

Chapter V

Ethnic and Political Movement in the Hills OF Darjeeling (1907-2007)

This chapter explains the Gorkhaland movement with its various characters from 1907 to 2007. Though, the origin of the movement and its various activities was much earlier than it. Generally, the movement before 1907 in the hills of Darjeeling was limited to acquiring some constitutional reforms for themselves. More specifically, the agitations were mainly organised for demanding some socio-economic reforms from the Government.

The year 1907 is the landmark of the Gorkhaland movement in Darjeeling within British India. The demand for separation within India was begun from this year. This separatist movement furthermore divided into two parts during these 100 years. India's Independence in 1947 was the dividing line of the two different categorical movements. Furthermore, the second half of the movement was Nepali language recognition movement in Indian Constitution and for Sixth Schedule. The Partition of India as well as Bengal in August 1947 left the boundaries of the district intact and in the share of West Bengal. The district was placed thereafter in the Presidency Division and became a general district of West Bengal. In 1917, the people of Darjeeling again advocated to Viceroy Lord Chelmsford and secretary of state in India, Mr. Montagu, for "the creation of a separate unit comprising the present Darjeeling district with the portion of Jalpaiguri district which was annexed from Bhutan in 1865". The same demand was placed in 1929 before the Simon Commission also.¹ The demand for separate State of Gorkhaland was firmly made in 1980 by Gorkaha League Zilla Committee (G.L.Z.C.), then by Pranta Parishad and finally taken up by GNLF who were eventually successful in launching an agitation based on this demand of Gorkhaland.

As mentioned earlier that the territorial history of Darjeeling is closely related with Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim. The area of Sikkim ran extensively in the years and reached as far as eastern Nepal. After Prithvi Narayan Shah's conquest and unification of greater Nepal, Darjeeling came to be part of Nepal.² Prior to 1861 and from 1870–1874, Darjeeling District was a "Non-Regulated Area" (where acts and regulations of the British Raj did not automatically apply in the district in line with rest of the country, unless specifically extended). The term "Non-Regulated Area" was changed to "Scheduled District" in 1874 and again to "Backward Tracts" in 1919. After the formation of the Darjeeling district in 1866, the British Government treated this district as a non-regulated area against others regulated region. The former laws and regulation relating land and land revenue in force which

applicable in regulated area but in non-regulated area i.e. in Darjeeling district such was not the case. The power was given in the hands of the executive. From 1862 to 1870, it was considered a "Regulated Area". The term "Non-Regulated Area" was changed to "Scheduled District" in 1874 and again to "Backward Tracts" in 1919. The status was known as "Partially Excluded Area" from 1935 until the independence of India. The objective of making such a division was to protect the tribes and backward people who were incapable of protecting themselves against the economic, social and cultural domination of the outsiders. But Darjeeling was not only 'excluded', 'scheduled' or 'non-regulated' area; there were several such district in India like Chottanagpur plateau, the Chottanagpur hill tracts in Bengal Presidency, the Naga, Lusai, Khasi and Jayantia hills of Assam.³

Every protest movements have a life-course; they emerge, evolve, grow, mature and in this process, change and transform in terms of its components. The social groups with various ethnic and linguistic origins indicating numerous racial stocks and social status have found places for themselves at various points of time adapting themselves to several ecological niches presented by the Physiographic and climatic setting of the area. The diplomatic idea of differentiation among the strongest for gaining all over control between themselves was derived from the minds of Colonial British rulers. The Morley-Minto Reforms (1909) advocated the arrangement of separate electorates for Muslims which suited the British admirably and only confirmed in Indian minds the 'divide and rule' designs of the British. While to most Indians Independence was the end of political struggle for emancipation, to the people of Darjeeling Hills it was a beginning of long drawn struggle for ethnic identity. In political process of free Indian years of simmering discontent of hill people found stronger expression of identity.

Ethnicity and its Theoretical Concept

"Ethnicity" has been generally understood in an objective or subjective sense. Those who emphasize its objective criteria are mainly Harold Isaacs, who defines it as "primordial affinities and attachments", and Clifford Geertz, who sees it as an "activated primordial consciousness". Though van den Berghe strongly argues in favour of combining the objective and subjective approaches, most other scholars have taken the second approach. For instance, Max Weber defines it as a "sense of specific honour", Fredrik Barth as a "subjective process of status identification", Sandra Wallman as "perception of group difference", Glazer and Moynihan as "interest groups", Daniel Bell as "interest plus affective tie" etc.⁴ Ethnic identity, often condemned as parochial, chauvinistic, anti-integrationist, and anti-development, is actually a social necessity. When a nation or a state is found to be abstract

and even hostile, ethnicity is the only straw that people can hold on to with confidence. Such being the case, ethnicity is there wherever human beings are there. This is well elucidated by Ronen and according to him ethnicity is a “potentially useful factor in the process of development. He also hopes that, this attribute of ethnicity can be proved useful either by “administrative decentralization” or “structural reorganization into a federal system”⁵Discrimination against ethnic groups by the state or country is a general tendency in the earlier dominant colonies of Asia and Africa in the field of economic opportunities, civil rights and political privileges.

From the prevailing empirical condition in sub-continent raised some important issues which are relevant to the study of any separate ethnic movement like Gorkhaland Movement. Firstly, ethnic groups often find themselves discriminated against, exploited and even oppressed.⁶ Secondly, sometimes the boundary of the state or federal unite of a nation is fixed irrespective of the fact as how such boundaries were fixed and dominant class or political elite would invariably disapprove. Consequently, ruthlessly suppress the ethnic groups who wish to opt out of the state and sometimes ask for self-determination. Thirdly, the tendency of the dominant groups is to establish their authority over the nominal nationalities or ethno-nationalities. If the process fails, the ethnic groups are branded as parochial and this process was applied in ethnic movement of Assam. Fourthly, ethnic groups believe that a separate state is the only way to finish the tension between dominant group and them which can be maintained their own cultural identity.⁷Fifthly, ethnic groups always pressurize the state for greater share of developmental allocation.⁸ Sixthly, aspirations for strong or more political control often make a sense of frustration and rebellion. The Sikh peasantry frustrated in the late 1970’s when the Green Revolution reached a plateau and their profit margin started reducing. The threat of withdrawal of input subsidy made them desperately look for more share in the political power, like Bosque nationalism in Spain which is “the work of peasant, and Catholic orthodoxy,” and striving” to become a separate part of Spain or even a separate state.⁹ Seventhly, there is tendency on the part of the ethnic groups in the erstwhile colonial states to fall separately in post-colonial era.

During the colonial period, the colonial powers had acted as ‘glue’ in holding some diverse cultural groups, together within the framework of centralized states. Once the ‘glue’ was removed when the colonial powers withdraw, each package state began to disintegrate and ‘to fall in its original parts’.¹⁰ The colonial state of India made out the ‘glue’ through a variety of divisive policy formulations. The Sikhs and Gorkhas were ‘martial races’, a purely colonial construct with a view of pressing them into the service of the empire. For the Nagas and other north-eastern tribes, religion was an effective ‘glue’ to hold them on to the colonial state.¹¹ Eighthly, regional and sectoral disparities in the development plans and programmed further accentuate ethnic disparities because each region or sector is dominated by a particular ethnic group.¹² Finally, ethnicity is essentially a political phenomenon. Traditions, customs and other components are used as mechanism for political mobilization, and cultural differences are associated with serious political cleavages.¹³

Formation of a Hill Political Society in the Colonial Period

After the formation of the Darjeeling district in 1866, the British Government treated this district as a non-regulated area against others regulated region. The former laws and regulation relating land and land revenue in force which applicable in regulated area but in non-regulated area i.e. in Darjeeling district such was not the case. The power was given in the hands of the executive. The British desire to protect the Lepcha-Bhutia tribes because the British had sponsored migration from Nepal to Sikkim to counter the anti-British attitude of the Lepcha-Bhutia groups. The likely objective of declaring Darjeeling as “excluded area” was insulation of the Nepalese from extraneous influence, especially the influence of the burgeoning nationalist movement from outside and safeguarding the huge capital invested in the tea industry in Darjeeling. The original inhabitants of Darjeeling hills are the Lepcha. Though their origin is obscure, they are decidedly Mongolian in feature. They speak a Tibeto-Burman language, which they call Rongaring, and were originally the indigenous people both Darjeeling and Sikkim. The majority of Darjeeling’s contemporary population are the culturally Nepali Gorkhas, who speak Nepali (also called Gorkhali), along with their own mother tongues, such as Gurung, Limbu, Mangar, Newar, Rai, Sherpa, Tamang and Thami. The Sherpa community are famous for their courage and stamina in mountaineering, most notably tensing Norgay spent much of his life in Darjeeling and eventually died there.¹⁴

Throughout the hills of Darjeeling, people will also meet Bengalis, Bhutias, Biharis, Marwaries, Punjabis, Sindhis and Tibetans. The Khampas, another branch of the Lepchas, are warrior-like and more dashing than their docile cousins. The Khampas are recent immigrants from Tibet. The greater bulk of the people in the Hills are Gorkhas. They are industrious and enterprising as a race and speak various dialects. The short Mongolian type Nepalese, the Gorkhas, renowned for their military prowess the world over, and the first to be decorated with the coveted Victoria Cross, finds jobs and security both in the British and Indian armies. They carry the traditional weapon, the *Khukri*- a curved ornamental knife. Among the population are also the Newars or best known, the world over as the Sherpas. They are well known for their courage, stamina and surefootedness and for their immeasurable contributions to Mountaineering. Also, much in evidence in the hills are the Bhutias and they are divided into Tibetan, Bhutan, Dharma and Sikkimese Bhutias and a greater bulk of Bengalee from Siliguri sub-division. The birth place of the Lepchas is Sikkim.

