ Between 1934 and 1939, the American Congress passed the measures: unemployment compensation, old-age and disability insurance, aid to dependent children. The welfare state in the United States emerged since the New Deal in both cost and complexity.

²²⁹ No welfare legislation was enacted before World War-I and very little between the two wars. Contemporary Japanese welfare state programs principally reflect legislation since 1946.

²³⁰ 'Fukushi Gannen' means *first year of the welfare age* in Japanese version. During this time the expenditure on social security expanded remarkably under the new cabinet headed by Prime Minister, Tanaka (Maruo, 1986, pp. 64-68).

France is one of the leading examples of welfare state. The organisation of social security, welfare facilities and benefits extended to the French citizens, the care of the old aged and establishment of hospitals and other specialised institutions for the management of mental illness, cancer, tuberculosis, correction of maladjusted children and juvenile offenders are some of the reasons for making France a welfare state.²³¹ In the Netherlands, the welfare state emerged in the late forties of the 20th century and main area upon which the state focussed was minimisation of unemployment, overcoming the housing shortages and expansion of social insurance. In addition to these, enactment of Compulsory Education Act was another initiative towards the establishment of social welfare of the Dutch state (Ahmad, 1988, pp. 54-56).²³² The Third World Countries have also adopted and launched various social security programmes and social services. For instance, public assistance programme, old age and widow pension and assistance schemes and family allowance schemes have also been introduced in the Third World Countries. Special attention has also been given to the health, education, housing and welfare of the workers.

During the time when India became a sovereign country in 1947, there prevailed massive problems like poverty, want, unemployment, literacy, disease and squalor. The shortage of housing, filthy slums and squalid abodes with extreme depressed sanitary conditions and dirty surroundings in some of the villages, metropolitan cities, industrial towns and state capitals, the problem of ill-health, epidemics, malnutrition etc. and illiteracy, ignorance and obscurantism had and have been the gravest problems. Such circumstances set new threshold for India to establish itself as a welfare state with the goal to proceed for planned

²³¹ In France, the social security covers all the employed and provides insurance for sickness, maternity, disability, industrial accident, and old age. Since 1961, it is also extended to cover the farmers and self-employed. Apart from these, family allowances are also implemented and paid to both earners and others (Ahmad, 1988, pp. 50-54).

²³² Under this, the children after attaining the age of 5-6 years are supposed to join schools and remain in the schools till 16 years of age. The state has set up 20 types of special schools for the children with the following handicaps; the deaf, the partially hearing, those with severe speech defects, the blind, the partially sighted, the physically handicapped, those in convalescent homes, the dedicate, the mentally handicapped and the maladjusted.

economy and development. In 1950, the Planning Commission was set up by the Government of India to prepare Five Year Plans. The main aim of planning in India was to raise the living standard of the citizens, open opportunities to them for more richer and varied life, accelerate developmental process, provide social justice to all the citizens particularly to the weaker and down-trodden sections of the society, reduce inequality of income, wealth and opportunities etc. These directives made India a country having democratic and socialistic pattern of society. It adopted and launched various measures relating to social services, social welfare and welfare for the weaker sections of the Indian society and social security (Ahmad, 1986, pp. 66-79).²³³

The idea underlying the welfare state has been drawn from different sources. In the account of Robson, (1976, p.11) different sources from which the idea of welfare state has been conceived are the concept of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity from the French Revolution (1789), the idea of greatest good and happiness of the greatest number of the people from Utilitarian philosophy of Bentham and Mill, concept of social insurance and social security from Bismark and Beveridge, the principle of public ownership of basic industries and essential services from Fabian Socialists, doctrine for the control of trade cycle and avoiding mass unemployment from John Mynard Keynes and Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission and the idea of abolition the causes of poverty and clearing up the basic society from Webbs. Above and beyond the specific contribution from these sources, many great thinkers like Leonard Hobhouse, Richard Titmuss, Dickens, Ruskin, William Morris, Lord Shaftesbury, Chadwick, Charles Kingsley, General Booth, Cardinal Manning, Canon Barnett, Henry George etc also contributed to the share of idea flowing into the concept of welfare state.

²³³ Under social services; housing, health and education, social welfare and welfare; social defence, corrections, social and moral hygiene, after-care and welfare of the needy, underprivileged and weaker sections of society such as women, children, workers, the Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribes, the physically and mentally handicapped, the aged, the beggars etc. provision of full employment and anti-poverty measures and under social security; social insurance against sickness, unemployment, interruption of income, industrial mishaps and other contingencies of life had have been major concern in the Five Years Plans.

In Sikkim, the welfare state emerged during the time of Tashi Namgyal (1914-1963), the eleventh Chogyal of Sikkim (Sikkim Darbar, 1963, pp. 22-27). During this time, the Darbar of Sikkim devoted its energies towards welfare projects like improvement of transport and communications, extension of medical and health facilities and educational programmes for which the biggest allocation of Budget had been made in the Development Plan (Sikkim Darbar, 1963, p.9). Housing for the Government employees and financial assistance for house construction in the form of loans for the people were other welfare schemes upon which the Darbar had have given stress during this time (Sikkim Darbar, 1963, p.19). For the first time in 1917, hospital named Sir Tashi Namgyal Memorial (STNM) Hospital was established (Lama, 2001, p. 21). Initially, it was equipped with 50 beds and three doctors.

The Darbar also set up various schools in Sikkim to disseminate modern education.²³⁴ The education system was free and the needy students were further assisted in the form of scholarships and boarding facility. Besides, vocational training was also imparted in India and other countries. For the impartment of Buddhist Scriptures, Enchey School which could accommodate 300 students was established (Sikkim Darbar, 1963, p. 18). There were altogether 5 Hospitals and 16 Dispensaries for free medical services. The Hospitals and Dispensaries were staffed with 10 Doctors, 34 Compounders, and 36 Nurses and Mid-wives. The programme relating to the public health such as Malaria Eradication Programme (MEP) was conducted according to the standard of National Malaria Eradication Programme (NMEP). Extensive and intensive campaign for the control and eradication of Small Pox, Tuberculosis, Venereal and Helminthic disease was also undertaken with the assistance of the Government of India (Sikkim Darbar, 1963, p. 9).

²³⁴ By the 1960s, in Sikkim, there were 4 High Schools, 6 Junior High Schools, 12 Middle Schools and 164 Primary Schools providing nearly 10,000 children education of whom about one-sixth were girls.

For adequate water supply in the Villages and Bazaars, the provision was made under Public Health Programme. The Darbar of Sikkim also acquired certain amount of land at Tadong for the development of Housing Colony for the Government employees (Sikkim Darbar, 1963, pp. 19-20). The Sikkim Darbar also introduced Sikkim State Transport (SST) in 1944 and constructed roads for transport and communication, established Power Plant, Sichey, 1927 for generation of electricity, set up Government Institute of Collage Industries (GICI), 1957 for the employment of youths [girls and boys] (Sikkim Darbar, 1963, pp. 22-27). All these activities initiated by the Darbar of Sikkim were more concerned for the welfare of the people in that period.

During this, the modern type of Chief Court with full time judge and separate Judiciary with Executive was established by a Charter of April, 1955. Indian Code and Criminal Code (1953-1954) were introduced and Indian Penal Code was adopted, provision relating to capital punishment for murder during life sentence was deleted, provision about marriage offences being not in conformity with the customary laws was also deleted. The Judicial and Magisterial functions of landlords were completely abolished (1948). The social evils and inequality such as public gambling was declared illegal (1921), use of unpaid labour was prohibited (1924), the personnel of the landlords' court was abolished (1937), form of conscripted labour for government work on payment called Jharlangi was curtailed (1945-1946). The Khuruwa, obliged labour is attendance at staging points in anticipation of officials and tourists and landlords' court and their power of registration of lands and deeds were abolished in 1947 and Home Tax was totally remitted in 1950. It is worth mentioning here that all these judicial and legal reformation measures taken by the monarchical state were the starting point of welfare policy in Sikkim as in those days there was no 'Rule of Law' and the Chogyal was the final authority. Therefore, establishment of Judiciary in Sikkim and judicial reformation through the abolition of evil social practices was sort of relieving and easing the life of the common people against the social injustice in some way. Therein, services rendered and measures adopted by the state in that

period were rehabilitative, supportive and protective. So, in the context of Sikkim, the concept of welfare was the component of social right, justice and equality as well as fulfilling of basic needs, improvement of living standards and exemption from sickness and hardship in the pre-merger era.

From the above it can be said that the concept of welfare state was not born all of a sudden but it evolved in due course of time and though the genesis and evolution of welfare state in the world have similar story of gradual evolution yet, is not simultaneous. The welfare state emerged over time as the consequences of compulsion, stresses, strains, pressure of certain socio-economic and political events from both outside and inside, industrialisation, capitalist civilisation, and growth of monopoly, mass poverty and unemployment, periodical depressions and new dimensions in social policy. Therefore, the growth and development of welfare state bears multidimensional historical records and long series of socio-political as well as economic events and woes its origination both in the socialist and capitalist society.

II

WELFARE AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN SSP MANIFESTOES

Welfare policy and poverty alleviation programme are two fundamental facets of the welfare state. 'Welfare Policy' is a course of action adopted by the government or state or any organisation in relation to public welfare. Such welfare policy concerns with the social service, social welfare for the underprivileged and weaker sections of society such as women, children, workers, the Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribes, the physically and mentally challenged, social security, social insurance, health and medical care, child and family welfare and care, basic education, provisions for full employment, pension of retired, aged old and disabled, housing scheme for the squalor, social assistance for

sickness, accident, work injury, maternity, proper management and arrangement of basic public need.

While, on the other hand, poverty alleviation programmes are those which are formulated and initiated by the government to combat poverty and there is greater intervention of state or government through various beneficiary-oriented programmes and area development programmes.²³⁵ In India, such poverty alleviation programme includes Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM), Development of Women and Children in Rural Area (DWCRA), Integrated Rural Energy Planning and Programme (IREP), Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) etc.

In most of the Western countries, USA, England, Germany, Sweden, New Zealand, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Norway, Switzerland, France, the Netherlands, etc welfare policy includes insurance and compensation for industrial or any sort of accident, sickness, disability, unemployed, old age, national insurance for couple, a single adult, widow and retired person, pension for retired person, widow, age-old, family aid and allowance for dependent and children, allowance for the first child in the family, social security, major insurance scheme for entire population, relieving of destitution, abolition of poverty and workers' compensation scheme etc. The public health, education, public housing and housing allowance, child care, guaranteeing workers a basic standard of living, mitigation of extreme need and suffering, student loans, insurance for the farmers and self-employed and family allowance for both earners and others and caring of handicaps such as deaf, partially hearing, with severe speech defects, blind, partially sighted, physically handicapped also come within the fold of welfare policy.

²³⁵ The programme includes the strategy to promote (i) economic growth and overall development (ii) human development with emphasis on health, education and minimum needs (iii) eradicate poverty through employment generation, training and building up asset endowments of the poor and (iv) protect the poor from inflationary pressures and provide them with access to essential foods at affordable prices (Chelliah & Sudarshan, 1999, p.105).

In India, welfare policy of the government is concerned with raising the living standard of the citizens, and launching of various social services, social welfare and welfare for the weaker sections and social security measures like housing, health and education, social welfare and welfare; social defence, corrections, social and moral hygiene, after-care and welfare of the needy, underprivileged and weaker sections of society such as women, children, workers, the Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribes, the physically and mentally handicapped, the aged, the beggars etc, provision of full employment and anti-poverty measures and under social security; social insurance against sickness, unemployment, interruption of income, industrial mishaps and other contingencies of life.

In the case of Sikkim, in the pre-merger period, the component of welfare policy was more inclusive and comprehensive of social right, justice and equality apart from fulfilling of basic needs, improvement of living standard and exemption from sickness and hardship. But in the post-merger period, the welfare policy extended to family and health welfare and care, basic education, social defence, social assistance, social housing, day care centre and recreation centre, destitute homes, integrated education, scholarship and subsistence allowance for disabled, old age pension, welfare of the needy, disadvantaged sections of society such as women, children, workers, Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribes, physically and mentally handicapped, age old, provision of full employment, social insurance against sickness, accident, natural calamities so on and other anti-poverty measures. However, though the basic education comes within the fold of welfare policy and activities of the government yet, it is not being discussed in this chapter as it has already been discussed in detail in the fifth chapter under section II of the thesis.

Sikkim was still the youngest one amongst the Indian states; it became the part of Indian Union in 1975. For such newly emerging state within the fold of democratic and socialistic pattern of Indianism, the term, 'welfare' sounded very

new. The SSP, when formed in 1984, Article 4 clause (f) of the Constitution (SSP) stated, 'It shall strive for all-round development of the people of Sikkim by giving priority to the socially, economically and educationally backward communities including Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes'. The clause (i) of the same article further read, 'It shall give priority to the welfare of youth, women and children' (Constitution of SSP, 1984, p. 1). In the context of Sikkim, all-round development meant fulfilment of basic needs of those days like health, education, housing and provision of safe drinking water, massive electrification, improvement of rural transport and communication, management of sanitation and increase in agricultural productivity.

Along with this, on the eve of general election to the Sikkim Legislative Assembly, SSP, in its Election Manifesto (1984, p.2) it appealed to the people of Sikkim that if voted to power, then it 'executes the plans and projects which had come to a grinding halt, for the betterment of the people of Sikkim' and 'affirm the solidarity of the Sikkimese people to the Sikkim Sangram Parishad and support its policies and programmes'. Such statement of the party indicated the sympathy towards the interests of the people (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1984, p. 2). The SSP laid more stress on vocational education reoriented to meet the needs of the country as a whole. It promised to give emphasis on quality rather than quantity in the educational sphere and establish University, more schools, colleges, Polytechnic Institutes, Engineering College and a Medical College in Sikkim. It also was determined to fight for more seats for Sikkimese students in educational institutions outside the state (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1984, p. 6). Providing free education to attain the goal of all round development of Sikkim was another promise of SSP. Along with this, it assured to create special opportunities and provide Higher Education to raise the standard of Education of Sikkim to the level of other Indian states (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1989, p.12). The purpose of giving priority to education was to eradicate poverty and injustice from the society and for strengthening all round development of the state (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1989, p.10).

Better health care occupies an important place in the welfare policy of SSP. So, in its election manifesto, it was determined to make Sikkim an ideal state by giving topmost priority to family welfare. For the extension of health services, SSP pledged to set up the health Sub-Centres at the Panchayat levels, a Central Health Centre to meet the need of quality health provisions for the people to treat all kinds of disease with the help of modern technology (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1989, p.9). It also gave stress for greater medical facilities in terms of more beds, more qualified doctors and better nursing care, mother and child care in the state. It called for specialized and sophisticated treatment in capital hospitals, Gangtok and provided more facilities in district hospitals and dispensaries (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1984, p. 6).

The welfare of Schedule Castes, Schedule Tribes and Backward Classes had also been an important plank of SSP's policies and programmes. For the welfare of Schedule Tribes, Schedule Castes and Backward Classes, it promised to demand more financial allocation for the welfare of the STs, SCs and other weaker sections of the society. It committed to provide pre-matric and post-matric scholarship and increase the amount of the same for the school going children of scheduled caste and Tribe, grant housing loans at highly subsidised rate and launch various scheme and programmes for their welfare (Sikkim Express, 16th January 1985). In the general Election of 1989, it committed to make special provisions for the lower castes and communities in order to make them balanced with other communities. To acquire this, it assured the formulation of various schemes and works to be accomplished in accordance with the programmes laid down by the SSP (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1989, p. 7).

For the welfare of female, the SSP assured to make provision for the preservation of honour and permanent security of the female section by executing the Hindu Marriage Act. The SSP was determined to implement the aforesaid Act in the fullest possible means and ensure security and special provisions for the female section. Devise and execute schemes to provide special

privileges according to the need of the female folk to uplift their status and to preserve their interests; discussion and consultation will be done with the senior female citizens of the state to propagate the right and justified schemes. To give genuine sympathy towards all the employers of the state starting right from the wage labourers, the SSP promised to fulfil their demands (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1989, pp. 7-10).

For creating full employment opportunities and avenues for educated youths, SSP pledged to establish small and Cottage Industries like handicraft and handloom, carpet weaving, tanka painting and wood carving work in Sikkim (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1984, p. 6).²³⁶ It also promised to launch various schemes and programmes to benefit the educated unemployed youths and impart training for capacity building and skill development to make them self-help and self-reliance. For an individual unit, hoteliers, taxi operators, artisans, entrepreneurs, businessmen and unemployed youth, it promised to provide financial assistance in the form of loans through various financial institutions at highly subsidised rate (Sikkim Express, 16th January 1985, Vol-29, No. 6).

In Sikkim, rural development which formed the bedrock of the society had more or less close connection with the concept of welfare. Therefore, apart from the welfare programmes and schemes, SSP pledged to launch various poverty alleviation programmes for Rural Development and combating poverty in Sikkim. For Rural Development, it promised to launch various programmes in main areas like Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Horticulture and Poultry farming. The SSP promised for the demand of regular supply of better seeds, fertilizers, insecticides, agricultural implements and implementation of irrigation projects, promote self dependence to the farmers by executing modern technologies in agriculture and provide more aid for the cultivation of mushroom, ginger, sunflower, cardamom, orange, apple and flowers (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1984,

²³⁶ Large industries and factories in Sikkim is not feasible, therefore, SSP made commitments to set up small industries along with some domestic industries in almost all part of Sikkim to resolve unemployment problems (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1989, p.8).

p. 4 & 1989, p. 9). In the same way, programmes have been devised to focus much on agriculture and animal husbandry in order to uplift the financial status of our people (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1989, p. 12). To increase the production of milk and milk products, better breed of cattle was felt necessary. In a nutshell the objective of the SSP's rural development programme was to make every village self-sufficient in its basic needs. Besides, the Parishad, in its Election Manifesto (1984, p.7) laid stress on Rural Electrification Programme. It pledged to electrify each and every village in Sikkim in the shortest possible time and to give top priority to the supply of safe drinking water to the people all over the state. It made a time-bound programme to supply safe drinking water to all villages in the state. It also accorded top most priority to family planning. It ensured for good houses in place of the weak houses by distributing free tin sheets for roofs to the poor people and devised a poor oriented programme which would help in eradication of poverty from entire Sikkim. To meet the present need and facilitate domestic cooking and domestic electrification, SSP committed itself to launch Solar Energy Schemes. The provision for the Drinking Water and Domestic Electrification was also to be made possible to facilitate each and every houses of every village. To safeguard the interest of Sikkim and the Sikkimese people and ensure security in Sikkim, SSP, promised to formulate more laws and rules (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1989, pp. 6-12). The family planning and sanitation, state social housing scheme were some other welfare agendas of the party. To give speedy legal remedies particularly to the poor people, SSP also promised to set up mobile courts (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1984, pp. 6-8).

III

WELFARE POLICIES OF THE SSP GOVERNMENT

After the landslide and windfall victory of SSP led by Bhandari in Sikkim Assembly election of 1985, various welfare as well as poverty alleviation programmes were launched. The government also made some commendable achievements in the

spheres of welfare activities. These are discussed briefly under sub-heads as below-

1. Health and Family Welfare

Health and family are two significant contributors of human capital formation. Investment in health and family has direct returns in terms of longevity and improvement in the physical and mental development of the people. Better health and family status of the population leads to reduced mortality, higher life expectancy, decline in infant and child mortality.