According to ancient Lepcha folk-stories, the Lepcha script is believed to be framed by five Lepcha Pundits, who were - Targay, Sayyum, Goley, Tangrab and Dureang. This script is similar to Mongol script. The Kirat community is counted among the world's ancient communities. The mention of it can be found in the Rig Veda too. The Kirats had created their own civilised society before the Aryans reached Sapta Sindhu, and was ruled by their leader Shambar. But after losing all their territories, in the 40 years of long war, they headed in search of new lands. Later they resided in the Himalayan region of Nepal, Sikkim and India. They usually speak in Tibeto-Burman language style as that of Newar, Magar, Gurung, Murmi, Sunar, Lepcha and Toto and also in the style spoken in East Nepal by Dhimal, Thami, Limbu, Yakkha, Khambu and Hayu. The traditional residential area of Tamangs is the hilly area between Budigandaki and Likhukhola in Nepal. The style of language is from the family of Tibeto-Burman. The Magar Community hails mostly from Palpa, Syaugja and Tanhu areas of Nepal. The language spoken by them falls under Tibeto-Burman branch. The Limbus, Tamangs, Newars etc. who migrated from the Limbouan territory to Darjeeling were generally Buddhists and each of these group had a separate language.¹⁵

Like all other ethnic movements in India, the Gorkhaland Movement in Darjeeling district was also preceded a cultural movement. The cultural movement is deep rooted and it has an emotive value and it can easily unite the sub-groups under a common symbol and make them conscious of their distinct identity. In the history of British India, during the closure of the First World War Darjeeling was accorded approval and sanction for teaching of Nepali Language upto the graduation level from the then Calcutta University on 24th July 1918. The permission for teaching of Nepali Language as a developed language of the Gorkhas in India. Thus it is evident that the Nepali speaking people had grown into compact nationality in India living in the region comprising Darjeeling.¹⁶ The diverse groups of Darjeeling found expression in Nepali *Sahitya Sammelan* founded by Parasmani Pradhan in 1924. He had published the first literary journal in Nepali language called Chandrika from Darjeeling in 1918. The Sahitya Sammelan spearheaded a powerful movement for the use of Nepali in administration and as medium of instruction in Darjeeling.¹⁷

The Demand for Gorkhasthan and C.P.I.

On the heels of Independence of the country came the partition of Bengal, and the Government of India tried to be primarily careful against advance disintegration of West Bengal. Gorkhasthan, in which the word 'Gorkha' represents a community and 'sthan'

meaning 'place or land.' The concept of 'Gorkhasthan' proposed by the Darjeeling District Committee of the Communist Party of India was different from the concept of 'Gorkhaland.' The movement for separate Gorkhasthan gained momentum as its leaders were organized. Gorkhasthan sought to establish a union, a Republic of the Proletariat, especially of its kingdom of Nepal, southern parts of Sikkim and Darjeeling. And, 'Greater Nepal' sought to expand the present contours of the republic of Nepal to the area it encompassed during the rule of King of Nepal Prithvinarayan Shah. So, the main difference between the two is that: 'Gorkhasthan' sought to engulf Nepal but 'Greater Nepal' sought to expand the territorial dominance of Nepal. The memorandum presented by the CPI leaders demanding the Gorkhasthan was divided into three segments: Firstly, the formation of the union of Gorkhasthan. Secondly, expansion of the territory under the union of Gorkhasthan. Thirdly, the development and administrative measures to be undertaken in the district of Darjeeling in the interim period leading to the formation of the Union of Gorkhasthan. Though, the idea of a Gorkha homeland had been propounded by Roopnarayan Sinha. He had submitted a petition to the government of Bengal in 1935 on behalf of Hillmen's Association urging of separate homeland for the Gorkhas in Darjeeling and some adjacent parts of Jalpaiguri district.

Some prominent leaders of this socialist movement in the hills were Ratanlal Brahmin, Bhadra Bahadur Hamal, Sushil Chatterjee, Satyendranath Majumdar and Dr. Sachin Dasgupta. Brahmin. In 1932, Ratanlal Brahmin founded the *Gorkha Dukh Niwaran Sammelan* In 1932, Ratanlal Brahmin founded the *Gorkha Dukh Niwaran Sammelan* (G.D.N.S.). Communist Party of Darjeeling was founded in 1943 by the leadership of Ratanlal Brahmin Sushil Chatterjee, Satyandranath Majumdar, Dr. Sachin Dasgupta, Bhadrabahadur Brahmin, Bhadrabahadur Hamal and Ganeshlal Subba. The Darjeeling District Committee of the Communist Party, on 6th April 1947, submitted a memorandum to the Constituent Assembly of India requesting for the formation of a separate 'Union of Gorkhasthan'. Their demand of Gorkhasthan comprises some areas of the present day Nepal, Darjeeling District and Sikkim. Most importantly, the signatories to the memorandum, Ratanlal Brahmin and Ganeshlal Subba chalked out various measures that are required to be taken by the government of independent India during the interim period that resulted in the formation of the 'Union of Gorkhasthan'.¹⁸ The leaders of the Communist Party of India (CPI) in the hills organized Gorkha tea workers in 1940. The CPI favored regional autonomy

for Darjeeling hills within West Bengal presenting a memorandum to the States Reorganisation Commission in 1954.

In face of this stiff attitude, various types of demands for autonomy of Darjeeling began to converge in the 1950s and the 1960s and tended to pivot round the movements for the recognition of Nepali language in the Eight Schedule of the Indian Constitution as well as for the autonomous status of Darjeeling within the province of West Bengal. In the meantime, the State Government of West Bengal passed the official Language Act in 1961, accepting the amendment brought by Deo Prakash Rai of the All-India Gorkha League to give official language status to Nepali in the three hill sub-divisions of Darjeeling. This bill was expectedly supported by all political parties in West Bengal. The inclusion of Nepali in the Eight Schedule of the Constitution emerged as a major ethnic issue when Professor Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, as a member of the Official Language Commission formed by the Government of India in 1955, advocated in his minority report the inclusion of Sindhi and Nepali in the Eight Schedule. As many as 74 members of the Parliament supported this inclusion, but the Government of India did not follow up the case of Nepali. This discrimination created a deep frustration among the Nepali middle class of Darjeeling. In a conscious effort to organize a sustained movement for the constitutional recognition of Nepali language, the All-India Nepali Bhasa Samiti was formed on January 31, 1972. Both the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and the Communists Party of India as well as the All-India Gorkha League extended sincere cooperation to the various positive programmes and agitation activities of the All-India Nepali Bhasa Samiti in an organized manner.¹⁹

In early fifties of the 19th century there was a language movement in Darjeeling for recognition of Nepali as the official language of Darjeeling. The official response of Dr. B. C. Roy, the then Chief Minister of West Bengal over the language movement in the West Bengal Assembly on 23.02.1961 that “The number of people speaking Nepali in the hill district, according to 1951 census is only 19.98 per cent, even if we leave out Siliguri sub-division and take Darjeeling, Kurseong and Kalimpong, it is 25.2 per cent. This issue strengthened all the ethnic groups in the hills of Darjeeling for recognition of Nepali language which was the important step for the Gorkha identity. In fact, the Limbus, Lepshas, Bhutias, Rais, Magars etc. declare Nepali as their mother tongue in 1961, thus the percentage of Nepali speaking people in Darjeeling district increased from 20% in 1951 to 60% in 1961. Therefore, Government felt that it would be better to wait for the 1961 census. Then we may be able to decide whether Nepali language should be either in a district or municipality recognised as an

additional language of that area”. Perhaps, Dr. B. C. Roy had some own observations regarding the figure of 1951 Census.²⁰ But in Darjeeling, initially Hindi and then Nepali became the lingua franca. Except these people all the others like Bengali, Behari etc. from the plains settled in Darjeeling for the jobs opportunity or as a tourist, picnic purpose etc. But the inhabitants of Darjeeling helped to develop a sense of ethnic exclusiveness which eventually burgeoned into a movement.²¹

In a Government confidential political document issued on July-August, 1931 mentioned the “Activities of the all India Gorkha League” as follows:

The All India Gorkha League (A.I.G.L)

“The Gorkha League was founded in 1925 and the central organisation of the League is at Dehra Dun. Its ostensible object is social and religious reform amongst the Gorkhas. Its membership in 1927 was about 125, when its influence was considerable and on the increase. Most of the leading local Gorkhas including retired military officers were members of the League. One of the rules of the League is that it should keep clear of politics and upto 1927 its activities had not been found to be objectionable, but the fact that one of its chief promoters and its then vice-president was Thakur Chandan Singh, a well known agitator, leads one to doubt whether it will continue to lead a blameless existence in this respect. Chandan Singh is the son-in-law of the late Nepalese general, Karak Shumsher Jang, and was in the service of the Bikaner State before the war and accompanied the Bikaner Camel Corps on active service. After the war he quarrelled with the Maharaja of Bikaner and proceeded to Dehra Dun where he conducted an objectionable agitation against His Highness. During the non-cooperation period he was a staunch non-cooperator and took a leading part in the movement. More recently he has acted as a jackal to the Maharaja of Nabha and has aided him in some of his questionable enterprises. His father-in-law has disowned him on account of his objectionable activities.

From a Press Report dated the 27th June 1927, it appears that a branch of the League was started at Dibrugarh (Assam) in about April of that year. A “largely attended” public meeting was held under the auspices of the League on the 23rd June at which political matters were discussed. In 1927 the League had for its president Bahadur Shumsher Jung, son of the ex-Maharaja of Nepal, Deb Shumsher. Thakur Chandan Singh is the president of the League at present. The official organ of the League is the ‘*Gurkha Sansar*’, which was, and apparently still is, edited by Chandan Singh. It is a weekly newspaper printed in *Gurkhali* at the Grand

Himalayan Press, Dehra Dun, and was started on the 4th November 1926. It had a circulation of about 400 in 1927 and till then its tone had been moderate. It aimed at bettering the social and religious condition of the *Gurkhas*, but did not have much influence. There is some suspicion that Kharag Bahadur Singh and his party are in some way connected with the League, but so far nothing has transpired to substantiate this. The League is not recognised by Army Headquarters. Commanding Officers of the units with Gurkhas in their composition have accordingly been advised that no serving soldier should be permitted to join the League or to support it in any way. Its official organ has been declared unsuitable for circulation among the Indian troops.²²

A.G.L and Uttarakhand Demand

The Uttarkhand Movement emerged out of deliberate and organised effort by the elite Rajbanshi communities of North Bengal to attain certain goals. But the creation of a separate state of Kamtapur was the main aim of the movement. The "sons of the soil" doctrine was the key factor of the Rajbanshis North Bengal to achieving the separate state of Kamtapur. The proposed land of 'Kamptapur' would include the five districts of North Bengal. The leaders of Uttarkhand movement initially declare to brand a particular section of people (Bhatias) as outsiders. They demanded Bhatias expulsion from North Bengal. The Bhatias had been identified as the chief competitors by the leaders of this movement. The economic, social and political spheres of life, Bhatia people considered as Rajbanshi communities main competitors. There was a feeling prevalent in this region that even while the Rajbanshi people are the members of the dominant indigenous community. But they are subjected to the domination of the so-called alien population. In these circumstances, a kind of intense distrust against the alien communities arose out of a quite distinct psychological attitude on the part of the leaders of this movement.

In the sphere of economic opportunities the Rajbanshis are of the opinion that they are falling behind the Bengali immigrants. The members of the farmer community will constantly feel that they are in a less privileged position as compared to the migrant Bengalis many of them are already well established in terms of money, education, contact and power. As a sense of insecurity and discomfort is there in the mind of the Rajbanshis and which is often exploited in favour of Uttarakhand movement.

The movement is somewhat distinct from Backward class movement in terms of its goal, ideology, orientation, mobilization pattern and course of action. The genesis of this

movement not only lies in 'discontent' arising out of 'relative deprivation' but also a desire to dominate over the alien population at all major spheres of life. There are three principal dimensions of the Rajbanshi society – class, status and power that sought to bring out their casual association with the emerging Uttarakhand movement.²³ It was reported in a newspaper that the Jalpesh temple near Mainaguri of Jalpaiguri district had become a regular venue of a section of leaders who are committed to the creation of a separate state for themselves. Their gatherings at the temple have an awesome seriousness about them. Every member is reportedly asked to swear by the Gita that he will not give up the struggle until a separate state becomes a reality and then he is blessed with water which is first 'purified' by pouring it on the Shiva Linga in the temple.²⁴ On October 30th, 1949, the representatives of Cooch Behar State Praja Congress, along with All India Gorkha League (AIGL), Sikkim Praja Sammelan; assembled in Darjeeling and together called for a separate state as 'Uttarakhand Pradesh Sangha'. On 5th July, 1969, the Uttarakhand Dal (UKD) was formed at the historical Jalpesh temple of Mainaguri of Jalpaiguri district by a section of Rajbanshi people, was born in the womb of the Kshatriya Samiti.

The founder members of the Uttarakhand party were Panchanan Mallick, Kalindranath Barman, Hiramohan Barman, Soma Oraon, Sitanath Roy and many others. From there the leaders of the movement announced to create a prosperous Indian state called 'Kamtapur.' The supporters of the party adopted the name of 'Kamtapur' because of the regional and historical background.²⁵ To win the struggle for power the Rajbanshi leaders have finally brought the Kamtapur issue into the forefront. The leaders were fully aware of the fact that numerical strength is an important basis of power. The emergence of the Uttarakhand party (Uttarakhand Dal) and their present stir for a separate state of Kamtapur reveal the desire on the part of a class of Rajbanshi leaders to grab the power and to exert their absolute political authority over everyone. Like any other socio-political movements, the Uttarakhand movement has mainly three basic features. These three features of the movement were collective mobilization, separate ideology and orientation to change. As stated earlier that the leaders of the movement propagate the idea of the promised land of 'Kamtapur' which would include all five districts of North Bengal but except the three hill sub-divisions of Darjeeling. The demand for a separate state in the initial stage was that claimants of the state only included the three districts of northern part of North Bengal i.e. Cooch Behar, Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling barring one exception when Sikkim was included. The idea of inclusion of all the five districts of North Bengal in their proposed state of Kamotapur developed later. The

Uttarakhand leaders are trying to consolidate their power first by organizing their own community members and then by forging coalition with the other communities.²⁶ Many of the leaders of this movement were the members of traditional Jotedars families and depend on landed property for their subsistence.

The political change of West Bengal in 1977 ushered a new dimension in the history of this movement. After 1977 when Left Front came to the power both 'All India Gorkha League' and Uttarkhanda Dal jointly submitted memorandum to the government of West Bengal demanding the socio-economic and cultural development of the region. Though the Uttarkhanda Dal was formed in July 1969 but demand for a separate state was raised by this regional political organization only after 1980. Thus the new political phenomenon occurred from 1980s may be regarded as next phase of the movement. In the wake of Uttarakhand movement, the inclination towards revival of Rajbanshi dialect as a distinct language (Kamtapuri) of the region is merely an attempt to establish a different identity for the Rajbanshis. Thus the leaders of this movement want to bring the language issue not only to strengthen the loyalties of the Rajbanshis to Uttarakhand movement but also to prevent the community from being assimilated into the Bengali fold. It is difficult to understand the demand for a separate Kamtapur state in isolation of the dynamics of Rajbanshi society in economic, social and political orders. Theoretically one can look into the whole issue of Uttarakhand movement from the angle of "domination and authority in human society." As a traditional dominant society of the region, the Rajbanshis feel that they are dominated by the immigrants in every sphere of life which is described in the next phase of the writing.²⁷ The political organizational connection of Uttarkhanda Dal (U.K.D.) and Gorkha National Liberation Front (G.N.L.F.) regarded the second phase of the movement.

From 1980's onwards again the demand for a separate state in the region emerged under the both political organizations. The former raised such demands in the plains of North Bengal and the latter in the hills of Darjeeling district. On the other hand, the Uttarkhanda Dal and the All India Gorkha League jointly fought against the Govt. of West Bengal for the all round after 1977. But the new changing political scenario the U.K.D. and the G.N.L.F. was different than the former where they individually raise their voice for a separate state respectively as stated earlier. It was also found that though the Uttarkhanda Dal included all the districts of North Bengal in its proposed state but the G.N.L.F. kept its demand confined to three hill sub-division of Darjeeling district. Though, it was found that the G.N.L.F. later

made an effort to include the Tarai and Dooars of Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri districts which was more popularized by another hill organization namely Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJM).

The demand of Gorkhaland was on the basis of ethnic identity but the main slogan of the Uttarkhanda Dal was socioeconomic and cultural backwardness of the region. It was found later that the Uttarkhanda Dal turned its movement gradually into linguistic and ethnic identity base movement and tried to communicate with G.N.L.F. leader Subhash Ghising.²⁸ However, the first argument in this regard was put forward by the president of the Uttarkhanda Dal (U.K.D.) Sri Panchanan Mallick in an interview. In this interview he alleged that as the then chief minister of the Govt. of West Bengal Sri Jyoti Basu did not look it necessary to acknowledge their memorandum which they went to submit jointly with the 'All India Gorkha League' on September 1977 demanding socio-economic development of North Bengal and redress their grievances nor even the chief minister felt any courtesy to meet them. Under this situation, the U.K.D. leadership was compelled to turn to the demand for a separate state to the central government.²⁹ After a long period, the same tone was reflected in the memorandum, submitted by the president of the U.K.D. to the then Prime Minister of India Smt. Indira Gandhi on 24th August 1981. It was mentioned in the memorandum that "the Rajbanshi people of North Bengal had become displeased and restless regarding their fear of extraction in socially, politically, economically and culturally. They feel that the only way to come out of this sorry state of affairs is to organize themselves in a separate state under the name and style of Kamtapur state within the union."³⁰

The first decision for a separate state of Kamotapur was taken by the Dal in its Central Committee meeting (*Kendriya Sanmela*), held at Bijlimani Primary School of Darjeeling district on 31st May, 1980. It is very important to mention the fact that one representative from the All India Gorkha League Sri Y. V. Subba from Kalimpong sub-division of Darjeeling district was present in the *Sanmela* as a special guest. From this point of view, it can be said that both have organizational connection between the two party.³¹ Another political conference (*Sanmela*) was organized by the U.K.D. on behalf of the 'Uttarkhanda-Gorkha League Front' at Chaterhat, near North Bengal Medical College in 28 January 1978. The chief guests of that conference were from All India Gorkha League viz., Smt. Renulina Subba, M.L.A. (Kalimpong) and Sri Deo Prasad Rai in Darjeeling district who was general secretary of All India Gorkha League and MLA.³² The political alliance of U.K.D. with 'All India Gorkha League' in the next phase established their political relation with the Republican Party. It should be mentioned that the Republican Party (organization) was an

organized led by the backward class communities. The support of that political party (organization) was among the scheduled caste communities especially among the Matuas and Namasudras (Bengali sub castes).