Health improvement and nutritional status of the family has been one of the major thrust areas of the social development programmes in the country. This can be achieved through improvement and utilization of Health, Family Welfare and Nutrition Services. As such the provision for the preventive, curative and promotional services for health is essential. This can be ensured by the way of health service such as medical institutions, providing curative services and a series of disease-specific campaign, programmes targeted towards prevention, eradication and control of diseases.

Better health care and family welfare occupied an important place in the welfare policy of the SSP. In its election manifesto (1984, p.6 & 1989, p.9) it determined to make Sikkim an ideal state by giving topmost priority to family welfare. For the extension of health services, SSP pledged to set up the health Sub-Centres at the Panchayat levels, a Central Health Centre to meet the need of quality health provisions for the people to treat all kinds of diseases with the help of modern technology. It also gave stress for greater medical facilities in terms of more beds, more qualified doctors and better nursing care, mother and child care in the state. It called for specialized and sophisticated treatment in capital hospitals, Gangtok and provides more facilities in District Hospitals and Dispensaries.

After the SSP came to power, an effort was made to reach the basic health needs to the doorsteps of the rural mass.²³⁷ The government strived to reduce the infant and maternal mortality in the state and aimed at reaching the goal of 'Health for All by 2000 AD' (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 50-54).²³⁸ For this very purpose, establishment of medical institutions were indispensable in Sikkim.

In between 1985-1992, altogether 07 Family Health Centres, 23 Primary Health Centres and 141 Primary Health Sub-Centres; ie, 01 Primary Health Centres for 2000 population and 01 Primary Health Sub-Centres for 3000 population were established. By the end of Eighth Five Year Plan (1990-1997) it was expected to have hundred percent of the PHCs and eight percent PHSCs functioning in the Government Buildings. The Central Referral Hospital at Gangtok was upgraded to a 300 bedded from 250 beds (BESPDD, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, p. 112).

For better diagnostic and treatment facilities, modern sophisticated equipments for all the specialities had been provided. Specialised services in the field of medicine, surgery, anaesthesia, orthopaedics, Radiology, Pathology, Pediatrics, ophthalmology, Gynaecology, Dental, Dermatology and Psychiatry were added. Super speciality in cardiology with intensive coronary care unit with modern sophisticated equipments was also introduced. State Level Blood Bank and Transfusion Unit with facilities for HIV Screening were set up. In 1992, number of patients treated and beds available increased tremendously. The availability of beds has increased from 630 of 1970-1980 to 795 of 1991-1992.²³⁹ Similarly, the treatment of indoor patients and outdoor patients also went up to 12237 and 315863 in 1991-1992 against 8928 and 207447 of 1979-1980 respectively.

²³⁷ Rural masses formed the major component of the state population.

²³⁸ In 1978, an international conference on Global Health Rights was organised by WHO and UNICEF in Alma Ata (USSR). In so called 'Alma Ata Declaration' 134 countries subscribed to the goal of 'Health For All' by the year 2000 and India was one of them. The main goal of the Declaration was 'Health for All' through 'Primary Health Care' which included promotion of proper nutrition and an adequate supply of safe water, basic sanitation, maternal and child care, including family planning, immunization against the major infectious diseases, prevention and control of locally endemic diseases, education concerning prevailing health problems and the methods of preventing and controlling them and appropriate treatment for common diseases and injuries. India was one of the founding members (Gupta, 2008, p. 202).

²³⁹ Out of which 445 in East district, 110 in West, 80 North and 160 South district.

In addition to this, by the end of 1992, a new 75 bedded hospital at Singtam, East district and 100 bedded hospital at Namchi, South district with specialised services in the field of surgery gynaecology, ophthalmology, medicine and orthopaedics were constructed. For providing temporary hospitalisation for the leprosy patients, a 20 bedded Pt. G.B. Pant Leprosy Hospital at Sajong, East Sikkim was set up. More than 512 leprosy cases were detected and were given treatment (Sikkim Observer, 10-16th October 1987, Vol-2, No-81). For the treatment of Tuberculosis patients, 60 bedded District Tuberculosis Centre at Namchi and 10 bedded mini District Tuberculosis Centres in other three districts of Sikkim were constructed (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, 50-54). Proposal for the construction of 100 bedded district hospital at Geyzing and 60 bedded hospital at Mangan was made in Eighth Five Year Plan (1990-1997). During this time, the number of beds also increased to 445 in 1992 against 380 of 1980.

Free medicines to the District Hospitals, Primary Health Centres and Primary Health Sub-Centres and free diet to the District Hospitals, Primary Health Centres and Primary Health Sub-Centres were provided. During this, the provision for free medical facility had considerably increased over the year and in 1991-1992 it stood at one crore of rupees.²⁴⁰ The treatment of ailments for which facilities were not available in the state was referred for further treatment outside Sikkim and financial aid at different scales was provided to the patients (Sikkim Observer, 10-16th October 1987, Vol-2, No-81).

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) survey report of 1976, the people suffering from goitre in Sikkim were estimated to be 56%. To scrap the goitre, sale of non-iodised salt throughout the state was banned under the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act 1954 with the effect of 11th Sept. 1985.²⁴¹

²⁴⁰ Amji system of medical treatment also co-existed during this time.

²⁴¹ State Laboratory for the attainment of iodine in the iodised salt in sample basis was set up at Namchi for diagnosis, treatment and research in Iodine Deficiency Diseases (IDD).

Various Programmes; Family Welfare Programme, Family Planning Programme, Tuberculosis Control Programme, National Programme for the Control of Blindness, National Malaria Eradication Programme, Health Awareness Camp and Orientation Training Programme, Diarrhoeal Disease Control Programme etc. relating to health care and disease control were initiated by the government (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 50-54). In 1990-1991, under Family Welfare Programme, immunisation for infants against the killer diseases such as tuberculosis, diphtheria, tetanus, polio, whooping cough, and measles was carried out covering 77% of the total infants of Sikkim. Under Family Planning Programme, a team of doctors and paramedical staffs were trained for Leproscopy operation and teams were catered to all four districts of Sikkim. From the year 1989-1990, 7990 sterilisation and 10348 Intra-Uterine-Devices (IUD) insertions was done and eligible couple protection rate went up to 20% from 2% (Sikkim Herald, 26th January 1993, Vol-37, No-4).²⁴²

The Government also launched state-wide Tuberculosis Control Programme in Sikkim. In between 1985-1992, 11,029 Tuberculosis cases were detected and given treatment (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 50-54). Under National Programme for the Control of Blindness, 553 cataract operations was done and similarly under National Malaria Eradication Programme, fortnightly domiciliary visits were made by Surveillance workers to detect fever cases and given treatment for the same.²⁴³ Under Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), 482 Anganwadi Centres were established in the villages by 1992.²⁴⁴ Under

²⁴² To provide basic health service, 293 indigenous Dhies, 345 Health guides and Host of other paramedical staffs were trained.

²⁴³ Blood samples were also collected from fever cases to detect the causes. Over the year the incidence of malaria was brought down during 1991-1992, 17 positive cases were detected as against 57 of 1979-1980.

²⁴⁴ Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) was a centrally sponsored scheme was launched in India in 1975 with the following objectives (i) Improve the nutritional and health status of children below the age of 6 years, pregnant and lactating mothers (ii) Lay the foundation for the proper psychological, physical and social development of the child (iii) Reduce the incidence of mortality, morbidity, malnutrition and school drop-outs and (iv) Enhance the capability of the mother to look after the health and nutritional needs of the child through proper health and nutrition education. In Sikkim the same scheme was launched by the state government with the target to set up at least 405 Anganwadi Centres.

Nutrition Programme, mid-day-meal and supplementary nutrition was provided in Sikkim for better health status among the mothers and children (Sikkim Herald, 26th January 1993, Vol-37, No-4). Under School Health Programme, Age-wise Immunisation Programme was initiated to cover the school going children from class-I to class-V. All Health Programme was also implemented through regular Health Education Activities like Health Awareness Camp and Orientation Training Programme to educate and motivate the people for better care and small family norms through mass media, like films, literature exhibition etc (Sikkim Herald, 11th June 1985, Vol-28, No-53). Under the Diarrhoeal Disease Control Programme, medical as well as paramedical workers including mothers were trained on oral Rehydration, Therapy and Diagnosis of Dehydration case caused due to server diarrhoea (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 50-54).

2. Social Welfare and Social Security

Social Welfare encompasses a host of measures which fall within the ambit of social security. The social welfare groups include persons with disabilities,²⁴⁵ social deviants who come in conflict with law²⁴⁶ and the other disadvantaged groups.²⁴⁷ While, social security is the protection which society provides for its members, through a series of measures against the economic and social distress caused by the substantial reduction of earning, from sickness, maternity, employment injury, invalidity, old age and dead.²⁴⁸ In India, social security includes legislations, various

²⁴⁵ Disables includes loco-motor, visual, hearing, speech and mental, disabilities etc.

²⁴⁶ Social deviants who come in conflict with law are those juvenile delinquents or vagrants, drugs addicts, alcoholics, sex workers, beggars etc.

²⁴⁷ Disadvantage groups are older persons, children in distress such as street children, orphaned/abandoned children etc.

²⁴⁸ The social security is important for both promotional and protection measures. The promotional social security refers to the expansion of basic human capabilities of the population and include measures at two levels: (a) the provision of basic needs, education, health and nutrition (EHN) programmes including public distribution system (PDS), which improve the capabilities of the population as a whole and (b) improvement of the economic security through implementation of asset and employment generation and poverty alleviation programmes. Protective social security includes entitlements to those affected by old age, disability, sickness, maternity, employment injury etc. and includes contributory benefits in the form of pensions and retirement benefits to Government employees, provident funds and other benefits for workers in the factories and other commercial establishments, pensions for vulnerable groups and marriage and maternity or other social assistance for women and others.

Schemes and Programmes relating to the public life. The several legislations includes Maternity Benefit Act (1961), Employee's State Insurance Act (1948), Payment of Gratuity Act (1972), Employee's Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provident Act (1952) and schemes and programmes includes Employees' Provident Fund Scheme, Employees' Deposit-Linked Insurance Scheme, Employees' Pension Scheme, Life Insurance Scheme, National Family Benefit Scheme, National Social Assistance Programme and Annapurna National Social Assistance Programme, Annapurna Scheme, National Old Age Pension Scheme, Indra Gandhi Old Age Pension Scheme, Aam Admi Bima Yojana, Rastriya Swasthya Bima Yojana etc. Similarly, social welfare includes various Legislations, Schemes and Programmes such as Welfare and Development of Persons with Disabilities, Persons with Disabilities²⁴⁹ Act, 1995, Integrated Scheme to Promote Voluntary Action for Persons with Disabilities Scheme, Deen Dayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme and Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchasing Fitting Aids and Appliances Scheme etc (Gupta, 2008, pp. 317-329).

In Sikkim, Social Welfare Department is responsible for looking after the welfare of the women, destitute and neglected children, physically handicapped, old age persons and juvenile delinquents.²⁵⁰ Under the Social Welfare Department, various social welfare schemes and programmes like Old Age Pension Scheme, Subsistence Allowance to Disabled, Award of Scholarship to Disabled, Supply of Aids and Appliances to the Disabled, Integrated Education for Disabled, Grant-in-aid to other Destitute Homes, Day Care Centre and Recreation Centre, Hostel for Working Women, Assistance to Voluntary Organisations, Training Centres for Women, Social Defence Programme etc were initiated by the government.²⁵¹

²⁴⁹ Disabilities Act envisages Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation.

²⁵⁰ Initially the Social Welfare Wing under the Health Department was established in 1976 and later formed a part of Rural Development Department. In 1991 January, it was however, once again, reverted back to the Health Department until when it started functioning as a full-fledged Department.

²⁵¹ But in order to implement these schemes and programmes, the Department of Bureau of Economics and Statistics foremost conducted Sample Survey of Disabled Persons in Sikkim and

The Old Age Pension is one of social welfare schemes launched from April, 1981. In Sikkim, this scheme was implemented with the amendment of Sikkim Old Age Pension Rules, 1981. One hundred beneficiaries were selected each year for Old age Pension. By 1992, the total number of selected beneficiaries was 1154.²⁵²

Under Subsistence Allowance to Disabled Scheme, the helpless disabled persons having no one to look after them were provided with a monthly monetary grant. Initially, grant was of Rs 50/-per month. But later, the amount was increased to Rs 100/-. In between, 1985-1994, 83 helpless disabled persons were benefited.²⁵³ The disabled students studying in general schools were also awarded scholarship and altogether 46 disabled students were benefited with the scholarship by 1992.

The Sheltered Workshop for Disabled was also set up at Jorethang, South Sikkim to impart training in cane and bamboo works to disabled trainees on daily wages basis as to provide means of their livelihood. By 1991-1992 there were 12 production workers and 10 trainers. Under 'Supply Aids and Appliances' Scheme, the government provided wheel chairs, crutch axilla, crutch elbow, hearing aid, calliper, spectacle to 30 disables at free of cost (Sikkim Herald, 26th August 1989, Vol-32, No-18). The government also sent orthopeadically challenged persons to Calcutta, Jaipur and Pune for medical treatment and correction and fitting of artificial limbs in its own expenses sent.²⁵⁴

identified 4825 disabled persons in the state. Thereafter, the government launched and implemented various social welfare schemes and programmes.

²⁵² Initially, each beneficiary had been paid the sum of Rs 50/- per month. But later the amount was enhanced to Rs 60/-per month and then to Rs 100/- per month.

²⁵³ Subsistence Allowance to Disabled was the new scheme which had been implemented in 1981 with an observance of 'International Year of the Disabled'.

²⁵⁴ More than 17 persons were benefited at free of all cost under this scheme.

Grant-in-Aid was extended to the Destitute Homes of Chakung, Kaluk, Gangtok, Pelling and Mangan, womens' organisations,²⁵⁵ Sikkim Branch of Association for the Blind, Dharma Chakra Centre, Rumtek and Sikkim Branch of Indian Red Cross Society (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp.137-142). Day Care Centre and Recreation Centre for nursing and caring of infants of working mothers were established in Gangtok and Blind School in Namchi. More than 115 Creches for the children of working mothers were also established (Sikkim Herald, 20th January 1988, Vol-33, No-5). At an estimated cost of Rs 18.32 lakh, Hostels for the Working Women were established at Namchi and Gangtok in 1991, with the accommodating capacity of 50 working ladies. Training in cutting, tailoring, knitting, embroidery, weaving, pickle making, chips and wafer making etc. was imparted to the women.

Social Defence Programme (SDP) was another legal sanction initiated by the government. For the care, welfare, protection, education, training and rehabilitation of neglected and delinquent juveniles, the Sikkim Children Act 1982 was enacted under this programme. But later on Sikkim Children Act 1982 was replaced by the enactment of Central Law i.e, Juvenile Justice Act 1986.²⁵⁶ The Act 1986 provided for the establishment of Institutions like, Observation Home at Rongyek for temporary reception of juveniles, Juvenile Home and Special Home for the care, protection, education, training of neglected delinquent, competent Authorities like Juvenile Welfare Board, Juvenile Court. For the implementation of the Act, the Sikkim Juvenile Rules 1990 under the Juvenile Justice Act 1986 has been notified (No.15 (84) 88-89/SW/6 Dated: 17th April 1990, Tuesday, Govt. of Sikkim).

The government made a provision of 3% job reservation in the government services for the disabled. The conveyance allowance @ 10% of their

²⁵⁵ Like Sikkim Womens' Council, Samiti and other Organisations of Sikkim, Geyzing and Lingchom for conducting training in different vocations.

²⁵⁶ According to the Act 1986 '*no child under any circumstance shall be put in police lock up jail*'. This implementation was the direct result of the Supreme Court of India's direction.

basic pay per month was also provided (Sikkim Herald, 15th March 1986, Vol-29, No.1). Free travelling facility for the blind along with the escort in the Sikkim Nationalized Transport (SNT) buses was also provided by the government (Sikkim Herald, 26th January 1993, Vol-37, No.4).

3. Welfare of Schedule Tribes and Schedule Castes

The important plank of SSP's policies and programme in its election manifesto was the welfare of Schedule Castes, Schedule Tribes and Backward Classes. The SSP was determined to demand more financial allocation and committed to provide housing loans at highly subsidised rate. It also promised to launch various schemes and programmes for the skill development of ST and SCs and provide pre-matric and post-matric scholarship to the school going children of Schedule Castes and Tribes (Sikkim Express, 16th January 1985). It further committed to make special provisions for the lower castes and communities in order to bring them at par with other communities (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1989, p. 7).

For the extension of economic benefit and welfare of the Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Castes, various welfare schemes were implemented. The schemes like Scholarship Scheme, Housing Assistance and Economic Grant Scheme, Tools and Implements Scheme and other various programmes were launched. Educational Development for the students of the Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Caste was the most important concern of the government and lion share of the state plan fund was spent on Scholarship Scheme for Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Caste students. Two types of Scholarship Scheme; pre-matric and post-matric scholarship were implemented by the Government through the Department (Sikkim Observer, 14-20th February 1987, Vol-1, No-22).

Under pre-matric and post-matric scholarship scheme, 3511 Schedule Tribe and 2735 Scheduled Caste were benefited respectively by 1992.²⁵⁷ Under Housing Scheme, 4132 ST and 592 SC families were benefited respectively. More than 4132 ST and 592 SC families were provided GCI sheets for house roofing till the end of 1992 (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 128-130). For the economic betterment of poor ST and SC families, the government also distributed, piglets, bullocks, milch cows, and under Tools and Implements Scheme, sewing machine and black smithy tools were distributed to the SCs (Sikkim Observer, 14-20th February 1987, Vol-1, No-22). By the end of 1991 about 738 SC and 776 ST families were covered under this scheme and in the Eighth Five Year Plan (1990-1997) government set target to cover 300 ST and 250 SC families under the same scheme. For encouraging and promoting the professional skill of the SC people, government established Iron Workshop-Cum-Training Centre at Nagi, South Sikkim to undergo skill development training for SC young youths. Training Programme on knitting, tailoring, carpet weaving, cane and bamboo work and blacksmith under TRYSEM, NREP, and RLEGP was also imparted to the STs and SCs (Sikkim Herald, 28th May 1985, Vol-28, No-48).

On the recommendation of Schedule Tribe and Schedule Caste Department, Government of Sikkim, the Government of India sanctioned Rs 7.61 lakhs for the establishment of Model Tribal Village under Eighth Financial Commission at Ray Mindhu, East Sikkim, Chojo Thingling, West Sikkim and Hee-Geythang, North Sikkim. Under this scheme, six classroom, three staff quarter, an approach road, two water supply units, one unit of medical equipment and a water seal latrine at Ray Mindhu, three class-room and one water supply unit for Chojo, Thingling and one water supply unit and one medical equipment for Hee-Geythang were constructed.

²⁵⁷ In the Eighth Five Year Plan (1990-1997) the government made physical target to cover 19,000 ST and 12,350 SC under pre-matric scholarship scheme and 1125 ST and 230 SC under post-matric scheme respectively.

The government of India sanctioned another amount of Rs 10.32 lakh for the establishment of Seed Potato Farm at Shipgear, Dzongu, North Sikkim in 1992. Under Twenty Point Programme (TPP) various schemes were launched for the economic assistance of the Schedule Tribe and Schedule Caste families. By the end of 1992, 13662 Schedule Caste and 28617 Schedule Tribe families were given economic assistance (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 128-130). Besides, the government also constructed 2 Girls Hostels for the Schedule Caste²⁵⁸ and 5 Girls Hostels for Schedule Tribe.²⁵⁹

4. Welfare of Educated Unemployed Youths and Economically Backward Classes

For creating full employment opportunities and avenues for educated youths, SSP in its Election Manifesto (1984, p. 6 & 1989, p. 8) pledged to establish Small Scale and Cottage Industries like handicraft and handloom, carpet weaving, tanka painting and wood carving work in Sikkim. Large industries and factories in Sikkim was not feasible, therefore the SSP made commitment to set up small industries along with some domestic industries in almost all parts of Sikkim to resolve the unemployment problem (Sikkim Express, 16th January 1985, Vol-29, No-6).²⁶⁰

In order to fulfil its commitments the government launched various programmes such as training of educated youths on wiring, knitting, tailoring, carpet weaving, cane and bamboo work, training on chalk, candle and soap making, training on sanitary filling, carpentry, mosaic mansion, marble stone, fitting and fixing and iron grill making etc, training on mushroom plantation, vegetable cultivation, training on cutting and tailoring, training on various trades

²⁵⁸ 50 bedded Girl Hostel for SC was constructed at Khamdong and 25 bedded at Rhenock.

²⁵⁹ 50 bedded Girl Hostel for ST was constructed at Chungthang, 50 bedded Hee Gaythang, 25 bedded Ravangla, 25 bedded Tingbong and 50 bedded at Phodong.

²⁶⁰ It also promised to launch various schemes and programmes to benefit the educated unemployed youth and impart training for capacity building and skill development to make them self-help and self-reliant. For an individual unit, hotels, taxi operators, artisans, entrepreneurs, businessmen and unemployed youth, it promised to provide financial assistance in the form of loan through various financial institutions at highly subsidised rate.

and industrial units, small scale and cottage industries for the educated unemployed youths and rural unemployed youths (Sikkim Herald, 8th October 1985, Vol-28, No-81/30th July 1988, Vol-31, No-65/16th February, 1989, Vol-32, No-13/ Sikkim Express 1-7th March 1987, Vol-4, No-9). Entrepreneurship Development Programme, Rural Artisan Training Programme, Entrepreneurs Motivation Programme, Motivation Programme for self-confidence, self-reliance and self-stand were conducted for the educated unemployed youths under, Training of Rural Youths for Self-Employment (TRYSEM), Integrated Rural Employment Programme (IREP), National Rural Employment Programme (NREP), Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP), (Sikkim Herald, 19th June 1985, Vol-28, No-55/12th July, 1985, Vol-31, No-60/30th April 1988, Vol-31, No-36/15 October 1988, Vol-31, No-88).

New Schemes for financial assistance such as National Equity Fund Scheme (NEFS) to assist the entrepreneurs in establishing industrial units and Single Window Scheme (SWS) to provide loans and working capital to the educated unemployed youths who are interested in establishing industrial units was initiated (Sikkim Observer, 25th October 1985, Vol-1, No-10). In 1986, scheme, '*State Scheme of Incentives for Small Scale Industries*' was also launched in Sikkim to provide raw materials at highly subsidised rate, consultancy service, and power interest, interest on working capital and exemption on security deposited to benefit the educated unemployed youths (Notification No.27/DI/86-87/1052 dated: 27th October 1986). New provision of loan for educated unemployed youths under Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-1990) and Provision for the Relief Fund in case of natural calamities and other accidental cases were also initiated by the government (Sikkim Observer, 27th September, 1986, Vol-1, No-8).

For the upliftment and welfare of the economically weaker sections of the society, schemes like economic assistance scheme, social housing and group housing scheme, construction financial assistance scheme were launched by the state government (Sikkim Herald, 20th January 1989, Vol-32, No-7). The centrally

sponsored programme such as National Rural Employment Programme, Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme, Development of Women and Children in Rural Area, Rural Fuel Wood Plantation Scheme, Improved Chula Scheme, Biogas Energy Plantation Scheme, Solar Energy scheme, Wind Energy scheme, under New and Renewable Energy Sources and Integrated Rural Energy Planning Programme were implemented by the government (Sikkim Herald, 20th January 1988, Vol-31, No-5/Sikkim Herald, 20th February 1988, Vol-29, No-12 & 15th July 1988, Vol-1, No-6).

5. Welfare Policy of SSP towards Government Employees

The SSP in its Election Manifesto (1989, p.10) promised to fulfil their demands and give all possible and genuine sympathy towards all the employees of Sikkim starting right from the wage labourers. The government after coming to power, a new set of Conduct Rules, Disciplinary and Appeal Rules and rules defining and streamlining the system of filling up of post in Government Department was framed. The Pension Rules relating to pensionary benefits was revised with the view to streamline and simplify the procedure of payment of pension and gratuity to retired government servants in time. Rates of pension and gratuity had been revised w.e.f 1.4.1985. Rules for commutation of pension were introduced from 2.9.1985 enabling the pensioners to commute a portion of his pension and draw a lump-sum amount. The commute value of pension was restored to the pensioners after 15 years of commutation provided if the pensioners were alive at that time. Leave Rules had been revised and elaborate provisions for various kinds of leave admissible to Government servants had been made. The Earned Leave was raised from 180 days to 240 days. Provision for encashment of leave was also introduced in those rules.

During this time, Pay Commission was also constituted to consider the pay structure of the government employees. On the recommendation of the commission, the pay scale of the government employees was revised w.e.f 1.4.1985. To rationalise the pay scale of the government employees in view of the

revision of the scale of the Central Government employees, the state government revised the pay scales w.e.f 1.1.1987 thereby enabling a government servant in the lowest scale to draw a minimum of Rs 1000/- per month plus DA sanctioned by the Government from time to time (Notification No. 67/Gen/East, Establishment Department, Govt. of Sikkim, Dated: 23rd May 1987, NO-65). During this, House Rent Allowance was fixed at 12.5% of revised pay for the government servant drawing the pay scale above Rs 1600/- and 15% for those drawing pay scale upto Rs 1600/-, Hill Compensatory Allowance at 8% of revised pay subject to minimum of Rs 55/-, Difficult Hill Allowance at 10% of revised pay subject to minimum of Rs 125/- and Hill Altitude Allowance at Rs 150/- altitude rising from 800 to 1200 and Rs 200/- from 1200 and above respectively (Notification No.26/GEN/EST, Government of Establishment (Pay Cell) Department, Dated: 29th January 1986).

IV

POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME UNDER THE SSP LED GOVERNMENT

In India, eradication of poverty has been the greatest challenge since it became a sovereign state. As such poverty alleviation has been a part of the planning strategy. In the early 1970s, various direct poverty alleviation programmes such as Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM), Development of Women and Children in Rural Area (DWCRA), Integrated Rural Energy Planning Programme (IREP), Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) etc were launched to combat poverty. The Public Distribution System (PDS) was a part of these programmes.²⁶¹

²⁶¹ These programmes include the strategy to promote (i) economic growth and overall development (ii) human development with emphasis on health, education and minimum needs (iii) eradicate poverty through employment generation, training and building up asset endowments of the poor and (iv) to protect the poor from inflationary pressures and provide them with access to essential foods at affordable prices.

Even in Sikkim, poverty was one of the social problems during the Chogyal period. In 1974, 50.86% of the total population lived Below Poverty Line. In 1984, poverty declined slightly to 39.71%. However, the SSP in its Election Manifesto, 1984 did not mention its stand against poverty but simply had rural development strategies. So, for the rural development, the government launched various schemes under centrally sponsored programmes like IRDP, TRYSE, DWCRA, NRSE, NREP, RLEGP and JRY. Besides, state government launched State Social Housing Scheme, Economic Assistance Scheme, Social and Group Housing Scheme, Financial Assistance Scheme for the benefit as well as upliftment of economically disadvantaged people.

1. Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP)

Integrated Rural Development Programme which was the largest of the entire poverty alleviation programme was started in 1978 and it effectively came into operation on 20th October 1980. It was also called as 'Food for Work Programme' and was designed mainly to provide gainful employment to the families belonging to Below Poverty Line (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, p. 123).²⁶² In Sikkim, this programme was launched in 1980-1981 and was continuously carried out even after the SSP led government came to power in 1985. Under this programme, the state government, carried out house to house survey to identify Below Poverty Line families on the basis of annual income not more than Rs 6400/- and having less than 5 acres of land. The target group of the programme consisted of small farmers, marginal farmers, agricultures labourers, rural artisans and other whose annual family income was below the cut of line on the basis of survey conducted by State Rural Development Agency (SRDA). According to the survey, the cultivator having land holding of 5 acres or below was identified as small farmer. Similarly a person holding 2.5 acres or below were marginal farmer and a person having no land but deriving more than 50% of income from agriculture wage was identified as agricultural labourer. Under this programme, 10430 families

²⁶² Generally the landless, marginal and small farmers were covered under this programme. This project was implemented by the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) of the states (Bhowmik, 2007, p.107 and Chelliah & Sudarshan, 1999, p.106).

belonging to BPL were provided loans for the plantation of ginger, cardamom, potato, orange and establishment of small business, piggery, poultry, pisciculture, carpet weaving and handloom centres and black smithy. The milch cow, bullock, goats, pigs and chicken were also distributed to the BPL families. The State Rural Development Agency (SRDA) released Rs 34.83 lakh against credit mobilisation of Rs 112.28 lakh in subsidy for the benefit of BPL families.

2. Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM)

Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment is a part of IRDP and was started in August 1979. The main aim of the programme was to provide technical and basic managerial skills to the rural men and women of 18-35 years of age belonging to BPL enabling them to take up income-generating activities for self-employed and self-reliance (Chelliah & Sudarshan, 1999, p. 109). Under this scheme, the period of 3-12 months training was imparted to the Rural Youths belonging to Below Poverty Line in different trades like carpet, handloom, rari weaving, cutting and tailoring, knitting, carpentry, black smithy, cane and bamboo work etc. The trainees belonging to BPL were paid the monthly stipend @ of Rs 150/- per month and provided raw material along with tool kits allowance. Within the duration of five years (1985-1990) 1039 youths were trained in different trades out of which about 50% were provided loans with subsidy for starting self-wage employment (Sikkim Herald, 26th January 1993, Vol-37, No-4).

3. Development of Women and Children in Rural Area (DWCRA)

Development of Women and Children in Rural Area was started in 1987 as a result of intermediary evaluation of IRDP but a pilot project consisting of 50 districts was launched in 1978 and was implemented in all the states of India in 1982-1983 (Chelliah & Sudarshan, 1999, p. 110).²⁶³

²⁶³ The main aim of the project was (i) Self-employment along with various training facilities was to be given to the women who are below the poverty line. (ii) Party activities to be increased and organised so that women benefit economically and there is social self-reliance. (iii) The income of the rural poor through increase in output had to be encouraged, (iv) Production oriented

The scheme was started in Sikkim in between 1983-1984.²⁶⁴ Since this scheme was mainly for the women and children between the age group of 18-35 years for assisting them to generate income for self-reliance and self-employed, the finished products produced by them were marketed to Central Cottage Industries, Delhi. Rural Agent of marketing centre was opened in Gangtok for marketing outlet. Under DW CRA, group consisting of 10-15 women members was constituted. Each group was provided one time grant of Rs 15000/- as revolving fund.²⁶⁵ More than 125 groups under various trades were formed of which 10 were from south and 115 from west Sikkim and total 221 (40%) women were assisted and 30% was implemented for smokeless chulla, water supply etc under DW CRA of IRDP.²⁶⁶

4. New and Renewable Energy Source Cell (NSREC) Rural Development

New and Renewable Energy Source Cell (NSREC) Rural Development was another scheme which was introduced in the beginning of 1985-1986 financial years. The cell was launched essentially for the development and propagation of energy options and conservation strategies. Under this scheme various sub-schemes such as Improved Chulla, Biogas Energy Plantation, Wind Energy, Solar Energy and Energy Plantation were launched in Sikkim by the Government in between 1985-1986 to 1991-1992 (Sikkim Herald, 26th January 1993, Vol-37, No-4).

programme had to be formed and (v) Additional facility was to be given to the benefited women and children about proper environment, food and nourishment (Bhowmik, 2007, pp. 115-116).

²⁶⁴ To begin with, Soreng sub-division of west district was taken up. Then in 1989-1990 it was extended to Geyzing, West Sikkim and then in 1990-1991 in Namchi, south district of Sikkim.

²⁶⁵ The fund could be drawn for the purchase of animals for Animal husbandry and also raw materials for weaving carpet, handloom, raries, etc. In Sikkim, so far as implementation of DW CRA is concerned, it received tremendous response by 1990.

²⁶⁶ Health camps for women were also organised in collaboration with the State Health Department under this scheme.

(i) **Improved Chulla Scheme (ICS):** Improved Chulla Scheme which had been launched under NRSE had multi-benefits.²⁶⁷ Under this scheme each beneficiary were given 2 number of 3 inch diameter ACC pipe of 6 feet length and a chimney cowl free of cost and by 1992, 4130 families were benefited.²⁶⁸ Community size chullas were also constructed in school Hostel, Hospitals, Temples and Monastery kitchens. Numerous training was conducted to create cadre of trained self-employed workers in solving unemployment problems.

(ii) **Biogas Energy Scheme:** In Sikkim, agriculture and cattle keeping was the basis of livelihood of most of the people in the earlier days. Taking the advantage of this fact, the government initiated family size biogas energy scheme in Sikkim. Under this scheme, a biogas plant which provided facilities to generate gas for cooking and lighting from animals, human waste of biomass without reducing and damaging the manure value was introduced. Any family having 3-4 cattle were provided 2 Cu. m capacity gas plant to meet up cooking requirement of 4-5 family members. Family, installing biogas plant, were given substantial subsidy in the initial stage. The subsidy was Rs.8000/- per plant, in the following year it was reduced to Rs 7000/- per plant and thereafter to Rs 6000/- per plant.²⁶⁹ By the end of 1992, 272 families of those areas were benefited.

(iii) **Solar Energy Scheme:** Solar Energy Scheme as a sub-scheme of NRSE had several components like solar street and domestic light, Solar Photovoltaic modules for operation of state Television and solar radiation for solar water heater etc. Under this scheme, the NRSE Cell all together 70 solar street lights and domestic lights in Panchayat Ghars, Bhawans, Hostels, Schools, Temples and Monasteries were installed. One each solar power television was installed at Varsay Lodge, Soreng Community Centre and Gnathang Community Centre. From

²⁶⁷ Improved Chulla makes kitchen smokeless, save fuel, wood, lessens the drudgery of a house wife and improve health.

²⁶⁸ Through consumer and co-operative society shops, portable chullas were promoted at subsidised rate which had to be used in combination with fixed chullas.

²⁶⁹ Khamdong in East Sikkim and Lungchok- Salangdang in west Sikkim were the villages in which maximum biogas plants were installed.

1985-1992, the state had over 40 solar water heaters in the institutions, hospitals and some other private sectors.

(iv) Wind and Energy Plantation Scheme: Under New and Renewable Energy Source Cell (NSRE), wind energy scheme was launched and 300 Watt capacity of wind generator was installed at Thangu Police Outpost to charge wireless batteries to provide electricity supply in that area. There was altogether 86 energy plantation, under NRSE Cell and about 300 hectares of land was covered with the view of conservation and afforestation programme in relation to fuel wood need.

5. Integrated Rural Energy Planning Programme (IREP)

Integrated Rural Energy Planning Programme which was introduced in 1986-1987 financial year in the state was another scheme attached to NRES Cell. The NRES Cell was set up in Soreng-Sub Division in 1985-89 covering 7 Revenue Blocks and 43 Revenue Block in the first and second phases respectively under the suspension of one Assistant Project Officer to implement the Programme. In the third phase, Geyzing Sub-Division was covered under this IREP Programme (Sikkim Herald, 17th March 1993, Vol-37, No-6).

6. Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY)

Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) was introduced on 24th April, 1989 intermingling National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) and Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) and continued to be in operation through the Eighth Five Year Plan.²⁷⁰ The Indra Awas Yojana (IAY) a Massive Housing Programme and Million Well Scheme (MWS), scheme of irrigation wells at free of all cost to the poor, small and marginal ST/SC farmers and bounded labourers were the two main sub-schemes of JRY (Chelliah & Sudarshan, 1999, p. 112).²⁷¹

²⁷⁰ Jawahar Rozgar Yojana was 'Food For Work Programme' while was in operation in 1980-1981.

²⁷¹ The main aim of JRY was (i) to guarantee employment in rural areas because NREP and RLEGP created 55% rural employment from 1980-1981 to 1988-1989, (ii) to guarantee employment of 440

This scheme was implemented in Sikkim from 1990 onwards. During the course of implementation of this scheme, 327 number of school buildings, 53 playgrounds, 1988.33 kms village road and jeepable road, 17 water ponds, 13 Integrated Child Development Scheme Centres, 83 Irrigation channels, 44 Community and Panchayat Ghars, 519 bridges,²⁷² 355 village tanks and 658 Indra Awas Houses were constructed until 1992. Apart from these, 616 sanitation work, 42 flood protection work, 62 soil conservation work, 79 Land Development Nursery, Social Forestry work and 621 other works relating to welfare of the rural people was done (No-94/Home/90,Gangtok, Tuesday, 19th June 1990, No-83).

7. Safe Drinking Water under SSP led Government

According to 1981 census, 440 villages in Sikkim were identified as problem villages which needed immediate supply of safe drinking water and 405 habitable revenue blocks speedy implementation of rural electrification schemes. So, SSP in its Election Manifesto (1984, pp.6-7) made the supply of rural and safe drinking water as well as rural electrification two important agenda during general election to the Sikkim Legislative Assembly of 1985 and committed to complete the work within a time bound period.

After SSP led government assumed power, it strived to give topmost priority to those two thrust areas with a view to cover all the villages within 2000 AD. Water Supply Schemes under various programmes, such as Minimum Needs Programme (MNW), Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP), Technology Mission and Groom Water (TMGW) were extensively implemented in Sikkim (Sikkim Observer, 23rd August 1986, Vol-1, No-31).

lakhs families who live below the poverty line, and (iii) the central government had to spend expense 40% of total expenditure in stead of 50%. Of all, the fundamental aim of JRY was to create economic infrastructure and community social assets which would mainly add by the poverty stricken people and also it would aim at to improve the standard of living and the level of wages for which priority was to be began to the ST and SCs and 30% reservation had to be provided for women (Bhowmik, 2007, p. 109).

²⁷²The bridges included Suspension/ RCC/ Steel/ Log bridges.

During the period from 1984-1991, a total of 958 Water Supply Schemes at a total cost of Rs 4,700.00 lakh was implemented. Out of the 440 Villages, 369 Villages were fully covered till the end of 1991 (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 124-126). Remaining 71 villages which were uncovered were assured to be covered fully during the Eighth Five Year Plan (1990-1997).²⁷³ The government also undertook the work of water treatment to ensure safe drinking water. Quality water testing was done in the stationary laboratory of Micro and Geology Department, Gangtok. The Department also deployed one mobile van fully equipped with implements for all kinds of tests. By 1991, the mobile van had covered most of the villages and more than 400 test work was done (Sikkim Herald, 26th January 1993, Vol-37, No-4).

8. Rural Electrification under SSP led Government

During the earlier days, electricity was available only in the urban areas. Rest of the areas throughout Sikkim were spelled with black mask. There were only three power plants; Rongnichu Stage-I (1962), Lingbit stage-I (1970) and Lower Lagyap Hydel Power (1979-1980) and Manual Diesel Power Houses at Mangan, Gangtok, (1958-1982) and Ranipool (1979-1980) that supplied power to the main towns of Sikkim (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp:98-110).