The ideology of Republican party based on ideology of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. However, later the U.K.D., Gorkha League and the Republican Party united together and formed a new alliance called 'Mukti Front.' A joint public meeting was organized by these newly formed 'Mukti Front' at the Chaterhat School ground on 12 November 1979.³³ The Rajbanshis, a dominant scheduled caste community of North Bengal is the potent force behind this movement. Whatever may be their racial and migrational background, there is little doubt that the Rajbanshis are the early settlers of Cooch Behar, Jalpaiguri and the plains of Darjeeling district. There is still considerable controversy regarding the origin and ethnic affinities of the Rajbanshis. Racially the present Rajbanshis of North Bengal are of a mixed origin. At the same time, the authorities do not totally rule out the suspicion that Koch, Paliya and Rajbanshi belong to the same ethnic stock.

It appears from the study of census reports that some of the Koches of North Bengal preferred to be classes as Rajbanshis and the census of 1872 recorded the Rajbanshis as a special class of Koch.³⁴ According to census of 1971, the Rajbanshis constituted about 14 percent of total population and 50 percent of scheduled caste population in North Bengal. The next census does not provide separate statistics for the Rajbanshis but it shows that ethnically about 30 percent of the total population in North Bengal belong to scheduled castes. Historically, it appears that in the phase of their social mobility not all Koches became Rajbanshis by name. So a hierarchy emerged.³⁵ The leaders of Uttarakhand movement now want to channelise their agitation by exploiting the ethnic sentiments of a particular community through certain religious process.

The Language Question

The States Reorganization Commission (1953) and the Official Language Commission (1955) increased the restlessness in the country on the question of language and identity.³⁶ The Government of West Bengal, relying on the census report of 1951, wherein Nepali speaking people in Darjeeling was recorded as 20%, did not go by the contented of Article 345 of the Constitution which forbids that a language which is spoken by absolute majority of the people in a part of the state should get official status. To get the official language status for Nepali in Darjeeling according to the condition of the Constitution failed in 1958 when the

AIGL and the Nepali elements in other political party's effort was thrown. Consequently, Bhadra Bahadur Hamal's (CPI) amendment to incorporate Nepali as an official language of Darjeeling was rejected which was supported by the Nepali MLAs in the Congress during that period and the supporters of AIGL. It left a scar on the minds of the Nepalese of Darjeeling which has never been really healed when official language of the state was adopted as Bengali.³⁷ When Calcutta University decided to remove Nepali as a vernacular language from degree course which duration is three years, the sentiment of Nepali-speaking people was again hurt. As a result, Bhasa Manyata Samity (Darjeeling District Hill Language Implementation Committee) with representatives of all political parties was formed. According to census of 1961, Nepali speaking people of Darjeeling was rose 60% and then the State Government passed the Official Language Act of 1961 and then the amendment moved by D.P. Rai of AIGL to give official language status to Nepali in the three hill sub-division of Darjeeling district was accepted. Addition of Nepali language of the Constitution by Eight Schedule was possibly first voiced by Late Ananda Singh Thapa, the editor of '*Jagat Gorkha*' which published from Dehradun, in a letter to the then President of India in 1956. All India Nepali Bhasa Samity (AINBS) which got the support of a cross-section of the non-Nepali was formed in 1972 and agitate only for the constitutional recognition of the Nepali language. As early as in 1956, B.G. Kher, Chairman of the Language Commission remarked that Nepali was a foreign language. The then Prime Minister of India, Morarji Desai, echoed this sentiment in 1979. Writing to Jawaharlal Nehru on November 7, 1950, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel stated, "The people inhabiting this portion have no established loyalty or devotion to India. Even Darjeeling and Kalimpong areas are not free from pro-Mongoloid prejudices".³⁸

The issue was politicized when the State Assemblies of West Bengal (July, 1977), Sikkim (October, 1977) and Tripura (June, 1978), resolved that Nepali language should be included in the Eight Schedule of the Constitution. But, the resolution in Tripura and West Bengal Assembly had a political objective while that of Sikkim was on ethnic considerations. Like All India Nepali Bhasa Samity another similar organization called Bharatiya Nepali Rashtriya Parishad (BNRP) was formed in 1990. The Darjeeling District Congress Committee (1966) made a submission to the then Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, urging to implement the Pataskar Commission's recommendation.³⁹

The provincial Government conceded their demand and introduced Nepali as medium of instruction up to the level of middle school and appointed to the needs of Nepali students.

The movements for Constitutional Recognition of Nepali Language were started when the Nepalese of Darjeeling established Nepali Bhasa Samity on 31st January, 1972. Very soon it assumed an all India character and therefore it was renamed as All India Nepali Bhasa Samiti in June, 1972. During the framing of the Constitution 14 languages like Bengali, Hindi, Tamil, Telegu etc. were listed in the Eight Schedule. In 1967 another language, Sindhi, was included in the list by 21st Amendment Act of the Constitution. The inclusion of Sindhi encouraged the other linguistic groups, particularly Konkani, Nepali, Manipuri etc. for raising a similar demand. If linguistic state be the criterion, Nepali is official language in two states, West Bengal and Sikkim. If the size of population is the criterion, there are more than 60 lakhs Indian nationals speaking Nepali as their first and second language. Going even by the 1961 Census figures the Nepalese population far exceeded the Sindhi in 1967, when the language of the latter was granted recognition in the Eight Schedule.⁴⁰

In 1907 Prithiman Thapa, a dismissed Gorkha soldier having connection with the revolutionaries had brought out a paper '*Gorkha Sathi*' in 1926. In 1956 Ananda Singh Thapa, editor of "*Jagat Gorkha*", sent a memorandum to the Official Language Commission for the inclusion of Nepali language in the Eight Schedule. But it was turned down by the Chairman of the Commission. The movement got a new dimension when the Sikkim Government, headed by Nar Bahadur Bhandary, threw its weight behind the movement and founded a new organization called *Bharatiya Nepali Rashtriya Parishad* (B.N.R.P.) in June, 1990. The movement for the recognition of Nepalese very soon received support from a wide range of people, mass organizations, political parties and various state governments. The State Assemblies of West Bengal, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh and Tripura unanimously passed resolutions recommending the inclusion of Nepali in the Eight Schedule. The various national parties like Communist Party of India (Marxist), Janata Dal, Bharatiya Janata Party etc. lent their support to this movement. The memorandum that was submitted by the Bharatiya Nepali *Bhasa Samiti* to the Prime Minister of India on 21 November, 1991, was signed by more than a hundred members of Parliament including two former Prime Ministers. Earlier, Jayaprakash Narayan personally wrote a letter on 19 December, 1978 to the then Prime Minister of India, Morarji Desai 'to look into the matter and take suitable steps in this connection'. But the movement got a jolt when a section of the Nepalese under the leadership of Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF) demanded the inclusion of *Gorkhali* in place of Nepali. But the Bharatiya Nepali Rashtriya *Parishad* urged the Union Government not to be misled by the false propaganda of the GNLF. They argue, it is preposterous to say that those

who speak Gorkha language are loyal to India and the people who call their language Nepali are not Indians and are anti-nationals. The Members of Parliament accepted the argument of the Parishad and unanimously passed the Seventy First (Amendment) Act on 20 August, 1992 incorporating Nepali along with Konkani and Manipuri in the Eight Schedule of the Constitution. The All India Gorkha League was formed in 1921 at Dehradun to organize the retired soldiers for the cause of Indian Nationalism. “Many Indian Nepalis joined the freedom movement in Assam, Punjab, Calcutta, Dehradun and Darjeeling and a large number of them, serving in the Gorkha Regiments joined the Indian National Army under Netaji. Major Dal Bahadur Thapa and Captain Durga Malla were hanged by the British for their participation in the INA. In spite of their sacrifice for the cause of freedom, after independence they were ‘described as foreign’ and the consequent treatment meted out to them as ‘outsiders’, intruders, and settlers.”⁴¹

The case of the Gorkhaland movement, it is argued that the Darjeeling District along with areas of the neighboring district of Jalpaiguri should be made into a separate state within the Indian Union.⁴² Separatist movement of various colour and objectives has been known in the hill areas for quite some time. There can be no doubt that the serious deterioration in communal relationship in the rest of the country, particularly in Punjab and Assam and the rise of separatism in different parts of the country in Tripura, Mizoram and other areas in North-East over some years, had a significant bearing on the development of communal and separatist feelings in the hill areas of Darjeeling. But the relationship between the Nepalese and the majority of the Bengali community had always been exceptionally good based as it was on mutual trust and affection.⁴³

Two generation of the Hill people have in clear terms expressed their will to break-away from Bengal. The demand for a separate state of Gorkhaland in Darjeeling hills has existed for many decades. Identity politics become one of the most dominant and controversial themes in the field of academic researches of social science. A healthy debate has been going on among the social theorists about the movements of identity in the political sphere. State Re-organization (1955) in its report, while reorganizing the fact that the linguistic States would invariably weaken the national unity, observed, “the urge for linguistic States has now gone deep down into the minds of the masses and refusal to create such State would lead to wide-spread sense of frustration, which might have grave consequences.”⁴⁴ Ethnicity has expanded the centre point in politics and has posed itself as the foremost challenge to the unity of states. Darjeeling hills emerged as an urban center when this area was 'gifted' by the

Rajah of Sikkim to the British East India Company as a treaty of friendship. Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime Minister of India visited Kalimpong in 1952, the Gorkha League placed three alternative demands before him which were (i) Direct administration of Darjeeling areas by the Centre or (ii) Created a separate state comprising Darjeeling and neighbouring areas or (iii) Darjeeling along with Dooars, Jalpaiguri be attached to Assam. It also renewed the old demand for the formation of Uttarakhand state but did not pay any heed to the demand. The All India Gorkha League placed a separate demand for the formation of separate state in 1955, when the State Reorganisation Committee visited Darjeeling which was rejected by the committee.⁴⁵

The agitation for a separate state for the Nepalese, separation from West Bengal and a creation of a state within India comprising mainly the hill areas of Darjeeling of North Bengal where Nepali people are predominant after the acquisition of this area by the British Government in 1835. For benefit of the British Empire, Lord Morley and Minto had advocated the policy of a separate electorate system and taking advantage of this system, the people of Darjeeling had also demanded the separation from Bengal since 1907.