When the SSP led government came to power in 1985, there were 405 habitable revenue blocks that needed speedy implementation of electrification schemes for which supply of more electric power was required. For that more power plants were to be established to generate more and more electricity to meet the demand. Realising this acute shortage of electric supply, the government took up implementation of Rongnichu Hydel Stage-II Scheme (500MW) and Lingbit Hydel Stage-II (500MW) in 1984-1985 and were subsequently commissioned in 1988-1989. Though these schemes could reduce

²⁷³ Though the government attempted to cover villages and houses fully in one time but remained partially covered in the subsequent year due to the emergence of new houses and separate hamlets. Therefore, the implementation of Water Supply Scheme became a continuous process even after all the villages and houses were fully covered.

the shortage, the demand could not fully be met. Therefore, two more Hydel Schemes, namely Mayongchu (66MW) and Upper Rongnichu (4x2MW) were taken up during 1986-1987 and both were fully commissioned in 1991-1992.

The programmes such as Transmission and Distribution Programme, Free Electrification Programme, System Important Scheme etc. were launched in Sikkim to meet the speedy implementation of electrification.

(i) Transmission and Distribution Programme (TDP): Under Transmission and Distribution Programme greater emphasis was given to lay an extension of distribution network to cover as much areas as possible. System improvement works and remodelling of system at important load centre was taken up. Capacity of every transformer was augmented to meet the increasing loads. The 11 KV and LT lines were upgraded which ultimately reduced the loss of Transmission and Distribution²⁷⁴ (IRP, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 104-105).

With this initiative of the government the power supply and energy in the state improved tremendously. Of 405 habitable Revenue Blocks, 400 Revenue Blocks in the state were electrified by the end of 1990-1991 with the financial assistance from the Rural Electrification Corporation. The remaining five (5) Revenue Blocks were targeted to electrify during 1991-1992, thereby achieving 100% village electrification in the state. Extensive Intensification Scheme in the already electrified villages was also taken up during 1990-1992 with a view of covering 100% household to achieve the target of beneficiaries to 100%. An amount of Rs 450 Lakh was to be spent on the ongoing schemes during 1991-1992 (BESPDD, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 57-58).

(ii) Free Electrification Programme: The rural and house to house electrification in the villages was still a mere dream for the government as some of the people

²⁷⁴ Through (i) Capacity augmentation of distribution transformer to avoid overloading. (ii) Replacement of conductor with higher sizes, (iii) Erection of 66KV Transmission lines for bulk transfer of power and (iv) Identification and location of various load centres in the state.

could not effort to obtain connection in their houses. So, the government launched Free Electrification Programme and provided free connection of electricity to the households who were Below Poverty Line. Under this programme, 3,104 households were electrified. A sum of Rs 900/- was spent for each households for providing free electrification connection.²⁷⁵

(iii) **System Important Scheme (SIS):** Under the guidance of the Rural Electrification Corporation (REC), System Important Scheme was formulated by the Power Department for the improvement of reliability, Transmission and Distribution (TD), loses and strengthening of the existing installation. Fund for such schemes were provided under State Plan, Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) and Minimum Needs Programme (MNP). Major share came from Rural Electrification Scheme (RES) assisted by the Rural Electrification Corporation on loan. With the increase of departmental work in the power sector, the strength of the employment also increased to 1595 excluding temporary field workers. The revenue collection out of sale of electrical energy also increased from 15 lakh of 1979-1988 to 216.00 lakh in 1991-1992 (Sikkim Herald, 26th January 1993, Vol-37, No-4).²⁷⁶

9. Home for Homeless Policy of SSP

'Home for Homeless' was neither an issue nor an agenda spelled out in the Election Manifestoes (1984 & 1989) of SSP but appeared as one of the policy of his government when Bhandari announced occasionally in the public gatherings that his Government stands for 'Home for Homeless'. It was in 1987, that state Government in Sikkim launched state-wide scheme, State Social Housing Scheme

²⁷⁵ The government further proposed for providing another 3,100 households for free electricity connection. The main objective of this programme was to ensure that the benefit is percolated to the level of households of Below Poverty Line and the people living at for flung areas. The government also intensified the work in the already electrified blocks to provide benefit to the left out households as well as those which were constructed later on.

²⁷⁶ With the passage of time and development of consciousness among the general masses, the necessity of electricity in the village too revolutionised the basic concept of distribution of energy. Thus, the era of extension of electricity to the rural area began, resulting the augmentation, renovation, rehabilitation, refurbishment, commission, re-commission, transmission and distribution of power and energy plants in Sikkim.

(SSHS). Under SSHS, the government distributed 24 number of 8 long Galvanised Corrugated Iron (GCI) sheet to every families belonging to Below Poverty Line (BPL) to help them to build and roof their houses.²⁷⁷ In between 1987-1991, altogether 12999 families were benefited under the SSHS.²⁷⁸

Besides, the state government also launched other state schemes like Housing Scheme, Economic Assistance and Economic Grant and implemented centrally sponsored scheme, Indra Awas Yojana (IAY) in the state. Under Housing Scheme, 378 families²⁷⁹, Economic Grant 185 families²⁸⁰ and Economic Assistance 41279²⁸¹ belonging to Schedule Tribe and Schedule Caste were benefited by those state schemes respectively. Under Indra Awas Yojana, 658 houses for those belonging to Below Poverty Line were constructed from 1985-1992.²⁸² In addition to this, 4132 families belonging to ST and 592 SC families were provided GCI sheets for roofing their houses.

10. Programmes and Schemes for Rural Farmers

For the benefit of the weaker sections of the society and rural farmers, the government launched various programmes and schemes. Under Seed Multiflication and Distribution Programme, high yielding varieties seeds, chemical fertilizers, pesticides, manures and implements etc. were distributed to the farmers at free of cost. More than 26 government farms meant for multiflication of seeds and planting materials, conducting various adoptive research and

²⁷⁷ To provide benefit to the poorest of the poor families, the selection was to be done through the Panchayats and Area MLAs.

²⁷⁸ The government further proposed to cover 2,240 families living Below Poverty Line by 1992-1993.

²⁷⁹ Out of which 345 were Schedule Tribes and 33 Schedule Castes.

²⁸⁰ Of which 88 were Schedule Tribes and 97 Schedule Castes.

²⁸¹ Among which 27617 were Schedule Tribes and 13662 Schedule Castes.

²⁸² Indra Awas Yojana was launched in 1985 as a sub-scheme of Jawahar Rozgar Yojana to meet the shortage of houses in rural areas. The scheme aims to provide assistance to rural people living below the poverty line belonging to STs and SCs, bonded labourers and non ST and SC categories for the construction of dwelling units and upgradation of existing unserviceable katcha houses by providing grants-in-aid (Gupta, 2008, p. 163).

demonstration of improved technologies of farming were established.²⁸³ During the 10 years of SSP led government rule 10500 farmers were trained and 60 village level workers underwent 2 years diploma courses in the Training Centres/ Institutes in Sikkim. For the development of cattle and dairy production, imported frozen semen plant from the United Kingdom and installed in 1987 to produce liquid nitrogen for intensifying the herd improvement programme of cattle. Number of livestock scheme was launched during this time for the benefit of the weaker section of the society and farmers of the rural areas. Piglets, crossbred cows, poultry birds were distributed to 2500 families of economically disadvantaged group. In 1989-1991, Special Livestock Breeding Programme for small, marginal and landless farmers was also launched as a result of which 855 farmer got benefit within 2 years. The government under maximisation of agricultural production initiated many new irrigation schemes under Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-1990) to benefit and uplift the poor and rural farmers. The concrete Hume pipes and HDPE pipes in the damages of the open channels due to landslides and sinking were extensively used. Within this Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-1990), an additional irrigation potential of 6359 hectares was created and corresponding to 5530 hectares of potential was utilised. By 1990, the additional irrigation potential created was 21472 hectares and potential utilized was 14089 hectares with nearly 375 numbers of channels totalling approximately 455 Kms in length (Sikkim Herald, 26th Jan, 1993, Vol-37, No-4). Under the Livestock Scheme, 2500 Schedule Tribe and Schedule Caste families were distributed piglets, crossbred cows, poultry birds (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 5-7).

11. Massive Rural Sanitation Programme

The government launched Massive Rural Sanitation Programme (MRSP) in order to improve general health and achieve proper sanitation condition of the rural population in 1985-1986. Considering the social and cultural attitude of the rural

²⁸³ Other programmes such as Oilseed Production Programme funded by the Government of India and state Government on 75:25% share basis to meet the internal requirement of edible oil and National Pulses Development Project funded by the Government of India and state Government of Sikkim on 75:25% share basic to explore the production potentials was launched

people, it firstly gave emphasis on the constitutional household and institutional latrines construction (Sikkim Herald, 12th February 1986, Vol-29, No-9). Under this programme, a single seat latrine for each family belonging to Below Poverty Line was constructed at the cost of Rs 1200/- including fitting and fixing of pass and water seal. By the end of 1992, a total of 7898 rural sanitary latrines were constructed at a total cost of Rs 93.57 lakh (Sikkim Herald, 26th January 1993, Vol-37, No-4).

12. Rural Connectivity Programme and Scheme

Sikkim is a mountainous state with sloppy areas, numerous valleys and steep gorges through which river and streams flow. The people especially school going children of rural areas have to cross number of rivers and streams. This poses greater problem for those rural people. With a view to solve the problem, the government constructed number of foot-bridges over those rivers and streams and villages roads for inter-village connection and connection of villages with nearest market place, health centres, government establishment and motarable roads. Till 1991-1992 the government had constructed more than 519 foot bridges; 103 number of suspension bridges, 216 RCC bridges, 183 steel bridges and 17 number of log bridges at the total cost of Rs 158 Lakh.

13. Decentralisation of Administration

Democratic decentralisation of administration was one of the important agenda of SSP (SSP, Election Manifesto, 1984). To ensure active involvement and empowerment of the grassroots people, SSP aimed to strengthen the people through what is called '*Panchayati Raj Institution*'.

During the Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-1990), the reorganisation of Gram Panchayat was carried out and thereby 153 Gram Panchayat Units was reduced to 148. Each Gram Panchayat Units were given wider area of operation (Notification No.35 (2) 87-88/11/RDD/D, Dated: 10th December 1987). An annual grant of Rs 10,000/- was allocated to all the Gram Panchayat Units to carry out

their day to day functions. In 1991, the Government provided two tier of the Panchayat Raj System at the District and Village level, namely Zilla Panchayat and Gram Panchayat to revitalise the Panchayati Raj Institutions. This was a major step towards decentralisation of democratic administration. The Zilla Panchayat were also provided with sufficient developmental funds to enable them to carry out the developmental works in their districts and also were groomed to formulate district plans covering all the departments (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 115-117).²⁸⁴

14. Food Security Policy of SSP with reference to PDS

Food grains and allied food items constitute basic needs of mankind. Consumption of adequate food nutrients with wide variety and balanced diet are very important for health.²⁸⁵ It is the government which has an important role to play in the distribution of basic food items and maintenance of food security. While formulating policies regarding the food security, government has to plan in such a way that each and every family has adequate and equitable distribution of essential food items and thereof none of the individual is deprived of basic commodities.

In Sikkim, Department of Food and Civil Supplies (FCS) is primarily concerned with various activities such as procurement, storage, distribution and determination of policies of control an essential commodities allotted by the Government of India under the Public Distribution System (PDS).²⁸⁶ Under Public

²⁸⁴ To facilitate the meeting of the Gram Panchayat, the Government constituted two Zilla Bhawans at Geyzing, West Sikkim and Mangan, North Sikkim. Besides, government constructed 51 Panchayat Ghars to serve either two or three Gram Panchayat Units by each Panchayat Ghar. 100 Black and White Television sets and 20 Colour Television sets were distributed to all Gram Panchayat Units where reception was clear. Regular Television Programmes, video films, relating to various developmental schemes were screened through these outlets

²⁸⁵ Otherwise, malnutrition leads to nutrient-deficiency disorders like protein-energy malnutrition, anaemia, night blindness, goitre, susceptibility to a number of infectious diseases, low birth weight of children, lack of resistance to illnesses among mother and children etc.

²⁸⁶ The Public Distribution System (PDS) has been one of the most crucial instruments in food policy and for improving food security at the household level in India where millions of poor suffer from persistent poverty and malnutrition

Distribution System (PDS) basic commodities such as wheat, rice, sugar, edible oils, kerosene etc are distributed in uniform and subsidised rate.²⁸⁷

In 1984, SSP made a commitment to ensure proper management and adequate distribution of essential commodities specially food items at highly subsidised rate through proper and systematic channel. During 10 years of SSP led government rule in Sikkim, the government adopted uniform pricing policies for the control of market monopoly, black marketing and hoarding in the state considering the benefit of the consumers irrespective of the location. To avoid storage and maintenance of regular supply and buffer stock, government constructed a godown with a storage capacity of 6400 Metric Tonnes at Rangpo mining complex, East Sikkim. The controlled commodities which was lifted from Food Corporation of India (FCI) depot Siliguri previously was handed over to the Food and Civil Supplies Department of Sikkim at 2000 Metric Tonnes of Rice from Rangpo FCI, 2000 Metric Tonnes Jorethang and 500 Metric Tonnes from Siliguri totalling 4500 Metric Tonnes. By the year 1991-1992, food godowns have increased to 25 against 10 of 1984 with the total capacity of 5273.5 Metric Tonnes; 4500 Rice, 600 Wheat and 173.5 Sugar under ITDP (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 39-41).²⁸⁸

The procurement and distribution of food items also increased up to 4500 Metric Tonnes from 2000 Metric Tonnes.²⁸⁹ The distribution of rice and wheat at subsidised and uniform rate was started from December 1985. All the area under Schedule Tribe reserved constituency and Tribal predominant revenue blocks were covered under the distribution programme (ITDP). About 2.04 lacs of

²⁸⁷ The specific goals of PDS are to (i) make goods available to consumers especially the disadvantages section of society at fair prices; (ii) rectify the existing imbalances between the supply and demand for consumer goods; (iii) check and prevent hoarding and black marketing in essential commodities; (iv) ensure social justice in distribution of basic necessities of life; (v) even out fluctuation in prices and availability of mass consumption goods; (vi) support poverty-alleviation programmes particularly rural employment programmes (Gupta, 2008, pp.245-253).

²⁸⁸ Of these 14 food godowns, 07 were in west, 03 in south, 02 in north and 02 in east districts of Sikkim. For the proper distribution of these commodities, Government also opened 1475 fair price shops

²⁸⁹ With the difference of 2500 by 1992 in the case of rice, from 250 Metric Tonnes to 600 Metric Tonnes ie with the difference of 350 Metric Tonnes in the case of wheat and from 100 Metric Tonnes to 173.5 ie with the difference of 73.5 Metric Tonnes in the case of sugar respectively.

consumers living in 197 revenue blocks of the state could avail the benefit of heavily subsidised rice, wheat, sugar, kerosene commodities under ITDP, the rationing system was implemented for maintaining equitable distribution in ITDP areas from 1985-1992, thirty five thousand (35000), ration cards were issued covering 197 revenue blocks and two towns; Gangtok and Jorethang respectively. The essential commodities were distributed through fair price shopkeeper appointed by the department. With the view to protect the consumers from unscrupulous, traders, hoarders etc, the government of Sikkim on 1st July 1987 constituted State Consumers Protection Council (Notification No.7 (4) FCS/85/7/FCS, Dated: 20th July 1987) and enforced Consumers Protection Act 1990. Beside this, the government also constituted the State Commission and District Forums in Sikkim for the protection of consumers (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, nd, pp. 39-41).

Conclusion

During the two consecutive terms of the SSP led government in Sikkim welfarism, rural development and poverty alleviation could not make much headway. For the health care and family welfare only Hospitals, Family Health Centres, Primary Health Centres and Primary Health Sub-Centres were established. The existing hospitals were upgraded and the number of beds in the Hospitals and PHCs were increased. Programmes relating to health care and control of diseases were launched to fight against killer diseases. For social welfare and security, old-aged people were granted pension, monthly monetary grant was provided to the disabled persons and scholarships was granted to the disabled for their education. The Day Care Centres and Recreation Centres, hostels for the working women and destitute homes for the orphans were established. The students belonging to the ST and SC families were provided pre-matric and post-matric scholarships. For the ST and SC and BPL families only housing and other schemes such as distributions of piglets, bullocks, milch cows and sewing machine and black smithy tools for the SC families and GCI sheets for roofing houses was launched. Training on knitting, tailoring, carpet weaving, cane and bamboo work

and blacksmithy was imparted. For educated unemployed youths and economically disadvantaged groups, only training relating to handicrafts, trades and industrial units was imparted. Financial assistance in the form of loans and raw materials were provided at subsidised rates to those educated unemployed youths who were interested in establishing industrial units.

For rural development and poverty alleviation, school buildings, playgrounds, village roads and jeepable roads, water ponds, anganwadi centres, irrigation channels, community halls, panchayat ghars, bridges, village tanks and Indra Awas Houses for the poor were constructed and works relating to sanitation, flood control, soil conservation, land development, nursery, social forestry works and welfare activities were carried out. For the rural and poor farmers, high yielding varieties of seeds, chemical fertilizers, pesticides, manures and implements and seeds and saplings of ginger, cardamom, potato and orange and milch cow, bullock, goattory, piggery, poultry, pisciculture were distributed at free of cost. Safe drinking water was made possible only to 369 of 440 villages and out of 405 Revenue Blocks, only 400 habitable Revenue Blocks of Sikkim were electrified and 3,104 households belonging to BPL were electrified. About 7898 rural sanitary latrines and foot-bridges over those rivers and streams and village roads for inter-village connection and connection of villages with nearest market place, health centres, government establishment and motarable roads. The essential commodities such as food items were made available at subsidised and uniform rate and uniform pricing policy by the government for the control of market monopoly, black marketing and hoarding was made possible.

Thus although the SSP government led by Bhandari seem to have performed well in the spheres of welfare, rural development and poverty alleviation yet, much of the achievements was made under the aegis of centrally sponsored schemes and programmes.

Chapter VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In the last chapter of the thesis, we arrive at a conclusion. This part includes the summaries of the chapters and then finally a conclusion is attempted. In the first chapter the introduction, we discussed about the research problem, research questions, research methodology, data collection and finally organisation of the study. In the second chapter of the thesis, we have mainly dealt with the origin and growth of the SSP since 1984. In section I we have studied the emergence of Namgyal dynasty and the consequent political developments in Sikkim. After Sikkim became a Protectorate of British India in 1890 it witnessed a number of political and administrative reforms. In 1947, the first organised political party, Sikkim State Congress (SSC) was formed through the merger of Praja Sudharak Samaj, Rajya Praja Sammelon and Praja Mandal in the public meeting held at Pologround, Gangtok.

In January 1973, fifth Sikkim State Council election was held. The SNP secured 11 seats while SJC and SNC secured 2 and 5 seats respectively. L D Kazi of SNC and Krishna Chandra Pradhan of SJC protested against the pro-national party officials who were on duty in the election and accused the Sikkim Darbar personal of rigging the election. The agitation culminated in the complete collapse of law and order situation in Sikkim. The Chogyal of Sikkim requested the Indian Government to take charge of law and order of Sikkim. On 8th April 1973 the Indian Government took charge of law and order situation of Sikkim. In section II, we have looked at the emergence of Sikkim Congress (SC) government led Kazi with absolute majority after the first Sikkim Assembly election of April, 1974. During this period, Sikkim became a part of India on 16th May 1975, Schedule Tribe and Schedule Tribe Order (Sikkim), 1978 and Representation of the People (Amendment) Ordinance 1979 were implemented. In December 1975, Sikkim Congress led by Kazi merged with the Indian National Congress. On 18th August 1979, President Rule was imposed in Sikkim which ended the Kazi rule in Sikkim.