The demand for separate State of Gorkhaland, outside West Bengal was first made in 1980 by Gorkha League Zilla Committee, then by Pranta Parishad and finally taken up by GNLF who were eventually successful in launching an agitation based on this demand of Gorkhaland. A journal *Gorkha Sathi*, which was published from Calcutta in 1906 for the dissemination of nationalist idea among the Nepalis, was banned by the British Government. Another section of the educated Nepalis, led by Dal Bahadur Giri, took the lead in spreading the Gandhian Non-Cooperation Movement in the tea estates. The untimely death of Dal Bahadur, after his release from prison in 1923, was condoled by Gandhi himself at the Nagpur Session of the Indian National Congress in 1924.⁴⁶

The next demand in the hills of Darjeeling came from the educated middle class and the third stage of demand raised by the Nepali working class engaged in tea plantation under the political umbrella of the communists. In these demands they have raised a serious voice in connection to the aggravation of the economic problems in Darjeeling hills during the last decade of the colonial rule. The British administrators wanted to keep the public of the Hills of Darjeeling away from politics as well as political awareness. Even though, the political issues were gradually rising in the minds of the people of this area. The first historical evident goes back to the beginning the twentieth century when the hillmen's placed a memorandum

before the Morley-Minto Reforms requesting for a separate administrative status for themselves. In 1907, the demand for separate administrative status from Bengal was started. Ten years later in 1917, another demand of the Nepali speaking people of the hills of Darjeeling for a separate administrative was launched.

As long ago as 1907 before Morley Minto Reforms, the then leaders of the Hill people of Darjeeling submitted a memorial to the British Government demanding a separate administrative set up for the District of Darjeeling. During 1909 (Indian Council Act) the hill people submitted a memorandum to the Government for separate arrangements for Darjeeling and the status of “scheduled district” was not changed. The Hillmen’s Union which was formed under the presidentship of Sonam Wangel Ladenla and was an association of the “military pensioners”, Government servants, traders and rich farmers, belonging to the Nepali, Bhutia and Lepcha communities demanded same separation of Darjeeling. S.W. Ladenla, a Tibetan Buddhist and a serving police officer of Darjeeling, who, apart from being a very capable officer, played an important role in the social-cultural life of Darjeeling, was its moving spirit.⁴⁷

The Hillmen’s Association sent a memorandum to the chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal in 1917, in response to the invitation issued by the Government to the people of India to make representation to be laid before the Secretary of State.⁴⁸ The people of the Hill had abstained from the Home Rule agitation, which was treated with “neglect, even disfavour”. The submission by the Hillmen’s union was for the creation of a separate administrative unit comprising the “present Darjeeling district and the portion of Jalpaiguri district which was annexed from Bhutan in 1865”. A suggestion was also made for creation of North East Frontier Province by joining “Assam Dooars and hill territories which lie to the east of Bhutan and whose people have affinity with our people”. The grounds for separation were linguistic, racial and even climatic, as “the plains are entirely unsuited to the hill people, who are unwilling to go to the plains”⁴⁹The people had placed a memorandum before Montague, the Secretary of the State of India and Lord Chelmsford, the Viceroy of India in November 8th 1917. The first lines of the memorandum, was "We, the undersigned Lepchas, Bhutias and Nepalis, representing the opinion of the Darjeeling District gratefully respond " Here the Lepchas are placed first; the Bhutias communities are the second category except few Nepalis.⁵⁰The Kalimpong Samity, under Sardar Bahadur Bhindal Dewan and the People’s Association, led by sir P.M. Pradhan, in a separate memorandum in 1920, opposed the exclusion of Darjeeling district from the reforms of 1919, as according to them, such

exclusion would perpetuate backwardness. The plea for separation from Bengal was therefore objected to in a meeting in Kalimpong in July, 1920. Some of the signatories like Prem Singh, N.P. Kumain, Lachaman Singh withdraw their signature and disclosed that they had appended the signature only due to the persuasion of Dr. Graham, a noted European settler of Kalimpong and A. Tshering, a Government agent. In the wake of the Montague-Chemsford Reforms of 1919, the Darjeeling Planters Association, the European Association and the Hillmen's Association, at a joint meeting in Darjeeling in March, 1920, fully supported the memorandum of the Hillmen's Association and asked for creation of a separate administrative unit outside the representative government as envisaged by the Reforms Act of 1919, on the plea of backwardness of the area. In consonance with the British frontier policy, the creation of North Eastern Frontier Province was reiterated to Montague, the then Secretary of state for India by the Hillmen's Union, *raison d'être* was that it would be a bulwark against the northern enemies with the proven loyalty and devotion the Gorkhas to the British. The Government of India Act of 1919 however made Darjeeling district a "scheduled area" and did not concede demand of a separate province. During Constitutional Reforms in 1935, the Hillmen's Union and their patrons' rare once again active to keep Darjeeling away from the operation of the new reforms, on the plea of "protecting the identity and the way of life of the Gorkhas". The memorandum with five signatories under the banner of the Hillmen's Union submitted to Sir Samuel Hoare, Secretary of State for India, in October, 1930⁵¹ argued that the Gorkhas, in view of their services rendered to the Government in the "military, civil and other departments in the preservation of the solidarity of the British Empire." Should get some special reservation in the proposed constitution with a view to "preserving their social solidarity", so that they are not forced" to make a common cause with the Indians.

The GNLFF leader, Mr. Subash Ghising, has claimed that Darjeeling become "a no-man's land" after the British withdrawal from India. Historically, it also called, the 'no-man's land' and was a territory passed from one hand to the other in the wars that broke out between the East India Company, Sikkim and Nepal. However, light can be thrown on the ownership of the areas. When the Treaty of Punakh was signed in January 1910, the Maharaja of Bhutan remarked to Charles C. Bell, the Political Officer, Gangtok, in charge of the Bhutan affairs "Bhutan has become the part of the British Empire". The Maharaja was granted a salute of 15 guns and he attended the Delhi Durbar the following year. The Political Officer, Colonel Weir, informed the Government of India on December 7, 1931 that the "Gurkha menace" was

increasing in Bhutan and it was a population which did not owe allegiance to the Bhutan King.⁵²

Before the Govt. of India Act of 1935 was passed on 6th August, 1934, the Hillmen's Association of Darjeeling submitted under the signature of Late Sardar Bahadur, S. W. Ladenla, its President, a Memorial to Sir Samuel Hoare, the then Secretary of State for India demanding of Darjeeling should be totally excluded from Bengal and independent administrative unit created with an administrator at the head of area, assisted by the executive of Council", memorials making a demand of the same nature were submitted at the time and later on too by Raj Saheb Hari Prasad Pradhan on behalf of the people of District of Darjeeling.

This memorandum, in the context of the Communal award accepted by the Congress and "deemed to be implemented through legislation". The Communal award came handy for buttressing the ethnic difference as the ground for separation from Bengal. So, the Hillmen's Association sought to create difference between the hill people and the plains people on political as well as ethnic and cultural grounds. They demonstratively kept themselves out of the nationalist movement, by underscoring the ethno-cultural dissimilarities with the rest of the people of India. In the wake of Communal Award, the unity of these groups was sought to be strengthened by forming the Hill People's Social Union. On December 23, 1934, a public meeting of the hill people i.e. the Lepchas, Bhutias and Nepalis of Darjeeling was held under the Presidentship of Sardar Bahadur S.W.Ladenla. With the patronage of this Union "a Nepali periodical known as "NEBULA" (NE for Nepali, BU for Bhutia and LA for Lepcha) was launched with a view to promoting a sense of brotherhood among the three hill communities and making Nepali language a language of communication with the non-Nepali people. The common ethnic term "Gorkha", and the Nepali language thus accepted by them. During the years of the Second Great war when Mr. G.R.Casey was the Governor of Bengal, a Memorial was submitted through the Governor of Bengal and the Viceroy of India to Lord Pathich Lawrence, the then Secretary of State for India, By Sri R. N. Sinha, the then President of the Hillman's Association, and other prominent members of different communities in which they urged the government to exclude Darjeeling from the Province of Bengal and to create it a separate administrative unit under a Chief Commissioner. The Hillmen's Association hoped that as about two Lakh Gorkha soldiers were fighting for the British Army during the War, their demand would receive favourable consideration but the development in the national political situation restrained the hands of the British.