In section III, we have discussed the growth of Sikkim Janata Parishad (SJP) in 1977 and its aims and objectives. The SJP led by Bhandari came to power after the 1979 Assembly poll and in 1983 merged with Congress (I). Thereafter, 13 MLAs departed from Bhandari and submitted Homi J Talyarkhan, Governor of Sikkim enumerating corruption charges against him and expressing their lack of confidence against Bhandari in January 1984. On 11th May 1984, Bhandari was dismissed by the Governor of Sikkim and B B Gurung became Sikkim's next Chief Minister. On 25th May 1984, President's Rule was imposed in Sikkim following the failure of the constitutional machinery under Gurung's ministry. In section IV, we have analysed the formation of SSP on 24th May 1984 and its growth, after the dismissal of Bhandari and the aims and objectives and various political issues raised by SSP, the promises made by SSP in the pre Parliamentary and Assembly polls. Then we have found Bhandari winning the lone Lok Sabha seat in December 1984 Parliamentary election and ultimately won the Assembly election of 1985 securing 30 of 32 Assembly seats of Sikkim.

In the third chapter, we were concerned with the ethnic composition of Sikkim and the policies for the protection of linguistic and religious minorities under the SSP led government. In section I, we have discussed the ethnic complexity of Sikkim. In section II, we have focused on Tsongs (Limboos), one of the indigenous inhabitants of Sikkim to understand their ethno-history and political situation during the Chogyal regime and Kazi led government in Sikkim.

In section III, we have looked at the policy of Bhandari led government towards the protection of rights and interests of the Limboo community during its two consecutive terms. After a thorough analysis, we found that Bhandari had suppressed democratic aspiration of the Limboo community. But although Bhandari ruled Sikkim for two consecutive terms, yet he failed to fulfil the inner aspirations of the Limboos. He neither included the Limboos in the list of Schedule Tribe nor restored the 'Tsong Seats' of Limboos in the Sikkim Assembly. In section IV, we have discussed the policies of Bhandari towards two linguistic and religious

minorities, Bhutia-Lepchas of Sikkim. Here, we have examined whether the rights and interests of the two communities was protected and fulfilled by the SSP led government and arrived to the conclusion that Bhandari failed to fulfil the hopes and aspiration of the Bhutia-Lepchas.

In the fourth chapter, we have dealt with the quality of governance and the issue of social justice in Sikkim under the Bhandari regime. In section I, we have looked at the concept and meaning of 'governance' and 'good governance' and then the basic elements of 'good governance'. Here, we have understood that the word 'good governance' is an anonymous term of 'bad or inefficient governance' used to describe as how public institutions conduct public affairs and manage public resources in order to guarantee the realization of human rights and promote the welfare of the people.

In section II, we focused on the quality of 'governance' during the Bhandari led SSP regime. In this section, we have seen that SSP led government was quite responsible, accountable, effective and efficient in the spheres of rural and infrastructural development as well as poverty alleviation. But we also noticed that during this time political participation of the people was limited to only voting, campaigning and attending meetings. There was suppression of democratic aspirations, freedom of speech and expression of the people through the control of press and interference in the activities of the social organisations. In the II Bhandari regime, we have seen the misuse of power and public fund, mismanagement and mis-governance, corruption, nepotism, favouritism and red-tapeism to a high degree in the state. In section III, we have noted the suppression of democratic institutions, opposition political parties and freedom of press and media under the Bhandari regime. In regime II of Bhandari, we have learnt the continual loss of democratic atmosphere, violation of rule of law and victimisation of all forms of opposition. Even we have noticed that social justice was limited only to the welfare and economic benefits of the women, widows,

disabled, old-aged, destitutes, neglected and physically challenged people, schedule tribe and schedule caste and economically disadvantaged people.

In the fifth chapter of the thesis, we have studied the promises, policies and performance of Bhandari led SSP government towards the Agricultural, Educational, Industrial and Service sectors in the state. In section I, we analysed the agrarian structure and land ownership pattern in Sikkim and various agrarian policies and performance of SSP government towards the agricultural sector. Here, we have noticed the government emphasising more on the production of food-grains by setting up Soil Testing Laboratory, Village Level Work Centres, Farms and Regional Centres and application of High Yielding and Improved Varieties of Seeds, chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Minor and major land irrigation and double and multiple cropping methods were encouraged. As a result we find that there was substantial increase of agricultural production. In 1990-1991, production of food-grain in Sikkim accorded an average annual growth rate of 12.2%. The average annual growth rate of fruits was estimated to be more than 12.68%. In cash and commercial crops like vegetable, spices, production climbed up.

In section II of the chapter we have provided a historical overview of education in Sikkim in the pre and post-merger period and various policies and the performance of the SSP led government towards the educational sector. In the educational sector, we have observed that there was marginal growth and development. There was no great achievement in the educational sector other than making education accessible, universal and free to all. The students were exempted from the payment of fees like examination fee, games fee, laboratory fee etc. Textbooks were freely provided to the students up to class XII. In 1987, free education was extended to the college level. During this period, Sikkim witnessed just growth of schools, enrolment of students and number of teachers in the schools by 1992. In higher education, we have noticed only Sikkim Government Degree College getting multiplied streams like Arts, Commerce and

Science and establishment of Sikkim Law College, Teachers' Training Institute and District Institute of Education and Training (DIET). The literacy rate of Sikkim hardly increased from 34.05% in 1981 to 57% in 1991.

In section III, we analysed the growth and development of industries in Sikkim in the pre-SSP period and then arrived at the policies and performance of the SSP led government towards the industrial sector (1985-1994). Here, we have learned the growth and development of 185 Small Scale Industries in the period from 1985-1994. However, the contribution made by the various manufacturing units to the state's income declined to Rs 3.7 million 1991 from Rs 5.2 million of 1985. In section IV, we looked at the growth and development of the Service sector in Sikkim. Here, we have seen the condition of transport and communication during the Chogyal period in Sikkim and then examined the various policies and performance of the SSP led government towards the service sector. We have found that only vehicular transportation was made possible and accessible to far flung and rural areas after the SSP came to power. The roads and bridges were constructed on the basis of higher population, tourist potential, economic development and social welfare schemes were extended. To extend basic facilities, transport of food-grains, easy removal of patients from villages to different Health Centres, attending District and other offices and to transport the agricultural products to the marketing centres. The Railway Out Agency at Gangtok and Jorethang for passengers travelling to Delhi, Calcutta, Chennai, Trivandrum, Bangalore, Mumbai, Cochin and other connecting routes from Sikkim was also established.

In the sixth chapter, we have analysed the **'Welfare Policies of the SSP led Government in Sikkim'**. In section I, we have looked at the historical context of the growth and development of the concept of 'Welfare' and 'Welfare State' in the developed and the Third World countries, especially India and then in Sikkim in the pre as well as post-merger period. Here, we have learnt that in India, the concept of 'welfare state' arrived in 1947 with the introduction of various programmes and

schemes relating to social welfare, social defence and social insurance. In section II, we have noted the commitments and pledges made by the SSP led government in the Election Manifestoes of 1984 and 1989 in relation to the welfare as well as poverty alleviation policies and programmes. Here, we have learnt about SSP's aim of striving for all-round development of the people of Sikkim by giving topmost priority to the socially, economically and educationally backward communities including Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as well as youths, women and children. It also promised for the fulfilment of basic needs like health, education, housing and provision of safe drinking water, massive electrification, improvement of rural transport and communication and sanitation. In section III, we have looked at the various policies and performance of the SSP government towards welfare activities and examined whether promises made by the SSP towards health and family welfare, social welfare, welfare of the Schedule Tribe and Schedule Caste, government employees, educated unemployed youths and economically backward classes of Sikkim could have been fulfilled. Here, we have found only health care and family welfare becoming accessible with the establishment of Hospitals, Family Health Centres, Primary Health Centres and Primary Health Sub-Centres and upgrading the old hospitals and increasing beds in the District Hospitals and PHCs. Various programmes relating to health care and control of diseases were launched to fight against killer diseases such as tuberculosis, diphtheria, tetanus, polio, whopping cough and measles.

We have found the grant of pensions to the old-aged people, monthly monetary grant to the disabled persons and scholarships for the disabled for their education under Subsistence Allowance scheme. The Day Care Centres and Recreation Centres, hostels for the working women and destitute homes for the orphans were established. For Schedule Tribe and Schedule Caste School going children, we haven't found any facilities other than pre-matric and post-matric scholarship. For the poor ST families, piglets, bullocks, milch cows and sewing machine and black smithy tools for the SC families and GCI sheets for roofing houses of both ST and SC was distributed. Training on knitting, tailoring, carpet

weaving, cane and bamboo work and blacksmithy was imparted. For educated unemployed youths and economically disadvantaged groups, only training relating to handicrafts, trades and industrial units was imparted. Financial assistance in the form of loans and raw materials were provided at subsidised rate to the educated unemployed youths who were interested in establishing industrial units. For the upliftment of the economically weaker section, economic assistance scheme, social housing and group housing scheme and financial assistance scheme were launched. For the rural farmers, high yielding varieties of seeds, chemical fertilizers, pesticides, manures and implements were distributed at free of cost. The piglets, crossbred cows, poultry birds were provided under Livestock Scheme. For the employees, Pension Rules relating to pensionary benefits, rates of pension and gratuity being revised. Rules for commutation of pension were introduced from 2.9.1985 enabling the pensioners to commute a portion of pension and draw a lump-sum amount. Leave Rules was revised and elaborated provisions for various kinds of leave admissible to Government servants were made. The Earned Leave was raised from 180 days to 240 days. Provision for encashment of leave was also introduced.

In section IV, we have looked at the various poverty alleviation policies and development programmes and schemes implemented by the SSP led Government and examined whether SSP was able to fulfil its promises and make Sikkim a poverty free state. We have found only the construction of school buildings, playgrounds, village roads and jeepable roads, water ponds, anganwadi centres, irrigation channels, community halls, panchayat ghars, bridges, village tanks and Indra Awas Houses and other works relating to sanitation, flood control, soil conservation, land development, nursery, social forestry works and welfare activities. The families belonging to Below Poverty Line were benefited with ginger, cardamom, potato and orange plantation and milch cow, bullock, goattory, piggery, poultry, pisciculture. Similarly, we also noticed the establishment of Rural Agent of marketing centre in Gangtok and Delhi for marketing outlet. Women were provided one time grant of Rs 15,000/-as revolving

fund to run business. A biogas plant which facilitated the generation of gas for cooking and lighting from animals, human waste of biomass was provided to the family having 3-4 cattle. We have found safe drinking water was provided to 369 of 440 villages and electrification of 400 of 405 habitable Revenue Blocks of Sikkim and 3,104 households belonging to BPL were electrified. About 7898 rural sanitary latrines and foot-bridges over those rivers and streams and village roads for inter-village connection and connection of villages with nearest market place, health centres, government establishment and motarable roads. The essential commodities especially food items were made available at subsidised and uniform rate and uniform pricing policy by the government for the control of market monopoly, black marketing and hoarding was made.

Till now in this chapter we made a summary of the entire chapters now let us finally arrive at a conclusion. We have noted earlier that SSP led by Bhandari emerged as the strongest regional political party and dominated state politics of Sikkim from 1984 onwards. During its regime, we have found SSP focusing more on the rural and infrastructural development and poverty alleviation.

In the agricultural sector, upon which most of the populace of Sikkim depend, we noticed only slight improvement in agricultural production. The application of chemical fertilizer, pesticides, manures, adaptation of new techniques and scientific methods of cultivation and utilisation of High Yielding and Improved Varieties of Seeds were only found as the new measures adopted by the SSP led government. From 1985 to 1991, only 61200 to 67340 hectares of land was covered with HYIVS respectively. The consumption of fertilizer had increased just by 68% i.e, from 985 tonnes in 1981 to 1658 tonnes in 1991. The consumption of pesticides, fungicides and other plant protection materials had also increased only by 65% i.e, from 20 tonnes in 1981 to 33 tonnes in 1991. The routine work for seed testing, soil testing and pathological tests was carried out in the laboratories. The programme of planting material propagation, adaptive research, farmers' training, vegetable marketing, demonstration, dry farming,

rejuvenation, soil reclamation and assistance to small and marginal farmers was implemented in the field level. But the measures adopted by the government did not have much impact on agricultural production in Sikkim.

The production of food-grain increased just to 133.44 thousand tonnes in 1990-1991 from 99.99 thousand tonnes of 1980-1981 and food-grain in Sikkim increased at the growth rate of just 12.2%. Similarly, in the oilseeds, fruits and cash crops production, there was no significant increase. The production was estimated only to 5900 tonnes in 1990-1991 against 5700 tonnes in 1985-1986. In fruit, growth rate was marginal. It climbed just from 8200 tonnes in 1985-1986 to 10500 tonnes in 1990-1991. The average annual growth rate of fruits was only 12.68%. In cash and commercial crops, vegetable and spices also increase in production was not much remarkable. The vegetable production increased from 13900 tonnes of 1985-1986 to just 15000 tonnes in 1990-1991. The production of cardamom declined from 3800 tonnes in 1986 to 2600 tonnes in 1995. Only in ginger, there was considerable increase from 10900 tonnes in 1984-1985 to 24000 tonnes in 1994-1995. The agricultural production in Sikkim was even not sufficient for domestic consumption. The essential commodities like food-grains, edible oils, etc had to be imported from outside Sikkim under the Public Distribution System.

In the educational sector too, we have found only primary education becoming accessible to the people during SSP led government regime. No matter there was a sharp increase in schools from 794 of 1985 to 1343 in 1992, enrolment of students from 83337 of 1985 to 113849 in 1992 and number of teachers from 4298 of 1985 to 6546 in 1992. For vocational courses especially for drop-outs and students of class XII was introduced in the government Senior Secondary Schools. The students were exempted from payment of fees like exam fee, games fee, laboratory fee etc. Text books were freely provided to the students up to class XII. But still accessibility and universalisation of education to the children of the remote places could not be attained fully.

In the field of higher education also, we do not notice any remarkable development in the SSP led government. The Degree College established in 1977 by Kazi government was just multiplied into numerous faculties like arts, science and commerce and Sikkim Law College, Teachers' Training Institute and District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) were established. But the dire need of degree colleges in each four districts of Sikkim, establishment of B.Ed Colleges, Medical Colleges, Engineering Colleges and other Professional Colleges and University in the state was not felt as necessary. Had SSP government have realised such need, then much achievement could have been attained in the educational sector and the growth rate of literacy in Sikkim could have been more rapid. The increase of literacy rate from 34.05% in 1981 to 57% in 1991 is also not much remarkable.

In the industrial sector, though the government initiated number of steps, yet we do not see much headway. No matter, after 1985, there was a rapid growth of industries in Sikkim with the establishment of number of small and big scale industrial units. But still the performance of industrial sector in Sikkim was not so well. The contribution made by the various manufacturing sector to the state's income declined from 5.7 million in 1980 to 2.2 million in 1995. So, there was a steep decline of Net State Domestic Product (NSDP) from Rs 5.7 million in 1980 to Rs 2.2 million in 1995 with the margin of Rs 3.5 million within 15 years of gap. The decline in the industrial sector in Sikkim might be due to the topographical location of Sikkim, unavailability of raw materials, lack of skilled manpower and technology. But whatsoever may be the reason but we have found that the performance of industries in Sikkim under the SSP regime was very poor.

In the service sector, although transport and communication was said to have had gained momentum of progress and development during the SSP government's regime, yet we did not notice so much accessibility to the far flung areas especially in the villages. The construction and maintenance of roads and

bridges in the villages of remote places were not paid attention and taken care. Through the interview taken from the local gentries, we came to know that in the remote villages, bamboo, cane and log bridges were constructed over the streams and rivers. The roads were also not constructed and maintained in the most of the villages. In some of the places, transportation was possible only for reaching basic facilities, transport of food-grains, removal of patients from villages to different Health Centres, attending district, other offices and to transport the agricultural products to the marketing centres. The construction and proper maintenance of roads and bridges were confined only to the urban areas and National Highways, state and district roads. We have also noted that during the Bhandari regime, buses managed by Sikkim Nationalised Transport were the means of transport and communication in most of the places in Sikkim. Such development hardly could ease the hardship and inconvenience of the common people.

In the health and welfare sector, we have observed some commendable performance. For the extension of family welfare and basic health care to the doorsteps of the rural masses, we have found only the establishment of some district hospitals, Primary Health Centres and Primary Health Sub-Centres in the villages and upgradation of existing hospitals. There was slight reduction of infant and maternal mortality. For better diagnostic and treatment, modern sophisticated equipments were installed in the Gangtok hospital, but the same was not extended to every district hospitals. The patients with complicated diseases either had to be taken to Gangtok or outside Sikkim. No matter, free medicines and free diet was provided in all the hospitals, Primary Health Centres and Primary Health Sub-Centres but there was a lack of specialised doctors and nurses in the hospitals and Primary Health Centres.

During our study, we have also noticed that centrally initiated programmes, Family Welfare Programme, Family Planning Programme, Tuberculosis Control Programme, National Programme for the Control of

Blindness, National Malaria Eradication Programme and Diarrhoeal Disease Control Programme being implemented in Sikkim to control and fight against tuberculosis, diphtheria, tetanus, polio, whooping cough and measles. Under Family Planning Programme, sterilisation and Intra-Uterine-Devices (IUD) insertions and cataract operation under National Programme for the Control of Blindness was carried out. The detected fever cases were brought under control. For better health status for mothers and children, Mid-day Meal Programme, Supplementary Nutrition Programme and Nutrition Programme were implemented.

For social welfare, we have learned that the extension of Old-Age Pension Scheme only to 1154 old-aged people and grant of monthly monetary benefits and scholarships to the disables for education. For imparting training to the disabled, in cane and bamboo works on daily wages basis to meet their livelihood, we have found the establishment of only Sheltered Workshop at Jorethang and distribution of wheel chairs, crutch axilla, crutch elbow, hearing aid, calliper and spectacle to physically handicaps. The reservation of just 3% in government job for the disables and free travelling facility for them in the Sikkim Nationalised Transport (SNT) buses was provided. Day Care and Recreation Centres and hostels for the working women and tribal students were established. The Destitute Homes were provided grant-in-aids. For the social defence, we have noticed the establishment of Observation Home for temporary reception of juveniles, Juvenile Home and Special Home for the care, protection, education, training of neglected delinquent, competent Authorities like Juvenile Welfare Board, Juvenile Court under Juvenile Justice Act 1986.

For the extension of economic benefit and welfare of the Schedule Tribe and Schedule Castes, we have found only schemes like Scholarship Scheme, Housing Assistance and Economic Grant Scheme, Tools and Implements Scheme launched. We have noticed just 3511 Schedule Tribe and 2735 Scheduled Caste students being benefited under pre-matric and post-matric scholarship schemes

respectively and 433 ST and 150 SC families under Housing Assistance and Economic Grant Scheme. There was also distribution of GCI sheets just to 4132 ST and 592 Sc families for house roofing and piglets, bullocks, milch cows to the ST and SC families and sewing machine and black smithy tools to the SC. Training on knitting, tailoring, carpet weaving, cane and bamboo works and blacksmith under TRYSEM, NREP and RLEGP was imparted to the STs and SCs. For educated unemployed youths and economically disadvantaged groups, training on wiring, knitting, tailoring, carpet weaving, cane and bamboo works, chalk, candle and soap making, sanitary fitting, carpentry, mosaic mansion, marble stone fitting and fixing and iron grill making and mushroom plantation, vegetable cultivation, trades and industrial units was imparted. Financial assistance in the form of loans was also provided for the establishment of industrial units. For the upliftment of the poor section of the society, schemes like economic assistance scheme, social housing and group housing scheme and financial assistance scheme were launched. For the poor and rural farmers, under Seed Multiplication and Distribution Programme, high yielding varieties seeds, chemical fertilizers, pesticides, manures and implements were distributed at free of cost. The piglets, crossbred cows, poultry birds were provided under Livestock Scheme.

For the pensionary benefits of the employees, Pension Rules was revised. Rate of pension and gratuity was revised w.e.f 1.4.1985. Rule for commutation of pension was introduced from 2.9.1985 enabling the pensioners to commute a portion of his/her pension and draw a lump-sum amount. The commute value of pension was restored to the pensioners after 15 years of commutation provided the pensioners were alive at that time. Leave Rule was revised and elaborated and provisions for various kinds of leave admissible to Government servants had been made. The Earned Leave was raised from 180 days to 240 days. Provision for encashment of leave was also made.

In the course of our study, we have also found the implementation of only centrally sponsored schemes like Integrated Rural Development Programme

(IRDP), Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM), Development of Women and Children in Rural Area (DWCRA), New and Renewable Energy Sources Cell (NRSE), National Rural Employment Programme (NREP), Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) and Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) for the rural development and poverty alleviation in Sikkim under the Bhandari regime. We did not notice any state schemes and programmes launched by the state government for rural development.

We have seen that the families belonging to the Below Poverty Line being benefited with only ginger, cardamom, potato, orange plantation, milch cow, bullock, goattory, piggery, poultry, pisciculture and financial assistance for running small business and carpet and handloom weaving and black smithy under IRDP. Under DWCRA, only Rural Agent for marketing centre in Gangtok and Delhi were opened for marketing outlet and grant of Rs 15000/-as revolving fund to run business among the women. Under Biogas Energy Scheme, a biogas plant was provided to the family having 3-4 cattles to facilitate gas generation for cooking and lighting from animals and human waste of biomass. The school buildings, playgrounds, village roads and jeepable roads, water ponds, anganwadi centres, irrigation channels, community halls, panchayat ghars, bridges, village tanks and Indra Awas Houses were constructed and other works relating to sanitation, flood control, soil conservation, land development nursery, social forestry works and welfare activities were carried out under JRY. Safe drinking water was also made possible only to 369 of 440 villages and only 400 of 405 habitable Revenue Blocks of Sikkim were electrified. Under Free Electrification Scheme, 3104 households belonging to BPL were only electrified.

Under MRSP, NWP and CRSP, just 7898 rural sanitary latrines were constructed. The foot-bridges over those rivers and streams and village roads for inter-village connection and connection of villages with nearest market places, health centres, government offices and motarable roads were constructed under Rural Connectivity Scheme. The essential commodities were made available to the

people at subsidised and uniform rate. For the control of market monopoly, black marketing and hoarding uniform pricing policy was adopted. Fair price shops were opened for the proper distribution of essential commodities.

Under the Bhandari regime, we have also noticed the trample of democratic values and social justice in Sikkim. Due to the absence of strong opposition political parties in Sikkim, Bhandari emerged as an undisputed political leader in the state politics of Sikkim after 1985. Such kind of situation led to the absence of check and balance of power and continual loss of democratic atmosphere in the state. Bhandari turned more powerful, authoritative and tyrant and intolerant of any criticism from both outside and within party. Opposition parties and social organizations were not allowed to function independently in ventilating the interests and rights of the people. They either had to join or face serious consequences. There was a continuous interference of SSP in the activities of the social organisations. The rule of Bhandari after 1985 was of worse type. He was more arrogant, tyrant and corrupt. There was a loss of democratic spirit even within the cabinet and party functioning. The elected representatives had to remain faithful and loyal 'yes man' of Bhandari for their existence.

After winning the election of 1989, Bhandari became an autocrat. Lhendup Dorjee Kazi accused the political situation of Sikkim under Bhandari regime being '*worse than during the Chogyal regime*'. The people had lost the sense of freedom and they were living in constant fear. There was a suppression of democratic aspiration of the people by a handful of politicians, bureaucrats and businessmen. The freedom of speech and expression were curtailed. There was rampant corruption and victimization of opposition. The press in Sikkim as Bhandari claimed to have been divided into- '*Sangrami press*' and '*anti-Sangrami press*'. He dubbed those '*anti-Sangrami press*' as '*anti-people elements*'. The government authorities through various agencies and individuals kept a watchful eye on anyone who was associated with '*anti-government elements*'. The press and media had to face threat of life and property. They were asked to behave properly

otherwise have to face consequences. There was assault, threats, constant pressure and ransack over the press and media, arrest and use of commandos over the opposition political parties. Circulating political paper in Bhandari's regime was equal to inviting death. The administration, bureaucracy and the police force were used to torture the public to no end. Bhandari wanted to control all the people by coercion and physical torture. He tried to establish hegemony of one reign, one leader, one party and one language in Sikkim. Bhutia (1999) have accused Bhandari of being more tyrant, secessionist, intolerant, dictator and a corrupt leader.

Since 1990s, in Sikkim we witnessed the loss of democratic values and suppression of people's aspirations. Several leaders of the opposition parties who opposed Bhandari's dictatorial regime and voiced against Bhandari's policy and style of functioning were either arrested or detained and physically tortured and harassed. Their houses were raided.

Bhandari is accused of misusing his office position to throttle the voice of the people and Independence of the Judiciary. On the strength of muscle power, money power, deceit and intrigue, the judiciary was rendered impotent, used government machinery to his own advantage and threw the state economy in a state of disarray and confusion. He strangled democracy to trample anti-sangramis. He is also accused of forcefully propagating one religion, one party, one leader and one language hegemony in Sikkim to brutally suppress the existence of other opposition parties. He wanted to control all the people by coercion and physical torture. This is how the spirit of democracy was hijacked and suppressed when one-man-rule and one-man-reign of Bhandari began and representative democracy under his autocratic regime reached the highest stage of maturity in Sikkim.

During his two consecutive terms under SSP led government, Bhandari could champion only the grant of citizenships to 80,000 persons who were said to

have been stateless and inclusion of Nepali language in the 8th Schedule of the Indian Constitution. But Bhandari failed to respond and fulfil aspirations and demands of the people of Sikkim. He was not serious with the issues of linguistic and religious minorities like Limboo and Bhutia-Lepcha and did not feel to protect their rights and interests. He failed to restore 16 lost seats of Bhutia-Lepchas and 02 seats he promised earlier for the Limboos. He was reluctant to include the Limboos in the list of Schedule Tribe despite of their continuous demand. Granting seats reserved for the Nepalis in the Assembly and inclusion of Bhutia, Lepcha and Limboo languages along with the Nepali language in the 8th Schedule of the Indian Constitution remained just like a begging bowl of votes during the elections.

Bhandari did play not only with the sentiments of Bhutia-Lepcha and Limboos of Sikkim but also with the other communities by denying them OBC status. In 1990, communities like Limboo, Manger, Rai, Tamang, Gurung and Bhujel were included in the list of Other Backward Classes (OBC) of Sikkim by the Central Government under Mandal Commission but Bhandari refused to implement the Commission's recommendation in the state on the ground that such recommendation was discriminatory and could divide the ethnic communities. This refusal of accepting the commission recommendations in Sikkim further indicated his denial of social justice to those Backward Classes who were genuine and the deserving sections of the society.

Interestingly, we have also noted that during his earlier political carrier, Bhandari had accused Kazi of being corrupt and swore that he would punish the regime of the Kazi Government for all sorts of corruption, favouritism and nepotism practised if it comes to power. But paradoxically, he was hacked in 1984 and his government was dismissed on the charges of over corruption and possessing disproportionate properties. Such person, who raised voice against corruption, ironically could not remain cleanest against corruption.

The 'Son of the Soil' policy which Bhandari formulated during the elections could not make much headway. Selling of reserved seats for the Sikkimese students to the non-locals, allotment and distribution of sites and trade licences to non-locals, discrimination regarding the grant of scholarships to the students, refusal to allot work for the local contractors on the tender basis, favouritism, red-tapism and nepotism concerning jobs in the government service and back-door leverage for non-locals to share in the state's administrative and economic development plans are some of the activities which contradicted the Bhandari's principle of 'Son of the Soil' policy. 'Sikkim for Sikkimese' slogan adopted by Bhandari and his promise of 'anti-merger' were not fulfilled. Bhandari championed only in betraying the people who supported him during elections. It is alleged that '*Kazi sold only the body but Bhandari sold the soul of Sikkim*'. He was neither successful in fulfilling the innermost hopes and aspirations of the people nor maintain cordial relation with the centre. He had double standard politics; projecting himself as a Congressman at the Centre and attacking the Congress unit in the State. This is the reason why Bhandari was accused of being anti-national sometimes.

In the course of our study, we have found that there was a continual loss of democratic values within the cabinet and outside the party after 1990s. Within the ministry, the cabinet ministers and MLAs had to remain either faithful or loyal 'yes man' of Bhandari for their existence. Otherwise they were threatened to resign or leave the party. The style of functioning of the SSP government led by Bhandari was one-man-reign and one-man-rule as such sometimes he acted as a tyrant. The tyrannical style of functioning within the cabinet and autocratic rule of Bhandari gradually led to the growth of inner party conflict and differences between Bhandari and members of Sikkim Legislative Assembly. Outside government, there was a growth of discontentment among the different communities and distrust upon Bhandari. The Bhutia-Lepchas were disappointed. The Denjong Tribal Yargay Chogpa was not happy with the inclusion of Nepali language in the 8th Schedule of the Indian Constitution and expressed their

resentment by alleging Bhandari for working in favour of his own Nepali community. Some section of the people who wanted Sikkim's de-merger were also displeased with Bhandari's failure to do with de-merger of Sikkim. The Limboos were not pleased with Bhandari government for not fulfilling their aged-old demand of seats reservation in the Sikkim Assembly and their inclusion in the list of Schedule Tribe. Akhil Sikkim Kirat Limboo Chumlung was frequently demanding for Bhandari's resignation from his Chief Minister post. The discontentment and dissatisfaction grew even among the other communities like Manger, Rai, Tamang, Gurung and Bhujel after Bhandari's refusal to accept the Mandal Commission recommendations in Sikkim and inclusion of Limboo, Manger, Rai, Tamang, Gurung and Bhujel in the list of Other Backward Classes (OBC).

Meanwhile, there was also a gradual growth of differences between Bhandari and his Cabinet Minister, Pawan Chamling due to the frequent loss of democratic values within the cabinet and the state and autocratic style of functioning within Bhandari led SSP government. On July 1992, Bhandari removed Chamling from the post of Cabinet Minister and later from the primary membership of SSP. There from, Bhim Raj Rai, belonging to Chamling's community was appointed to the cabinet rank in place of Chamling. It is believed that the appointment of Mr Rai in place of Chamling was diplomacy of Bhandari to pacify his anti-OBC image.

After the removal of Chamling from the SSP, he in March 1993 formed Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF). Here it is worth mentioning that in 1989, Chamling had won the Assembly election, with 94.27% of total votes casted in his constituency while Bhandari had only 91.53% from Soreng constituency. This clearly indicated Chamling had more political base than Bhandari. Moreover, Chamling belonged to Rai community which had the highest vote bank in Sikkim and Chamling by virtue of being an OBC naturally had a good chance of becoming a leader to lead Sikkim. During this time in Sikkim, race and language also had

crucial role to play to determine state politics of Sikkim. Chamling racially belonged to the Mongoloid stock and with Rai language belonging to Tibet-Burman linguistic stock while Bhandari belonged to Aryan stock by race with Nepali language belonging to Indio-Aryan linguistic stock. This was another advantage of Chamling of winning the heart of the people in Sikkim and becoming a leader.

In 1993-1994, the Government of India proposed to extend the Central Income Tax Act, 1961 to Sikkim w.e.f, April 1995. Bhandari, in a letter to the central government, on 24th July 1993, requested for Tax exemption to the tribal communities in the pretext that the tribal in the North-Eastern states of India are exempted from such taxes. When Bhandari adopted such a taxation policy, the Sikkimese people were further divided into Tribal and Non-tribal in terms of Central Tax payment. The Sikkim People's Forum formed on 18th March 1994, called three days strike in protest against Bhandari's taxation policy demanding tax exemption for even Non-tribal people of Sikkim on 22nd March 1994. There was agitation, protest and resentment throughout Sikkim. Democracy started fading and anti-Bhandari movement started taking deep root in Sikkim. The political situation in Sikkim started growing tense to more tense.

On 5th May 1994, Bhandari's government split into two groups and there from 18 dissident MLAs of Bhandari government defected siding in favour of new leadership under Sanchaman Limboo. In order to prove the strength of Bhandari in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly, no-confidence motion was held on 17th May 1994. After an hour long Assembly discussion and abstention of Chamling from voting in the no-confidence motion, Bhandari led government fell. This resulted in the formation of a new government on 18th May 1994, under the Chief Ministership of Sancha Man Limboo. But soon the government led by Sancha Man Limboo lost majority following the resignation of two tribal ministers, Thukchuk Lachungpa and O.T Bhutia and remained as care-taker government till Assembly election was held. In November 1994, Assembly election was held in Sikkim. On

the plank of the restoration of democracy in Sikkim SDF fought the Assembly election in 1994. On 12th December 1994, SDF led by Chamling came to power putting an end to 10 years old SSP regime of Bhandari.

So far as our study on '*democracy and development*' under the SSP regime led by Bhandari is concerned we therefore find both democracy and development in Sikkim made limited advances during the period. Democracy was confined to voting, campaigning during elections and attending party meetings. So in Sikkim, democracy under the SSP regime was neither fully participatory nor developmental or protective in its kind. Development was also limited only to infrastructure development. Even though democracy was introduced in Sikkim during the regime of SSP led government but it made only limited advances.

Development also took place to a limited extent. The development works which took place in the rural areas of Sikkim were all under the aegis of the schemes sponsored by the Central government. There were construction of rural sanitary latrines, school buildings, playgrounds, village roads, water ponds, ICDS centres, irrigation channels, Community Halls and Panchayat Ghars, bridges, village tanks, Indra Awas Houses, sanitation work, flood protection work, soil conservation work, land development nursery work, social forestry work and works relating to welfare of the rural people. But all these developmental works were carried out by the state government under various schemes sponsored by the Central government.

In between 1985-1994, 400 of 405 habitable Revenue Blocks were electrified in Sikkim with the financial assistance of Rural Electrification Corporation. Still 05 Revenue Blocks remained in the grip of darkness. Under Free Electrification Programme, only 3104 households belonging to the BPL families were electrified but 3100 households remained without electricity connection. Therefore, the SSP government could not achieve 100% village electrification in the state. Safe drinking water could be provided only to 369 of 400 villages of

Sikkim. More than 71 villages remained uncovered. The policy home for homeless was only a dream for Bhandari. By 1992, only 4132 families belonging to ST and 592 SC families were provided CCI sheets for roofing their houses. In between 1987-1988, only 12999 families belonging to the BPL were covered. Under Housing Assistance Scheme and Economic Assistance too, only 378 families belonging to the BPL and 41279 belonging to the ST and SC families were benefited. Under Indra Awas Yojana, 658 houses for those belonging to Below Poverty Line were constructed in between 1985-1992. There were still more people living without proper houses in the state.

Under Improved Chulla Scheme 4130 families benefited. Community size chullas were also constructed in school Hostels, Hospitals, Temples and Monastery kitchens. Numerous training was conducted to create cadre of trained self-employed workers in solving unemployment problems. Under the Biogas Energy Scheme, a biogas plant which provided facilities to generate gas for cooking and lighting from animals, human waste of biomass without reducing and damaging the manure value was introduced. Any family having 3-4 cattle were provided 2 Cu. m capacity gas plant to meet up cooking requirement of 4-5 family members. Under this scheme 272 families were benefited by 1992. Similarly, under Solar Energy Scheme, 70 solar street lights and domestic lights in Panchayat Ghars, Bhawans, Hostels, Schools, Temples and Monasteries were installed. From 1985-1992, the state had over 40 solar water heaters in the institutions, hospitals etc.

We also notice that there was an absence of empowerment of women. In the Panchayati Raj Institutions and Assembly, there were no seats reserved for the women. Even in the government services, no provision was made for reserving seats for the women. Constitutionally there was seat reservation in the Assembly for the Schedule Tribes and Schedule Castes but in the Panchayati Raj Institution, there was no seats reserved for them. During the regime of Bhandari, the rate of poverty of Sikkim increased to 41.43% in 1994 against 39.71% of 1984.

Literacy rate climbed just from 34.05% of 1981 to 56.94% in 1991. The contribution of manufacturing sector to the Net State Domestic Product (NSDP) declined from Rs 5.2 million in 1985-1986 to Rs 3.7 million in 1990-1991 and Rs 2.2 million in 1995-1996. Similarly, in the service sector there was no remarkable achievement of the SSP government as such. The construction of roads increased from 1292 kilometres of 1980 to 2243 kilometres by 1992. Hence it can be stated that the progress of democracy and development took place only to a limited extent. The progress of development however was slightly better than democracy.

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Annexure: I
CONSTITUTION OF SIKKIM SANGRAM PARISHAD
Estd: 1984

1. NAME OF THE ORGANISATION:

The name of the Organisation shall be 'Sikkim Sangram Parishad' which shall be a body corporate having perpetual succession and a common seal and shall be a socio-economic and political organisation with the aims and objectives as enumerated under Article 4.

The flag of the Sikkim Sangram Parishad shall be white at the top and red at the bottom with its symbol 'Elephant', in the middle. Both the colour strips shall have equal size. The white colour symbolises purity, peace and harmony and the red colour symbolises courage and sacrifice.

2. HEAD OFFICE:

The head office of the organisation shall be located at Sangram Bhawan, Gangtok.

3. SYMBOL:

The symbol of the organisation shall be 'Elephant' which shall also be the election symbol.

4. AIMS AND OBJECTS OF THE ORGANISATION:

He main aims and objectives of the Organisation shall as follows:-

(a) The Organisation shall bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of India as by law established and to the principles of socialism, secularism and democracy and shall uphold the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India.

(b) It shall believe in de-centralisation of administration through the Institution of Panchayati Raj and shall adhere to the Gandhian philosophy.

(c) It shall always fight against all anti-social and anti-national activities to uphold the Constitution of India.

(d) It shall fight against any policy of exploitation, suppression and to preserve the unity and integrity of the Nation.

(e) It shall endeavour for peace, progress and communal harmony and shall follow the principles of peaceful coexistence.

(f) It shall strive for all-round development of the people of Sikkim by giving priority to the socially, economically and educationally backward communities including the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

(g) It shall believe in equality of opportunity to all and shall fight against all forms of discrimination on grounds of caste, creed and religion.

(h) It shall foster unity, friendship and harmony amongst all sections of the people in Sikkim.

(i) It shall give priority to the welfare of youth, women and children.

(j) It shall preserve, protect and promote the age-old customs, traditions and the cultural heritage of the people of Sikkim and shall preserve Sikkimese distinct identity.