In 1971, a deputation of Hillman of district waited on Mr. Montague, the then secretary of State for India, and Lord Chelmsford, the then Viceroy, and pressed the demand that “in laying down plains for the future, the Government should aim at the creation of a separate unit comprising the present Darjeeling district with the portion of Jalpaiguri district which was annexed from Bhutan in 1865”. The possibility of the creation of a still wider North Eastern Frontier Province to include, in addition to this, the Assam Dooars and the Hill people of Darjeeling was strongly emphasized by the deputation as not being beyond the scope of practical politics and urged for its exploration. This demand was reiterated when the Simon Commission visited India in 1929. The All India Gorkha League which was organized in 1934 took what it considered to be a more statesman-like view and demanded that the district of Darjeeling together with the Dooars section of Jaopairui8g be included in the province of Assam. This demand was made through Memorials submitted to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar B. Patel the Congress High Command, the cabinet Mission and the Constituent Assembly through the Sub-Committee, Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas. As stated earlier that in a Memorandum submitted at Gantok to Hon’ble Dr. B. V. Keskar, Deputy Foreign Minister, the All India Gorkha League suggested, as an alternative to their demands for the inclusion of Darjeeling and Dooars in Assam, the creation of a separate province comprising of the districts of Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri and the States of Sikkim and Cooch Behar, which would form a viable unit the Indian Union. On the 30th October 1949, leaders of different parties from Cooch Behar, Jalpaiguri, Sikkim and Darjeeling met in a conference at Darjeeling and resolved to demand the creation of a Separate Province comprising the above areas, and a Committee called Uttarakhand Pradesh Sangh was formed to place the demand before the proper authorities. A Memorandum to that effect was submitted to the Hon’ble Prime Minister of India and to the Late Sardar B. Patel and then deputy Prime Minister for Home, Information Broadcasting & States. Though “exclusiveness” of the people was thoroughly tinted by the Hillmen’s Union, their extra territorial loyalty was not explicit in their memoranda and demonstration. One of the main plea of “exclusiveness” was built up, was the loyalty of the Gorkhas to the British Government, and this could not be overtly negotiated with the extra-territorial loyalty to Nepal. But the British interests, closely managing the moves of the Hillmen’s Union, were not likely to allow any open declaration of such loyalty except a few references to the “customs and traditions of their ancestors” and “the tradition in the land of their origin”⁵³ there were no references to Nepal. It is the evident the Hillmen’s Union, an elite body of the Nepalese and the Lepcha-Bhutia communities, sub served the British defence and economic

interests by maintaining their “scheduled or excluded” status and thereby distancing themselves from the masses of Indian people and their movement for freedom. The Indian leaders, too, did not make any serious attempt to bring the common people in the hills to the mainstream of the national movement.

The Congress party adopted the principle of recognition of any region or states on linguistic base in 1920 (Nagpur Session). Simultaneously, election manifesto of the Congress and Motilal Nehru Report (1928) also repeated the same argument. But, in 1952 Nehru stated that, the linguistic division of the country would weaken the concept of united India. Language, autonomy and identity have a close relationship and there was strong motivation of regional identity in the wake of partition of India on the basis of communal identity.⁵⁴

The first recorded instance of the demand for separation of Darjeeling hill region from Bengal can be traced to the year 1907, barely forty years after the formation of Darjeeling (1867) as a district. It was just two years before the Morley-Minto reforms in air, in wake of the great anti-partition upheaval in Bengal and the fate of Darjeeling was integrally associated with the reforms. Under these circumstances, the voice of the ‘Leaders of Hill people’ in the absence of any viable political or social association was registered for the first time.⁵⁵ Actually the Gorkhas in Darjeeling hill never thought of having special powers for themselves during the British rule, nor did they ever think of separating themselves from Bengal Presidency rather the relation of the Gorkhas with the British was very good.⁵⁶In 1940s experienced a new turn of the events in the history of the formation of All India Gorkha League (AIGL) in Darjeeling on 15th May 1943; though it was already finalised at Siliguri in March 1943.⁵⁷ With the coming of freedom after Independence of India, the Gorkhas of Darjeeling did not want to be under the Bengal Government and wanted more powers for themselves. The white colour planters in the rich Darjeeling tea gardens were still there, predominant in influence, and the local Gorkhas did not easily accept the administrators from Calcutta. But the consequential demonstration was mild and was brought under control without much difficulty. By 1856 much had changed in the Darjeeling hills. The ‘Rana Rule’ in Nepal had been overthrown by the pro-monarchical forces aided by the Government in Delhi acting in haste. Meanwhile from Limbuwan or the Eastern Province of Nepal the Gorkhas continued their mass migration into the Eastern India which creates an ethnic surge in Nagaland, Meghalaya and some other parts of North East India.⁵⁸In the quarter of the 20th century, the process towards the balkanisation of India that had commences in 1956 was not strongly opposed by Jawharlal Nehru, the then Prime Minister of

India, created a separated idea among the Gorkhas of Darjeeling.⁵⁹ As mentioned earlier that the 'Communist Party of India (CPI) put forward the suggestion of the Gorkhas to forming a 'Greater Gorkhasthan' covering a large tract of the Himalayan and Sub-Himalayan zone. The memorial of the Darjeeling District Committee of the CPI submitted on 6th April 1947 to the Constituent Assembly states.⁶⁰ Actually, the realization of 'Gorkhasthan' by the then Communist Party advocated in favour of special representation of the Gorkhas in the state legislature.⁶¹ The creation of Meghalaya State in North-East in 1972 raised hopes for the separate state and Darjeeling Parvat Aicaya consisting of three hill sub-divisions of Darjeeling sadar, Kurseong and Kalimpong with the adjacent Dooars and Siliguri. From then the movement for separate state confined to peaceful methods. The first violent method of the movement for autonomous state began since 1980's. As early as 1981, the AIGL submitted a memorandum to the President of India demanding separate state of Darjeeling Parvat Aicaya on grounds of national security, development and justice to linguistic minority.⁶²

G.N.L.F - Subhas Ghising and the Demand for Separate Statehood Gorkhaland

In the 1980s, a movement of Nepali speakers demanding that the Darjeeling District be converted into a Gorkhaland state turned violent. The Central and State Governments reestablished stability by concentrating power in a single political party i.e. Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF) and ultimately, a single person i.e. the GNLF leader Subhas Ghising. This demands for separation from Bengal date back to the early 1900s, but they came to national prominence at the beginning of the 1980s. The CPI-M proved ineffectual in pushing for a constitutional amendment to create a Gorkha Autonomous Council in 1981, the AIGL'S headman, Deoprakash Rai, passed away.⁶³ The Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF), led by Subash Ghising was a political activist in a trade union organization with Congress (I), was formed on July 24, 1980 and came into being on 30th July, 1980, after the decline of *Prantiya Sangstha* on accounts of this *Sangstha*'s disorganized leadership and failed to produce anything beyond the stereotyped agitation plans, not adequate to sustain the interest of the youth. He was seized with the idea that a party with more radical targets and position could create a better influence than a political party with a common place name and programme, which resulted the formation of G.N.L.F. and Ghising stated that, each word of the name of the party was cautiously chosen. The name of the party sound like JKLF (Jammu & Kashmir Liberation Front), MNF (Mizo National Front) etc, and both are connected with militancy the GNLF party raised out as a party with a difference for its name only. Finally, The Gorkha National Liberation Front came into being in 1982 at Pagoda hotel in Darjeeling with Subash Ghising, an ex- military man, as its

secretary and D.D Ghimray as its President. Later on, Ghising became its President. The movement led by the GNLF may be divided into three distinct stages. They are secessionist movement, movement for statehood within the framework of India and movement for autonomy within West Bengal. The objective of the party followed some important issues like, (a) a separate state for the Nepalese in India, (b) recognition of the Nepali language in the Eight Schedule of the Indian Constitution, (c) abolition of the Indo-Nepal Friendship Treaty (1950) with a view to removing doubt in the Nepalese minds, (d) more recruitment of the 'sons of soil' in Indian army. Apart from these, others several demands also got priority like economic development of the hills of Darjeeling, distribution of land for the landless people, tree plantation i.e. forestry, beautification of Darjeeling hills by with the expansion of gardens etc. which encourage tourism and protect ecological balance.⁶⁴The changes in linguistic demography from 1951 onwards in Darjeeling district, the hotbed of the so-called Gorkha nationalist movement, present a clear picture of the exogenous growth of the Nepali speakers in this region, obviously due to migration to Nepal. This demographic colonization of migrants from Nepal to India, their unlawful participation in election and other political activities in India, and their aspirations to deceitfully obtain Indian citizenship were fully utilized by the so-called Gorkha nationalists outfits like A.I.G.L., and G.N.L.F.⁶⁵

In order to pursue its policy of irredentism it along with the *Prantiya Parishad* gave a boycott call during the general election of 1982. "Again the boycott call was given by the GNLF party during the Indian Parliamentary election for the same demand of Gorkhaland". The boycott of election implied that the GNLF had no faith in India's democracy and Constitution. Their objective was to establish a separate Gorkhaland. Whether they wanted Gorkhaland within the framework of India or outside of it was not made clear. But their real intention was revealed from the content of the Memorandum that they submitted to the king of Nepal, Birendre Bir Bikram Shadav. The copy of this memorandum was sent to the Secretary General of the United including USA, USSR, UK, Pakistan, PRC, Bangladesh etc. It indicated that the GNLF wanted a separate homeland for the Gorkhas. The West Bengal Government rightly suggests. 'The facts that the memorandum was addressed to a monarch of another sovereign state, and that its copies were sent to the United Nations and heads of various states, clearly point to the secessionist character of the movement'.⁶⁶The reference to the principle of self-determination and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights etc. in the memorandum implied 'that the Nepalis of Indian origin were under colonial implied' that the Nepalis of Indian origin were under colonial domination and should be given freedom and their own homeland'.⁶⁷ This was not simply a conjecture but a deliberate attempt to secede from India with the help of the foreign countries including Nepal. With this end in view a delegation led by Ghising went to Nepal on 15th February, 1984, and was reported to have met the Home Minister of Nepal. Again, in 1985 another delegation

led by Ghising went to Nepal and contacted the various embassies including those of USA, UK, PRC, Pakistan, Bangladesh etc. located in Kathmandu. Some political leaders from Nepal like, Hrishikesh Shaw, a former minister of Nepal, visited Darjeeling to give a boost to the movement for a separate Gorkhaland. In December 1983, Mr. Subhas Ghising submitted a memorandum to the King of Nepal, requesting him to take measures to settle certain imaginary geopolitical disputes with India concerning the migrated people from Nepal to India. According to 6th and 7th Articles of the Indo-Nepal Treaty, all the people of Nepalese origin residing in India, including the 'bonafied' Indian Citizens, are all Nepali nationals, which is not true. On 19th May Ghising had come out with a press statement against the treaty saying that, "It has mixed up the citizens of Nepal and the Indian Gorkhas in a single basket of illusion." Throughout the early 1980's Ghising was busy in preparing the ground work for his newly formed party and by 1985 he was able to establish the required mass base for his party which helped him unleash the violent struggle of Gorkhaland. By 1985 Ghising had been successful to establish six frontal organizations, namely Gorkha National Women's Organization (GNWO), Gorkha National Youth Front (GNYPF), Gorkha National Student's Front (GNSF), Gorkha Volunteers' Cell (GVC), Gorkha Welfare Organization (GWO) and Gorkha Ex-Serviceman Organization (GNEO). All these organizations as their names suggest had different categories of followers and different spheres of activities although they were guided by a single tread, i.e. the demand of Gorkhaland.⁶⁸