(k) It shall pursue the 'son of the soil' policy.

5. MEMBERSHIP:

The Organisation shall have two forms of membership, namely:-

- (a) Primary membership and
- (b) Active membership.

6. PRIMARY MEMBERSHIP:

(a) The Organisation shall give membership to those persons who are above the age of 18 years giving firm belief and faith in policies, aims and objectives of the organisation, on payment of such fee as may prescribed by the Committee from time to time.

(b) Any person who fulfils the above qualifications shall have to fill up the membership form duly certified by the authorised person.

7. ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP:

(a) Active membership of the organisation shall be given to the primary members by the President. Those persons who are desirous of having active membership of the organisation shall have to fulfil the following conditions, namely:-

(i) He or she must have remained as a primary member of the organisation at least for two years.

(ii) He or she must have been actively involved in the implementation of the policies and programmes of the organisation.

(iii) He or she has to fill up active membership form and pay the prescribed membership fee.

(b) Notwithstanding anything contained above, the President, however, shall have the power to grant active membership to any primary member at his own discretion.

8. REBEWAL:

Membership, whether primary membership or active membership, has to be renewed every year on payment of prescribed fee failing which the membership shall stand terminated.

9. COMMITTEES:

The organisation shall have the following committees, namely:

- (a) The Central Working Committee.
- (b) The All Sikkim Sangram Parishad Committee.
- (c) The District Committee.
- (d) The Constituency Level Committee.

10. THE CENTRAL WORKING COMMITTEE:

The Central Working Committee of the organisation which is a high-powered body shall consist of one President, four Advisors, four Vice-President, four Advisors, four Vice-Presidents, five General Secretary and one Secretary, Administration. Besides these, all party MLAs shall also be members in the Committee.

Provided that the strength of the committee shall not exceed sixty-one members.

11. FUNCTIONS OF THE CENTRAL WORKING COMMITTEE:

(a) It shall deliberate on all matters and take decisions regarding the activities of the organisation.

(b) It shall meet at least once in two months.

(c) Decisions of the Committee shall either be unanimous or by majority opinion of the members present.

(d) The Committee shall be in touch with District and Constituency Level Committee of the organisation and guide them in all their activities.

12. THE ALL SIKKIM PARISHAD COMMITTEE:

The All Sikkim Sangram Parishad Committee shall consist of all the office-bearers and members of the Central Working Committee, District Committee Level Committee, MLAs and MPs and members nominated by the President.

Provided that the strength of the All Sikkim Sangram Parishad Committee shall not exceed 351 members.

13. FUNCTIONS OF ALL SIKKIM SANGRAM PARISHAD COMMITTEE:

(a) The All Sikkim Sangram Parishad Committee shall elect the President for a minimum period of 3 years at a time.

(b) It shall meet once in a year at a convenient place and time as may be decided upon by the President of the Organisation.

(c) The meeting of the Committee shall be called by the President at short notice if he so desires to discuss some very important and urgent matter.

(d) The meeting of the Committee can also be requisitioned by one-third of its members by sending a signed one month's notice to the President.

(e) The Committee shall deliberate on many important issues included in the agenda for discussion. Members can ask for inclusion of any item in the agenda by sending request to the General Secretary of the Central Working Committee at least fifteen days in advance from the date of the meeting.

The Agenda shall be decided by the Central Working Committee.

14. DECISION:

All decisions of the committee shall be taken either unanimously or by majority opinion of the members present and voting.

15. QUORUM:

The quorum for any meeting of the Central Working Committee or All Sikkim Sangram Parishad Committee, as the case may be, shall be one-third of the total members of such committee.

16. POWERS OF THE PRESIDENT:

The President shall;

(a) preside over all the meetings of the Central Working Committee and All Sikkim Sangram Parishad Committee.

(b) appoint the Advisors, the Vice-Presidents, the General Secretaries, the Secretaries, the Treasurers, the Publicity Secretaries, the Office Secretary and the Secretary, Administration of the Central Working Committee.

(c) appoint the President of the District Committee and the President of the constituency level committee.

(d) have the power to remove any member of the Central Working Committee.

(e) have the power to suspend or remove any member from the organisation.

(f) call the meeting of the Central Working Committee atleast once in two months or any time as he may think necessary.

(g) call the meeting of the All Sikkim Sangram Parishad Committee atleast once in a year or any time as he may think necessary.

(h) have the power to invite any member to any meeting of the organisation.

(i) have the power to constitute any committee for any specific purpose.

(j) guide and direct all the activities of the Sikkim Sangram Parishad.

(k) have full control over the moveable and immoveable properties of the Sikkim Sangram Parishad.

(l) nominate persons to fill up the vacancy in any of the committee of the Sikkim Sangram Parishad.

17. RESIGNATION OF THE PRESIDENT:

(a) The President may submit his resignation on grounds of ill health or voluntarily without assigning any reason thereof.

(b) The President shall have to resign if two-third majority of members of the All Sikkim Sangram Parishad adopts a motion of no-confidence against him at a special meeting convened for the purpose.

(c) The President shall submit his resignation to the Vice-President.

18. REMOVAL OF THE PRESIDENT:

The President shall be deemed to have removed automatically if-

(a) he/she is medically certified as a person of unsound mind.

(b) he/she is declared insolvent by a Court of Law.

(c) he/she is convicted for murder.

19. NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION:

(a) One month's notice in writing with the signatures of at least one-third of the total membership of All Sikkim Sangram Parishad is required for a no-confidence motion. The notice for the purpose shall have to be addressed to any Vice-President, who shall fix the date and time after the meeting, for the said purpose.

(b) The no-confidence motion shall be deemed to have been passed if it is supported by two-third majority of the members present and voting in the meeting.

(c) The voting shall be by secret ballot.

20. INTERIM PRESIDENT:

(a) In the event of death, resignation, removal of the President or in the intervening period of dissolution of the All Sikkim Sangram Parishad Committee, the Committee consisting of the four Advisors and four Vice-Presidents shall elect one of the Vice-Presidents to be the interim President, for a period of not more than forty days and within this period a special meeting of the All Sikkim Sangram Parishad shall be held to elect new President.

(b) All programmes for the election shall be issued by one of the General Secretaries of the Central Working Committee of the organisation.

21. VICE-PRESIDENT:

There shall be four Vice-Presidents. In the absence of the President the Vice-Presidents authorised by the President shall preside over the meetings of the Central Working Committee. He shall discharge such other functions of the President as the President may authorise him, in writing, on his behalf.

22. GENERAL SECRETARIES AND THEIR FUNCTIONS:

(a) There shall be four General Secretaries and one General Secretary of the Legal Cell.

(b) The General Secretaries shall-

(i) implement all decisions taken by the Central Working Committee and the All Sikkim Sangram Parishad.

(ii) run the main office of the organisation. They shall call the meetings of the Central Working Committee and the Working Committee and the All Sikkim Sangram Parishad Committee on the advice of the President.

(iii) act on the direction given from time to time by the President in all matters pertaining to the organisation.

(iv) keep on constant touch with the General Secretaries of District Committee and

(v) keep membership list of the Organisation up-to-date and help the Treasurers in collection of membership fees.

23. TREASURERS AND THEIR FUNCTIONS:

(a) There shall be one Treasurer and one Joint Treasurer. The Treasurer and the Joint Treasurer shall:

(i) maintain the accounts of the organisation.

(ii) keep all the pass books and cheque books.

(iii) withdraw fund for the activities of the Organisation from the Bank by the Treasurer on prior written approval of the President.

(iv) submit the accounts to the President for his scrutiny when the President so desires and

(v) submit a duly audited comprehensive report of receipts and expenditures once in a year before the Central Working Committee and the All Sikkim Sangram Parishad Committee when they meet for their respective session.

(b) All donations and contributions to the Fund of the Organisation shall be in the name of the President of the Organisation.

24 OFFICE SECRETARIES:

The Office Secretary shall be appointed by the President to look after the Head Office of the Organisation. He shall also be an ex-office member of the Central Working Committee and the All Sikkim Sangram Parishad Committee.

25. POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE OFFICE SECRETARY:

The Office Secretary shall be responsible for looking after day to day administration of the Head Office of the Organisation. He shall appoint Head Office staff with the approval of the President.

All payments of the staff and other expenditure towards running of the Head Office shall be made by him out of the imprest money.

26. SECRETARY, ADMINISTRATION:

There shall one Secretary, Administration who shall be appointed by the President.

27. FUNCTIONS OF THE SECRETARY, ADMINISTRATION:

The Secretary, Administration shall be the in-charge of publicity and communication of the Organisation and discharge such other functions as the President may, from time to time, authorise him

28. DISTRICT COMMITTEE:

(a) There shall be a District Committee at the District level.

(b) It shall consist of President, one Vice-President, one General Secretary, one Treasurer, two Joint Secretaries, one Publicity Secretary and fourteen other members.

(c) The President at the District level shall be appointed by the President of the Organisation.

(d) The committee shall meet at least once in two months.

(e) It shall deliberate on all matters and take decision regarding the activities of the Organisation in its District.

(f) Decisions of the committee shall be either unanimous or by majority opinion of the members present.

(g) The decision of the committee shall receive the approval of the President of the Organisation before implementation.

(h) The quorum for any meeting of the committee shall be one-third of the total membership of the committee.

(i) The Committee shall be in constant touch with the Head Office of the Organisation and the Constituency Committees.

(j) It shall guide the Constituency Committee in their activities.

(k) The terms of the District Committee shall be for 3 years.

29. POWER OF THE PRESIDENT, DISTRICT COMMITTEE:

He shall preside over the meetings of the District Committee. He shall nominate the office bearers and members of the Committee in consultation with the party MLAs and duly taking approval of the President thereon.

30. DISTRICT PUBLICITY SECRETARY:

He shall be in-charge of publicity in the District. He shall have to report and send copies of press releases to the Secretary, Administration, Head Office, Gangtok However, such press releases should not be inconsistent with the policies of the Organisation.

31. CONSTITUENCY LEVEL COMMITTEE:

(a) The constituency level committee consisting of 15 members shall be the committee at the constituency level.

(b) It shall consist of one President, one Vice-President, one Treasurer, one Joint Secretary and other members. The President at the Panchayat Level will be appointed by the President of the Organisation.

(c) The decisions of the committee shall be either unanimous or by majority opinion of its members present.

(d) The decisions of the committee shall receive the approval of the President of the Organisation before implementation.

(e) The quorum for any meeting shall be one-third of the total membership of the Committee.

36. YOUTH WING AND WOMEN'S WING:

The Youth Wing and Women's Wing of the Organisation shall be amalgamated with the main body and there shall be no separate Youth Wing and Women's Wing.

37. LEGAL CELL:

There shall be one General Secretary and two Secretaries of the Legal Cell who shall be appointed by the President to look after legal matters pertaining to the Organisation.

38. DISCIPLINARY ACTION COMMITTEE:

(a) The President shall constitute a Disciplinary Committee to look into anti-Organisation activities by any member of the Organisation.

(b) The committee shall consist of not more than 3 members.

(c) The Committee shall give show cause notice to any member indulging in anti-Organisation activities to explain in writing within 15 days. If no explanation comes, his/her membership shall stand terminated in consultation with the President.

(d) The President of the Organisation can also take disciplinary action on his own motion against any member indulging in anti-Organisation activities.

39. DISCIPLINE/RULES TO BE FOLLOWED BY MPs AND MLAs BELONGING TO THE ORGANISATION:

Member of Parliament and Members of the State Legislature belonging to the Organisation shall, before voting on any issue or issues or before expressing any issue or views or before drawing the attention of the House on any matter or matters of national or state level importance or of the relation between the Centre and the State or between or among the States, keep in mind the Organisation's principle and stand and shall also take Organisation's prior instruction in this regard. Violation of this rule by any Member of Parliament or any Member of the State Legislature belonging to the Organisation shall attract disciplinary actions.

40. RIVAL GROUPS:

There shall be no place for any rival/splinter group in the Organisation. The only recognised group shall be the group headed by the elected President of the Organisation.

41. MERGER:

(a) The All Sikkim Sangram Parishad Committee shall decide on the merger of the Organisation with another party in its session to be specifically called for that purpose.

(b) One month's notice shall be given to all members by the Head Office Secretary about the agenda of the Session.

(c) The decision regarding merger shall be taken by two-third majority of the members present and voting.

42. AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION:

(a) The Constitution of the Organisation shall be amended if any amendment moved at a special meeting called for that purpose is adopted by two-third majority of members present and voting.

(b) Any member of the Organisation may forward a proposal for amendment of any of the provisions of this Constitution to the President of the Organisation.

Provided that every such proposal shall have to be supported by not less than thirty members of the All Sikkim Sangram Parishad Committee.

(c) The President of the All Sikkim Sangram Parishad Committee may, if considered fit and proper in the interest of the Organisation, further forward the proposal of amendment to the Central Working Committee for discussion and approval and on being approved by the committee with such modifications, if any, the Constitution shall be deemed to have been amended accordingly

43. POWER TO REMOVE DIFFICULTIES:

If any difficulty arises as to the interpretation of this Constitution, the President may, in consultation with the Central Working Committee, remove such difficulties in writing which shall be final.

ANNEXURE: II

Election Manifesto

Sikkim Sangram Parishad, 1984.

The Sikkim Sangram Parishad was born at a time when the whole fabric of Democratic institutions and constitutional norms was endangered following the undemocratic and illegal dismissal of Nar Bahadur Bhandari's Government in May, 1984. It was Sikkim's darkest hour when a truly representative Government, elected by the people and having overwhelming majority in the State Assembly was summarily dismissed through the connivance and active participation of the then Governor, Talyarkhan. This, the people of Sikkim can not and will not forget. There was thus the utmost need of a political party which would not only protect, preserve and promote the interests of the people of the State but also contribute towards safeguarding the edifice of hardwon Freedom and Democracy. The fabric of Unity, National Integration, Secularism and Communal harmony, which is the bedrock of our National ethos needs to be strengthened to meet the challenge of communal and secessionist forces. Imbued with these ideals and determination to pursue them, the Sikkim Sangram Parishad has begun its journey. The spontaneous wide support and sympathy the Parishad has since received from the people of all walks of life in the state is at once a testimony to its true representative character as the only hope and aspiration of the people of Sikkim to lead them to the path of democratic and constitutional functioning and towards peace, progress and communal harmony.

The election to the Lok Sabha is before us. We had demanded simultaneous Assembly elections in our State. This is long overdue. We firmly believe that President's Rule is no substitute for popular Government. As things stand today, the State Administration is practically non-existent. Execution of plans and projects for the betterment of the people has come to a grinding halt. We know that other political parties in the State are afraid to face the people and hence they are all in favour of continuance of President's Rule. This only shows how apathetic these parties are towards the interests of the people. Not only that, what a sordid political drama is being enacted by the political parties. Their so-called leaders have left their parties and their supporters just on the eve of elections for reasons which are crystal clear to everyone. We have every sympathy for them for having committed political harakiri.

Although the Election Commission is ready to hold the Assembly Elections along with the Lok Sabha poll in Sikkim, the State Authorities are not recommending revocation of President's Rule for reasons which are not hidden from all of us. The fact is that the Congress (I) in Sikkim is in shambles and is not in a position to fight the Assembly elections. The Sikkim Sangram Parishad assures the people that it will continue to press its demands for immediate Assembly poll. When Assembly elections can be held simultaneously in Tamil Nadu and some other states, why this cannot be held in Sikkim, which is the most peaceful State in the country.

Now that the Lok Sabha poll is at hand, the Sikkim Sangram Parishad has entered the election arena with utmost confidence that the people of Sikkim will overwhelmingly support the Parishad's candidate Shree Nar Bahadur Bhandari, President of the Parishad. It is an opportunity to our people to affirm their solidarity to their only party- Sikkim Sangram Parishad and support its policies and programmes. Also, once again it is an opportunity to lodge their strong protest through the ballot box against the supervision of democratic and constitutional principles and practices in Sikkim committed by dismissing the legal Bhandari Government. The Parishad is certain that the people of Sikkim will not fail in their hour of trial.

The Sikkim Sangram Parishad reiterates its firm stand on:

1. Seat Reservation in the State Assembly for all the three ethnic communities in Sikkim- Bhutias, Lepchas and Nepalese.
2. Grant of Citizenship to Stateless person in Sikkim with 1970 as the cut-off year.

These two are basic demands and there can be no compromise on them.

3. The Sikkim Sangram Parishad is steadfast in its demands which are the inclusion of Nepali language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. It will fight for it along with the Indian Nepalese and their well-wishers living in other parts of the country.

The Parishad makes it clear that it will fight for these legitimate demands democratically and constitutionally both inside Parliament, Legislatures and outside. It has explained in detail the various aspects of these demands through brochures, booklets and leaflets.

BACKWARD STATE:

The Sikkim Sangram Parishad is of the view that Sikkim should be declared as a 'Backward State' with provision for special treatment in matters of fund allocation and granting more facilities aimed at the advancement of economic, educational, social and cultural life of the people of the State.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT:

Rural Development is the bedrock of the Sikkim Sangram Parishad's programmes to better the lot of the rural people. The main thrust will be for the development of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Horticulture, Poultry farming and Forestry. During the Bhandari Government much emphasis was given to these sectors. As a result, the food production increased from slightly over fifty thousand tonnes to ninety three thousand tonnes. The Parishad demand regular supply of better seeds fertilizers insecticides, agricultural implements and implementation of irrigation projects. Better breed of cattle wealth is necessary to increase the protection of milk and milk products. In a nutshell the objective of the Parishad's rural development programme is to make every village self-sufficient in its basic needs.

FOREST:

Forests occupy an important place in the state economy. The Parishad emphasises the need for augmenting forest wealth not only by preserving them but also by increasing the areas under them. It believes on social forestry and ecological balance. The efforts are made in this direction by the Bhandari Government is not unknown to the people.

SON OF THE SOIL POLICY:

The Son of the Soil Policy of Sikkim Sangram Parishad is inherent in the very concept of preserving the ethnic and cultural identity of the Sikkimese people. Remembering Sikkim merged with India only nine years ago and that the state is backward in many ways, this policy is must if Sikkim is to march faster towards development and progress in order to catch up with the rest of the country. It is consistent with the basic projection envisaged in the Country's Constitution to help preserve, protect and promote the heritage of backward regions in the country. We are aware of the numerous instances where small states with their small population have been swamped by the unrestricted influx of people from out-side. This has created many problems. Sikkim wants to avoid such a situation in the interest of the Sikkimese people in particular and the country in general. The Congress (I) is opposed to this policy of 'Son of the Soil'. But the Sikkim Sangram Parishad will fight for this policy with all the strength at its command for the preservation of our identity.

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICAATION:

The strengthening and widening of the infrastructure of Transport and Communication is sine-qua-non for all round development of any State. It is all the more so for a state like Sikkim, which because of its topography and geographical contiguity to three foreign countries, deserves earnest attention. The present Siliguri-Gangtok national highway needs to be widened, a concrete bridge over the Teesta constructed and at the same time an alternate Siliguri-Gangtok national highway has become a must. Every village in the state needs to be connected by all weather roads.

Similarly tele-communication needs to be strengthened. The mini Radio station and a pocket TV relay centre in Gangtok which cover only a few kilometres around state Capital have become the laughing stock of the people. The continuous blast of foreign Radio and TV programmes encompassing the whole region is a threat fraught with grave consequences. The Parishad will continue its demand for powerful Radio & TV network covering the entire State.