The AIGL's faltering created opening another party which was filled by the GNLF leader, Subhas Ghising, who had served in the military and was also a popular author, was the charismatic head of Gorkhaland Movement. C.K, Pradhan and Chhatrey Subba managed its militant wing, the Gorkha Volunteer Cell (GVC). At the same time, Darjeeling CPI-M militant and the GVC launched attacks against each other. By 1988, up to 300 people had died, most in GVC versus CPI-M violence.⁶⁹

Besides, the speech of Ghising delivered on June 2, 1985 was a testimony to his extra-territorial loyalty. The cassette of this speech was widely distributed as the speech was treated as reflecting the ideology of the GNLF. In his speech he condemned the Government of Government for making the Darjeeling Hills a part of West Bengal and the All India Gorkha League for acquiescing. He then referred to the interest of the Nepalese. He argued that the small size of Darjeeling was UNO size of 55000 dollars to be paid annually'. It was then clear from his recorded speech that the GNLF was keen create to create an independent state or to make Darjeeling a part of Nepal. The immediate cause of the extremist movement in Darjeeling was the expulsion of a few hundred Nepali citizens from Meghalaya where they were working in Jowai hills coalmine, on the ground that they did not possess necessary entry permits. It was not an isolated case. The All Assam Students Union (AASU) raised a hue and cry on the illegal entry of the Nepalese in Assam. Similarly, the All Meghalaya Khasi Students' Union (AMKSU) launched a movement for the deportation of the foreigners from

Meghalaya. In response to the demand of the students union the Meghalaya Government deported a large number of foreigners including a few thousand Nepalese from the streets and bazaars and forced them to board Assam-bound buses, disregarding their pleas to bring their families along with them. The evicted Nepalese were pushed to the border of Assam. The Assam Government promptly drove them to the border of Assam. The Assam Government promptly drove them to the border of West Bengal and Nepal. IT was alleged that West Bengal Government did not give them shelter but pushed them towards Nepal and Sikkim. The Sikkim Government also refused to accommodate them. Even the Government of Nepal was not sympathetic to them. Only the Nepalese in Darjeeling took up their cause and raised strong voice against unlawful eviction and deportation of the Nepalese of Indian origin. To highlight the issue the hill areas of Darjeeling district observed a one- day total bandh on 20th March, 1986.⁷⁰

The All- India Gorkha League, in a public meeting presided over by its President P.T. Lama condemned the AMKSU movement. Similar protest meetings were organized in Darjeeling by the Prantiya Parishad led by Madan Tamang. But the movement of the GNLF led by Subash Ghisingh was more vocal, militant and intensive. It utilized the issue to raise the demand for a separate homeland would comprise the Nepali dominated areas of India including Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri districts of West Bengal. On 13 April, 1986 several processions converged on Mal where Ghisingh's inflammatory speech roused the passion of the Nepali youths and hinted at adoption of violent means to achieve their end. The supporters came with kukri in one hand and a flaming torch in the other. On 4 May, 1986 a large number of GNLF volunteers drew blood from their thumbs with kukris to write posters in blood on Gorkhaland. This hard line of the GNLF soon captured the minds of the students, youths and students, youths and a section of the intellectuals. In July, 1985 the youths and student wings of GNLF were formed and in 1986 an intellectual cell comprising lawyers, teachers and other professionals was formed to invigorate the movement. It proceeded with a definite plan and programme. The GNLF in a well-attended meeting held on 13 March, 1986 in Ghoom at the Hall of Bharat Dong adopted the following 11 point programme of action:

1. To observe a 'Black Flag Day' on 13 April, 1986 in protest against atrocities and discrimination perpetrated on the Indian Nepalese.
2. To give a 72 hour bundh call in May to highlight the just demand of Gorkhaland.
3. To burn copies of the Report of the States Reorganization Commission because it proposed the merger of Darjeeling with West Bengal ignoring the linguistic and cultural distinction of Darjeeling.
4. To burn the Article VII of the Indo- Nepal Treaty of 1950.
5. To protest against the indiscriminate felling of trees of the hill areas by the Forest Corporation for sending them to the plains.

6. To continue vote boycott movement.
7. To boycott all MLA's, minister and political parties who would oppose the demand for Gorkhaland.
8. To stop all vehicles carrying the valuable boulders of *Dudhia* towards the plains.
9. To launch a "Do or die" movement in protest against the alleged treatment of the Gorkhas as domiciles.
10. The Gorkhas of Darjeeling not to participate in any National Celebration including 15 August, 26 January etc.
11. To organize a movement for non- payment of taxes and loans (Document: 12-13).

The GNLFF adopted various methods and techniques to implement its programme of action. Some of them are mentioned below:

- At first it attempted to internationalize the issue and wrote letters to the UNO and various the Government of Nepal and the leaders of Nepal. Its president, Subash Ghisingh, visited Nepal at several occasions.
- It created sense of insecurity in the minds of the Nepalese by fabricating the reports of the incidents in Assam and Meghalaya.
- It organized students and youths for a militant movement. They were asked to join the procession with bare Kukri in hand, to write posters with their blood and to take oath in the hand, to write posters with their blood and to take oath in the name of God that they would not stop until Gorkhaland was formed.
- It tried to rouse ethnic passions and provoked the volunteers to adopt violent means.
- It observed *bundh* for 12 hours to 108 hours and blocked the roads to disrupt traffic.
- It organized meetings and processions and sent memoranda to the Union Government. It also tried to utilize the differences that had developed between state government.
- It extorted money from the businessmen and tea- planters.
- During the bundhs or road- blockades they used force to make the call a success. They did not hesitate even to attack police pickets or police out posts. The attack on Panihata, Garidhura, Kalimpong Police Stations are some of the examples of violence of extreme nature.

- The GNLF wanted to establish its hegemony over the hill sub- divisions by eliminating all other political parties and trade unions. Their main targets were the CPI(M) and its trade union wing, CITU. They attacked the house of the Darjeeling M.P. Ananda Pathak.

- It observed the Independence Day on 15 August, Republic Day on 26 January by hoisting black flags.⁷¹

The attitude of the State Government towards the GNLF led movement was revealed in the unanimous resolution adopted at an All- Party meeting held on 18 August, 1986. Almost all the political parties except Gorkha League and Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) attended the meeting. As many as 14 parties and 7 ministers including the Chief Minister, Jyoti Basu, attended the meeting. The meeting, ‘unanimously holds that the Gorkhaland movement, led by Gorkha National Liberation Front is divisive, anti-people, anti-national and anti-state. This movement has done immense harm to the interest of the Nepali-speaking people during the last few months. As a result, the economy of the district of Darjeeling has been very adversely affected. This meeting condemns this agitation in strong terms.’⁷²The next phase of the movement led by the GNLF was marked by the departure from its earlier stand for a separate sovereign Gorkhaland. At this stage it demanded the status of a state for Gorkhaland within the framework of the Constitution of India. There was opposition in Darjeeling also. A large number of intellectuals including the author of A History of Nepali Literature, Kumar Pradhan whom I met in Shiligori, was not in favour of this movement. The Darjeeling unit of the CPI(M) and its trade union wing Chia Kaman Mazdoor Union openly opposed this movement. Another important objective was to resolve the citizenship issue. 14member GNLF delegation, led by Ghising, held talks on and from January 25 to 28, 1987 in New Delhi with Buta Singh, the Union Home Minister. The discussion was mainly concentrated on the question of citizenship for Nepali-speaking people in India. The GNLF demanded a clear statement from the Union that those who were residing in India before the commencement of the Indo-Nepal Treaty of 1950 should be recognized as permanent citizens of India. The provision of reciprocal citizenship as provided in the treaty of 1950 was, according of this treaty and making 1950 the cut-off year. He also demanded that those who entered into India after that date should not be given the voting right. This stand of Ghising received wide support from a large section of the Nepalese. At this stage the GNLF tried to win over the Union Government and the ruling Congress Party. In a letter addressed to Buta Singh, the Union Home Minister he expressed his gratitude to him ‘for rightly and fairly acknowledging that our movement is not anti-national and that we seek a solution of our problem within the framework of the Indian Constitution,’ Butta Singh responded favourably and congratulated him for the affirmation of total loyalty to India. But the Union was in dilemma whether they would leave it to the West Bengal Government. Ultimately, the Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, clarified their position with respect to Gorkhaland movement in the following terms: ‘Having read the documents relating to the movement

he was convinced that it could not be described as 'anti national,'. This movement was entirely a matter for the State Government to handle, and the Central Government had nothing to do it."⁷³

With the recognition and passive support from the Centre the GNLFF intensified their agitation and resorted to violent means to silence the opposition. At that time the only opposition to the GNLFF was from the CPI(M). The Congress Party and all India Gorkha League had already made a compromise with it. Hence the GNLFF targeted the CPI(M) cadres. In the clashes between the two parties in 1987 alone 51 CPI(M) cadres and 15 (GNLFF) volunteers were killed. In short, the second phase of the movement was brutal and most violent. To arrest further deterioration of the law and order situation in Darjeeling both the GNLFF and the Union was playing a dubious role. Although it assured the State Government that it would not allow the partition of West Bengal, there was a rumour of a secret deal between Ghising and the Central leadership. The speech of the Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, in New York on 9 June, 1988 was referred to in this connection, where he blamed the Left Front Government for the detracting law and order condition in Darjeeling. Ghising tried to utilize this confusion in his favour. The State Government, therefore felt' that it is necessary for these two Government to join hands and to demonstrate a common and united stand against these divisive and separatist forces.'⁷⁴This idea a united action was reflected in the meeting of January between the Prime Minister and the State Chief Minister in New Delhi. They agreed to evolve a common approach towards the solution of the problems relating to the agitation. 'The two leaders called for a negotiated settlement of the issue, and for this the two Governments, various political parties as well as GNLFF would be involved in the discussion.'⁷⁵

The 40-day *bundh* was self-defeating. Many people fled to Siliguri and took shelter there. Those who stayed in the hills suffered terribly due to the shortage of food, drinking water, fuel etc. Moreover, the agitation cost over 300 lives and it caused the loss of about Rs. 150 crore worth of property. In this situation everyone wanted the end of this type of movement. Under this socio- economic compulsion the GNLFF insisted on a settlement on the basis of its demand for a 'separate state of Gorkhaland within the framework of the constitution'. But the West Bengal made it clear that there would be no negotiation on the issue of statehood. Meanwhile the state government persuaded the Union to take a common stand with it on the question of Gorkhaland agitation. As the differences between the Union and the State Government were narrowed down the GNLFF President had no other alternative except to sit with the State Government for a settlement on the basis of the proposed Regional Council.⁷⁶From the beginning the GNLFF movement opted for armed confrontation with the State police and Para-military forces who also retaliated with occasional excesses. It is clear from the seizure lists of the West Bengal police that Subhas Ghising and his followers procured a considerable amount of unauthorized arms and ammunition. After two years of confrontation (1986-88), they surrendered the following items: 6910 pipe guns, 101 SBBL, 66 DBBL, 5 rifles (.303), 12 revolvers (.22), 3 revolvers (.38), 5 stem guns, 54 SBML, 2 BDML, 554 imported pistols, 8 R/S pistols, 3 revolvers (.45), 58 hand

grenades, 22 imported air guns, 63 imported canon, 1 rifle (.79), 1 rifle (7.62), 1 air pistol, 1 tear gas gun, 12 bore rifles, 38 special pistols and 38 MM grenade (7.16). They also surrendered the following items of ammunition 45 artillery shells, 11,000 bombs and mines, 1000 detonators, 300 gelatin sticks and thousands of ammunitions for various types of fire arms.⁷⁷

It is significant that the retired Nepali army officers and ex-service men have always enjoyed the close confidence of Ghising and they dominated the central leadership of GNLF during the agitation and even after. The Chief Minister clarified that in this ‘negotiated settlement’ the creation of a separate state would not be on the agenda. For, the State Government believed that regional autonomy was an effective administrative arrangement for safeguarding the language and culture of the ethnic minority groups. In September 1987, a serious conversation was held in Delhi between Rajiv Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, Union Home Minister Buta Singh, Jyoti Basu, Chief Minister of West Bengal and the GNLF President Subhas Ghising. The violent separatist movement in the hills of Darjeeling ended with the formation of Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC) which was the outcome of the signing a tripartite agreement on 22nd August, 1988 between the Central Government of India represented by C.G. Somiah, the Union Home Secretary, state Government representative R.N. Sengupta, the state Chief Secretary and Subhash Ghising on behalf of GNLF. Along with that both the Union Home Minister, Buta Singh and West Bengal Chief Minister Joyti Bose also put their signature on the agreement.⁷⁸

The separate statehood demand of Gorkhaland is essentially driven by the crisis of identity of the Nepalese in Darjeeling. Rajat Ganguly in his article, ‘Poverty, Malgovernance and Ethno-political Mobilization: Gorkha Nationalism and the Gorkhaland Agitation in India’ contends opined that it is also a demand to reclaim their lost territory.⁷⁹ A highly provocative leaflet, overtly Anti-India in tone, has been circulated in the hills by a new underground unit named Rajya Mukti Morcha (RMM). The leaflet claims that the Morcha headed by Sudesh Azad formed on March 10, 1990. They demand statehood for Gorkhas and oppose the Hill Council, and also sought the dissolution of GNLF which continues to fight for a separate Gorkhaland. The morcha has placed two alternatives before the government (1) Constitute a separate state for Nepalese and (2) Quit the land incorporated by the British under the Treaty of Segauli.⁸⁰ The anti- DGHC and anti-Ghising posters have been signed by all kinds of nebulous and fledging organisations ranging from ‘Darjeeling Janata’, ‘Darjeeling Boys’ and ‘GNLF Bachao Samiti’⁸¹ Advani had the 2009 Election Manifesto amended to include the BJP’s support for Gorkhaland, using elliptical language: “We will sympathetically examine

and appropriately consider the long pending demands of the Gorkhas, the Adivasis and other people of Darjeeling district and Dooars region.”

Subash Ghising and the Gorkha National Liberation Front control Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council next two decades but the arrangement was finally rendered a toothless entity which quickly drew rancour from all sides. The Gorkhas, an ethnic group originally from Nepal, migrated to India during and after British rule. In 2005, GNLF signed another tripartite in-principle memorandum of settlement to include Darjeeling in the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution, mentioned in articles 244 (2) and 275 (1) which addresses administration of tribal areas. The calculus becoming tribal grew more complex in 2005 when Ghising and the GNLF wanted to make Darjeeling’s ‘tribal area’ as per the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. According to census statistics, only 32 per cent of Darjeeling was then recognized as tribal, making it difficult to meet the Constitutional criteria for Sixth Schedule status. Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram where there are tribal belts came under the status of Sixth Schedule areas in India. So, Sixth Schedule areas are supposed to include traditional tribal political edifices, but since Darjeeling did not have a sole uniformly agreed upon set such structures. Though, the tripartite accord between West Bengal Chief Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, Union Home Minister Shivraj Patil and Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council Chairman Subhash Ghising, Sixth Schedule Status to the Darjeeling Hill Council was announced.⁸² The misgoverned and ineffective part played by DGHC and its caretaker Ghising and the public displeasure caused by granting of Sixth Schedule Status paved the way for the rise of another political force in the hills of Darjeeling. That is when a popular event has been occurred in Darjeeling with the winning of popular national television show, ‘Indian Idol’ by Prasant Tamang in 2007 will be discussed in chapter seven. It will also discussed in respective chapter that how Ghising’s leadership was replaced by Bimal Gurung with newly formed organisation Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJM) that marked its arrival with a 40-day bandh and started to stop pay any bills or revenue to the government.⁸³ The immediate objective of the newly formed Morcha leadership was to remove Subash Ghising from the post of Caretaker Administrator of DGHC. The Sub-organization of Morcha, mainly the *Janamukti Asthai_Karmachari Sangathan* (J.A.K.S.) went on an indefinite hunger strike for the regularization of jobs for the employees of the DGHC. These protests finally ended with the resignation from the post of caretaker administrator of DGHC by Subhash Ghising on March 10, 2008. The direct objective of GJMM was protesting the proposed Sixth Schedule by Subash Ghising. It is believed that the Statehood demand for the Gorkhas would

address this problem than the Sixth Schedule status in Darjeeling. The GJMM started its their agitation by burning of the Memorandum of Settlement which was signed between the Government of India and the Government of West Bengal and Subash Ghising.⁸⁴

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⁴⁸ Memorandum of the Hillman's Association-submitted to the Chief Secretary to the Govt. of Bengal dated 8th November, 1917.

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⁵⁰ It can be said that the Nepalis were increasing in number though their presence had not become very important. The Lepchas on the other hand, were the original inhabitants of the hills of Darjeeling as mentioned in the Gazetteers of Darjeeling written by LSS O'Malley and Aurthur Jules Dash on 1907 and 1947 respectively. The people of the hills wanted to project their Mongoloid origin and try to separated themselves from the plains people which was suited for the both Lepchas and the Bhutias.

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⁵⁸ Dr. Bani Prasad Misra, the then Director of the Centre for Himalayan Studies is pointed out of Gorkhaland Agitation in Darjeeling as a result of the transferred anger for the injustice meted out of their brethren in Meghalaya and Assam. He divides the 'Nepalis' in India into two major categories – one who born in Nepal but somehow migrated into India and another of Indian origin. Both of them enjoy equal status, rights and privileges as they suffer from similar disabilities. A major disability which the second category of Nepalese suffer from particularly in the North-East India, is proving that they are Indian citizens in a place where there is no established norm or criterion to prove it. For further details see B. P. Misra, Behind Gorkhaland Agitation,.....26th November, 1986

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⁷⁹According to Rajat Ganguly, ‘The Gorkhas in the hills of Darjeeling had also been predominant in some parts of the Dooars and Siliguri sub-division. The refugee influx from Bangladesh after 1971 tipped the balance against the Gorkhas. Before that, the influx of refugee became more prominent since partition of East Pakistan as well as the creation of free Bangladesh. So, the insertion of Siliguri sub-division and some portion in Dooars for the demand of a separate Gorkhaland is an attempt to reclaim their lost territory.

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⁸²The Hindu Dated 7.12.2005

⁸³Middleton, Townsend & Shneiderman (ed.), “Darjeeling Reconsidered: Histories, Politics, Environment”, Oxford University Press, 2018, Pp, 13-16

⁸⁴The copies of the Settlement on the Sixth Schedule Status for Darjeeling Hills were burnt in the hills of Darjeeling on 15th November, 2007