EDUCATION:

The Sikkim Sangram Parishad lays more stress on vocational education reoriented to meet the needs of the country as a whole. It gives emphasis on quality rather than quantity in the educational sphere. It demands the opening of University, more Schools, Colleges and Polytechnics. Time has come when an Engineering College and a Medical College in Sikkim gave become a must. It will fight for more seats for Sikkimese students in educational institutions outside the States.

HEALTH:

Better health care occupies an important place in the Parishad's programme. It gives stress for greater medical facilities in terms of more beds more qualified doctors and better nursing care, mother and child care in the State. It calls for specialized and sophisticated treatment in main hospitals in Gangtok and more facilities in District Hospitals and Dispensaries.

The Parishad will give top priority to the supply of safe drinking water to the people all over the state. It will have a time-bound programme to supply safe drinking water to all villages in the state. It also accords priority to family planning.

INDUSTRIES:

Sikkim is an ideal place for medium industries like Electronic industries which require cool and dust free atmosphere. The Parishad will pursue with the authorities to have such industries in Sikkim. Small & Cottage Industries have tremendous potentialities in the state. These industries will not only help solve unemployment but also generate revenue resources of the state. Mention may be made of carpet weaving, tanka paintings and wood-work, which need to be given further incentives.

WATER RESOURDES & POWER GENERATION:

With unlimited water resources thanks to the eternal snow-capped Himalayan on its northern range Sikkim has tremendous power potential. There is, therefore, tremendous scope for Hydel Power Projects. Unfortunately some of the projects cleared by the Bhandari Government are lying idle with the Centre. The Parishad lays great stress on Rural Electrification Programme. It pledges to electricity each and every village in Sikkim in the shortest possible time. Everybody is aware of the good progress made in this direction by the Bhandari Government.

TOURISM:

Sikkim with the majestic Kanchenjunga on the North epitomises all that is beautiful and grandeur of the Himalayan range abounding in scenic beauty. Unfortunately certain restrictions on Tourists to visit a number of beauty spots in the state have come as a damper to the tourism industry in the state. The Parishad will relentlessly pursue the removal of these restrictions however keeping in view the Defence factor. It will demand net-work of ropeways in the state to carry men and material, inexpensively and swiftly from one place to another.

WELFARE OF SCHEDULE CASTES/TRIBES & BACKWARD CLASSES:

Welfare of Schedule Castes/Tribes and Backward Classes will always remain an important plank of Sikkim Sangram Parishad's policies and programmes. It demands for more financial allocation for their welfare. The Parishad likes to mention here that the people of Sikkim being backward in Sikkim merged with India only 9 years ago; there is therefore the need to give special concession to the youth of Sikkim on matters of recruitment to Central Services by including them along with scheduled castes and tribes.

LAND REFORMS:

The Sikkim Sangram Parishad is committed to land reforms so as to help small agricultural farmers and tenants. Land reform is a must to bring about qualitative change in rural economy. It calls for early settlement of private estates of the erstwhile Chogyal with the Centre. Once this is done it will hasten the process of Land Reforms in the State.

DECENTRALISATION OF ADMINISTRATION:

The Parishad firmly believes in efficient, corruption free and accountable administration. To achieve this it is necessary that there is decentralisation of Administration involving the people right from the grass-root level. Hence the need to strengthen village Panchayats. The Parishad is aware of the tentacles of corruption and it is committed to root them out.

The Parishad strongly feels that immediate steps have to be taken to give speedy legal remedies particularly to the people. It therefore, demands setting up of mobile courts to meet the desired objectives.

CENTRE-STATE RELATIONS:

In a federal polity which India has opted for, the political party ruling at the Centre may not be ruling at one or more states. In such a situation, occasions do arise which give rise to irritants in the Centre-State Relations. These irritants are largely political and financial. On the political plane it has mostly centred round the role of Governor. Of late, three State Governments; in Sikkim, Jammu & Kashmir and Andhra Pradesh were in quick succession dismissed by the respective Governors despite the fact the Governments had majority support in the State Legislatures. The position thus is that State Governments' continuance in power rests on the pleasure of the Governor. This is highly undemocratic and the Parishad will support all those who are in favour of amendment of the constitution which seeks to do away with the authoritarian role of Governors. The Parishad is of the firm opinion that the only place to judge the majority support or otherwise of the ruling party is the State Legislature and not the whims and fancy and the pleasure of Governors.

On the financial plane, there is need to be just and equitable devolution of financial resources and revenue between the Centre on the one hand and states on the other. The Sarkaria Commission which has been set up to go into the Centre-State Relations must primarily go into these important aspects.

These are the basic issues on which the Sikkim Sangram Parishad has evolved its policies and programmes and these again have been highlighted briefly in this Election Manifesto of our party for this Lok Sabha Poll, 1984.

The Election Commission has allotted 'ELEPHANT' to Sikkim Sangram Parishad as its Election Symbol. The Elephant signifies wisdom and success and it will undoubtedly bring victory to the Sikkim Sangram Parishad with the overwhelming support of the people of the Sikkim in this Lok Sabha Election. Here, we appeal to our voters to cast their precious votes for 'ELEPHANT'- the symbol of the Sikkim Sangram Parishad, their only party and their only candidate who is Shree Nar Bahadur Bhandari, President of the Sikkim Sangram Parishad.

In brief, to VOTE for SIKKIM SANGRAM PARISHAD is to VOTE for:

- Reservation of seats for three ethnic communities of Sikkim- Lepchas, Bhutias and Nepalese in Sikkim Assembly.
- Grant of Citizenship to Stateless person in Sikkim.
- Constitutional recognition of Nepali language.
- All round development of Sikkim.
- Unity of the country.
- National Integration.
- Secularism
- Communal harmony.

SIKKIM SANGRAM PARISHAD
H.Q.: GANGTOK, SIKKIM.

ANNEXURE: III
Election Manifesto
Sikkim Sangram Parishad Election to the
Sikkim Legislative Assembly, Dated: 26th November 1989.

The Election Manifesto of the SSP for the Sikkim Legislative Assembly will also be treated as the Manifesto for the Lok Sabha Election.

The representative members from Sikkim Legislative to the Indian Lok Sabha, elected by the Sikkimese people have to pay respect to the hopes and aspirations of the Sikkimese people and have to decide positively without any kind of fear and pressure. We have some bitter experiences regarding this when these representatives have sometimes not bothered to take consent from the public and the party organisation. Now, our representatives to the Lok Sabha will act in accordance with the norms and guidelines of the SSP and will thus represent Sikkim in the trust sense of the term.

Please make our SSP Lok Sabha contender victorious by casting your valuable vote for the Symbol of 'ELEPHANT' to ensure preservation of security, rights and honour of the Sikkimese people.

The SSP is the Symbol of the integrity, nationality and mutual harmony of the Sikkimese people.

The Sikkim Sangram Parishad, committed and determined for the all round development and welfare of the Sikkimese people, does affirm the following declaration for the ensuing Elections to the Sikkim Legislative Assembly and Lok Sabha to be conducted on the 26th November 1989.

1. SEAT RESERVATION:

We have proclaimed in our last Election Manifesto of 1989 to initiate the Reservation Policy for all the communities of Sikkimese origin in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly and soon after our victory, we passed the resolutions to the same effect in the Legislative Assembly again and again in order to ensure the security of the Constitutional Rights of the Sikkimese people snatched away long back and sent them to the Central Government for approval. In 1975, it was because of the resolution passed in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly by the then 26 MLAs that Sikkim had turned into the 22nd state of the Indian Union from an independent kingdom. But it was again a resolution passed by 32 MLAs to rescue back the Fundamental Rights conferred upon them by their birth (Sikkimese People) which were taken away during the time of the Janata Dal at the Centre which was not paid any attention to by the Central Government, in reaction to which a delegation of 34 members comprising of the 32 MLAs and the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha members met the Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi with a memorandum. Our people are well aware of these happenings. Although the Prime Minister assured the delegation to look into the burning problems of Sikkim with sympathy, no positive outcome came out in true colours owing to which Shri N B Bhandari, the President of the SSP decided to go on hunger strike. As a result, the Central Home Minister called for a talk. Resultantly, a high level committee was formed comprising of the state and central members which reported that the Sikkimese demands were justified and by conferring Seat Reservation to the Sikkimese people, the National Integration and Sovereignty would even more be strengthened. But, Shri Rajiv Gandhi has yet not taken the report into consideration. The SSP will keep on striving to achieve the right of the Sikkimese people.

2. CITIZENSHIP:

As had laid down in the Election Manifesto of 1984, our party has been able to convince the Indian government to notify the notification of 1975 in regards to the issue of citizenship and another notification has been generated in 1989. This is decided that citizenship issues will be resolved from the 31st October, 1989 according to the new notification.

3. LAW OF 'SON OF THE SOIL':

We have kept our promises which we had acclaimed in our 1984 Election Manifesto. We are determined to strengthen this trend by offering preferences and fund to the people of Sikkimese origin in matters like job and occupation, commerce and business, contracts and all other relevant assignments. Apart from this, we have already devised a Bill in the Assembly and sent the same to the Governor for approval which will ascertain that the Sale and Purchase of land will only be possible amongst the Sikkimese people. The mission of the welfare of the entire Sikkimese people will be fulfilled with the execution of this bill.

To guard the interest of the Sikkimese people according to the 'Law of the Son of the Soil', we are gradually replacing the employees who were brought to Sikkim from outside the state and appointed on contract basis and a complete replacement of this kind of employees will be done very effectively.

4. NEPALI LANGUAGE:

We have place the burning problems of the Sikkimese people along with the demand for the inclusion of the Nepali language in the constitution before the Central Government, but due to the disruption caused by some of the political agencies of Sikkim, the fulfilment of the demands have been delayed. Even if this case undisturbed by the interference of the Sikkimese or any other political agencies, our Government is completely committed to strive hard for the recognition of the Nepali Language in the 8th Scheduled of the Indian Constitution if any other language is treated accordingly. After the victory in the coming election, we shall keep on striving hard to achieve this goal.

5. NORTH-EAST PRIVILEGES TO BE PROVIDED TO SIKKIM:

The SSP has continuously been raising its voice before the Central Government in regards to the conveyance of all the privileges that the North Eastern States are availing to Sikkim also. We shall certainly fulfil this demand.

6. COMMUNAL HARMONY:

The agencies which want to fulfil their ambition and interests with the help of communal sensitivity are trying to sow the seeds of communal differences and thus to hurt the peaceful atmosphere and mutual integrity. We strongly condemn such enterprises which are bred upon the money and guidance form beyond the state. Our sole aim will be to establish communal integrity and national unity.

7. WILD LIFE RESOURCES:

If wilds life is endangered, the life of all the living beings will face a great threat. Therefore, the SSP Government has formulated laws to ensure the conservation of wild life and forests. The SSP is totally determined to implement those laws to keep Sikkim ever green and prosperous and by doing this the environmental pollution could also be controlled and thus the ecological balance could be maintained.

8. APPLICATION OF THE SOLAR ENERGY:

To meet the present need and to help scientific experiments to flourish, the Solar Energy has now been brought into use in the works like cooking and domestic electrification. This programme will be expanded and put even more emphasis upon to gain more and more benefits for Sikkim.

9. SELF-DEPEDENCE:

Programmes have been started to enable all the Sikkimese people become self dependants and these programmes will further be expanded and the goal will be targeted upon effectively.

10. SAFEGUARD OF THE HONOUR OF SIKKIMESE PEOPLE:

The SSP will forever work for keeping the honour and respect of the Sikkimese people high. In this context, this can be said that work will be accomplished in order to guard the old laws and rules to

promote culture and tradition of Sikkim, to develop the cultural and traditional grandeur of the Sikkimese people. Thus, programme will be the Sikkimese people flourish all over.

11. THE CENTRE-STATE RELATIONSHIP:

We shall have a good and balanced relationship with the centre for the progress and development of Sikkim and Sikkimese people and for the fulfilment of our demands and rights without least concept for whichever political party form the government at the centre. While doing so, our party will have an independent standpoint. We shall always co-operate and work for the national integration and security and at the same time, we shall also strive for the safeguard of Sikkim and the Sikkimese people as the provisions have been given by the Indian Constitution; we shall demand for the preservation of the Sikkimese traditional culture and independent rights of the Sikkimese people.

12. SKILLED ADMINISTRATION:

We have managed to arrange for the appointment of eligible and skilled administrators to ensure the timely accomplishments of the public works because we understand that people suffer if the administrators are not good enough. We have ensured that public works are done on time and for that we have followed the maxim of decentralization of power by which, we have been able to facilitate people in many ways with the help of our units like the Districts, Sub-Division and Panchayats. We are able to offer help and developmental schemes at every door of our public and will continue to serve the people by expanding and maintaining our policies.

13. PANCHAYAT SYSTEM:

The rights and jurisdiction of the Panchayats will even more be expanded and strengthened by bringing in certain changes and rectification to the present Panchayat system and thus various types of aids to the people will be ensured and contracts will also be allocated to the villagers in accordance with their capabilities.

14. SCHEDULED CASTE AND TRIBES:

It is very necessary to have communal harmony amongst all the castes and communities to procure the all round development of the state. Special provisions will be provided to the lower castes and communities in order to make them balanced with other communities. To acquire this, works will be accomplished in accordance with the programmes laid down by the SSP which does have no belief in caste discrimination.

16. FEMALE WELFARE:

The present Government has ensured the preservation of honour and permanent security of the female section by executing the Hindu Marriage Act. The SSP is determined to implement the Act in the fullest possible means and thus to ensure security and special provisions for the female section. Schemes will be devised and executed to provide special privileges according to the need of the female folk to uplift their status and to preserve their interests; discussion and consultation will be done with the senior female citizens of the state to propagate the right and justified schemes.

17. PROPER GUIDANCE TO THE YOUTH:

The youths of today are the pioneers of tomorrow. So, this is our responsibility to provide proper guidance to the youths. Keeping this notion in view, the SSP will ensure the involvement of the youths in various types of intellectual programmes so that they could be kept away from different ill practices and bad habits prevalent throughout the country. They will be further given proper guidance by adopting various modern techniques to help them to become good citizens of the nation. Now, the time has come when all the youths of Sikkim have to focus on these matters seriously. They must not depend on Sikkim only for getting jobs but have to strive hard to get jobs in other parts of the country also. The Government will also offer help in this type of venture. Our students have started to develop themselves and are shining in studies. Our SSP will always encourage and respect the meritorious youths and students who will bring honour to Sikkim by

taking part and achieving glory in various national and international competitions in accordance with the need of the time and will offer help and co-operation in their enterprise.

18. TRADE AND INDUSTRY:

Large industries and factories can not be set up because Sikkim is a hilly state. Therefore, small industries along with some domestic industries have been set up so that unemployment problem could be solved to some extent and female sections are also made capable to stand on their own feet. This kind of factories and industries will be set up in almost all the parts of Sikkim.

19. TOURISM:

The state income will automatically increase if the tourism sector happens to be a promising one. With this fact in mind, tourism centres will be set upon in all the districts of Sikkim according to the convenience of the local people. Proper advancement in this regard was not realised due to the narrow mindedness of the Indian Government but Sikkim Sangram Parishad has untiringly strived hard to convince the Central Government about the prospects of the development in Tourism and thus to provide adequate provisions and convenience to the tourists. This will not only help the tourism prospect but will also help in solving the unemployment problem and at the same time, the state revenue will also be benefited. Arrangements have been done to make our peaceful state more beautiful and attractive so that proper help and convenience could be provided to tourists.

20. RURAL DEVELOPMENT:

All the developmental works under the Rural Development Schemes have been accomplished on the Panchayat and the area MLA levels so far. In the coming days also, the under works and many other yet to be done will be done accordingly with expanded provisions and programmes throughout the villages of Sikkim.

21. AGRICULTURE:

The state will be made self-dependent by promoting self-dependence to the farmers by executing modern technologies in agriculture. More aids and encouragements will be provided for the cultivation of Mushroom, Ginger, Sunflower, Cardamom, Orange, Apple and Flowers.

22. HEALTH:

We have been determined to make our state Sikkim an ideal state by giving priority to family welfare. The works and programmes carried out so far by our Government have been praised all over. We have also devised expanded programmes to have an all round health development in our state.

23. LEGAL PROVISION:

The SSP Government has established many laws to safeguard the interest of Sikkim and the Sikkimese people. In the same way, many more laws and rules will be formulated in order to ensure the security of Sikkim and the Sikkimese people.

24. EDUCATION:

The purpose of giving priority to education is to eradicate poverty and injustice from our society. We hope that everybody will take the opportunity of the programmes which have been devised. Only the Sikkimese students in the whole country are availing some special provisions. As a result, the literacy rate in the tenure of our government has grown upto 55% from the precious 34%. This, certainly, is an achievement of the SSP Government. The Education system will be more strengthened to acquire the all round development of the state.

25. WELFARE OF EMPLOYMENT:

We always have a genuine sympathy towards all the employers of the state starting right from the wage labourers. This is known to all that the demands of the employers have been granted in keeping the pace with the rising trend of the price hike of commodities. We are also all destined to co-operate with them in the future also.

26. HELIPAD:

We do not have a proper and efficient transportation facility to go to all the places of Sikkim because most of the places are still not motarable. We do not have helipad too. This is an injustice on the part of the Central Government. For all these problems, we shall put our strong demands before the centre so that these problems could be met up soon.

27. GOVERNMENT: READY TO DEVELOP LITERATURE, ART AND CULTURE:

Language, literature, art and culture are the inevitable parts of a race or a community. The Government is always keen and committed to safeguard and develop these disciplines of our state and this is known to all. The Government will always lead from the front for the development of all these essence in the future also.

28. GUIDANCE TO STUDENTS:

The students who have not attained the age of 18 years should only concentrate on studies keeping themselves away from politics. Students who have attained or crossed the age of 18 years will have to decide properly so as to the future of Sikkim and the Sikkimese people.

We hope that the students who have got the voting right after attaining the age of 18 years will responsibly franchise their right keeping in mind the future not only of themselves but also of the entire state. The SSP will always be committed for the future security of the Sikkimese students.

29. RELIGIOUS HARMONY:

India is a secular country and we have been rightly implementing the doctrines and principles of secularism in our state by paying honour to the religious beliefs of all the religions sects and we have also been actively associated in constructing and maintaining institution like Gumpa, Temple, Mosque and Church. The Indian Constitution has given us a special privilege to elect a religious representative from our state. We have been able to establish religious harmony in our state and will work hard to strengthen the same even more spiritedly.

30. ALL ROUND DEVELOPMENT OF THE STATE:

The free education system will be carried on in order to attain the goal of all round development of our state. Along with this, special opportunities will be created and provided for Higher Education also and the standard of Education of our state will be raised to the level of other states.

Similarly, to bring in yet more development in health services, arrangements will be done to set up health Sub-Centres in the Panchayat levels. One Central Health Centre will be established to meet the need of quality health provisions for our people where all kinds of diseases will be treated upon with the help of modern technology. In the same way, programmes have been devised to focus much on agriculture and animal husbandry in order to uplift the financial status of our people.

The transportation facilities will be made more convenience for our villagers by constructing roads and bridges in all the villages of Sikkim. The provisions of Drinking Water and Domestic Electrification will more be concentrated upon so these facilities reach each house of every village.

From our long experience of being in the Government we know very well about the ways of serving our Sikkimese people, employees, youths and the students. Hence, we shall try our level best to accomplish our tasks and serve our people in the fullest means possible.

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, let us reiterate that the SSP is completely committed and determined to fulfil the objectives laid down in the constitution of the SSP.

