

PROTEST MOVEMENTS AND THE POLITICAL PROCESS: A STUDY OF THEIR IMPLICATIONS IN CONTEMPORARY INDIAN POLITICS

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PREFACE

Since Independence, Indian political system has been witnessing a number of protests, agitations and movements. These protest movements seem to be rooted in the broad theoretical framework - the theory of relative deprivation. The assumption of this theoretical frame that is brought to explain the protest movements in general is that if a section of the people of a society finds reason to feel relatively deprived it resorts to protests to redress the alleged deprivation. However, it should be noted in this connection that not always the deprivation syndrome of the common people acts as the root cause of protests and movements. Rather it is noticeable that it is the perceived deprivation of the few - the leadership that brings about protests and movements in the name of the deprivation of the common masses by mobilizing and organizing the otherwise passive common people for subserving the narrow interests of the leadership who are, for one reason or the other, deprived of the sharing of power but wants to be around the helms of power. And thus, when the leadership cannot come near the power centre by the available legitimate means they resort to the mobilization and organization of the passive common masses as if they are deprived of the share of the benefits of the society, polity and the economy. These are the two broad theoretical frameworks which are involved to explain the roots of protest movements in general and their organizational, functional and behavioural aspects. The protest movements that are being witnessed in India over the decades can also be explained by these two broad theoretical frameworks.

The protest movements in India have been of different types, goals, strategies, mobilization and leadership with the aims of expressing dissent from conditions of powerlessness, injustice or loss of identity and seeking various remedial empowerments and entitlements. As such, these movements have influenced and tend to influence the working of the Indian political system in many ways - from the perceived positive

(ii)

contribution to the strengthening of the system to the other extreme pole of feared disintegration of the system. Thus, there has been a number of viewpoints that question the very legitimacy and rationality of these protest movements in a parliamentary democracy like India where the Constitution contains the necessary remedial measures for the grievances.

Given this background, the present dissertation seeks to explore and find out the overall impact of the various protest movements in India on the political process in general and the nation-building, federal polity and governance in particular. The dissertation, by exploring the roots of the protest movements in India, seeks to identify the different contradictions of the Indian society that act as the breeding grounds of the protest movements. The study also endeavours to analyse the types, ideology, leadership and mobilization pattern of the protest movements in India to evaluate the impact of these protest movements on the Indian political system and the process.

The dissertation has been divided into five broad chapters, covering the specific dimensions of the study. Chapter I introduces the study with a statement of the problem that has been probed, a broad theoretical framework, the specific objectives of the study and an overview of surveyed literature on the subject of research. Chapter 2 analyses the contradictions of different types of the Indian society that are supposed to be the roots of dissent and protest. In chapter 3, a detailed discussion of various protest movements in India has been made in its historical perspective. Chapter 4 provides analysis of Indian protest movements with their specific dimensions like analysis of types, ideology, leadership and mobilization pattern of protest movements in India. Chapter 5, the concluding chapter, analyses and evaluates the overall impact of the protest movements on the Indian political system and the process.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AASU	:	All Assam Students Union
AAGSP	:	All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad
ABSU	:	All Bodo Students Union
ABVP	:	Akhil Bharatiya Bidyarthi Parishad
AGP	:	Assam Gana Parishad
AIGL	:	All India Gorkha League
AJSU	:	All Jharkhand Students Union
AKSU	:	All Kamtapur Students Union
ATPLO	:	Army of Tripura Peoples Liberation Organization
ATTF	:	All Tripura Tribal Force
BCNSM	:	Bihar Chhatra Navjayan Sangharsh Morcha
BDSF	:	Bodo Security Force
BPAC	:	Bodo Peoples Action Committee
BLT	:	Bodoland Liberation Tigers.
CPI	:	Communi st Party of India
CPI (M)	:	Communist Party of India (Marxist)
CPI (ML)	:	Communist Party of India (Marxist- Leninist)
CPRM	:	Communist Party of Revolutionary Marxist
DGHC	:	Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council
GNLF	:	Gorkha National Liberation Front
JAC	:	Jarkhand Coordination Committee
JKLF	:	Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Force
JMM	:	Jharkhand Mukti Morcha

JP	:	Jharkhand Party
JPP	:	Jharkhand Peoples Party
KCP	:	Kangli-Pak Communist Party
KPP	:	Kamtapur Peoples Party
LIC	:	Life Insurance Corporation (India)
MCC	:	Maoist Communist Centre
MNTAC	:	Manipur Nagaland Tripura Assam Consolidation.
MNF	:	Mizo National Front.
NDFB	:	National Democratic Front of Bodoland.
NNC	:	Nagaland National Council.
NYS	:	Navnirman Yavak Samity.
NSCN	:	National Socialist Council of Nagaland.
PTCA	:	Plain Tribal Council of Assam.
PREPAK	:	Peoples Revolutionary Party of Kangli-Pak.
PLA	:	Peoples Liberation Army
PWG	:	Peoples War Group
RPF	:	Revelutionary Peoples Front.
RSS	:	Rastriya Sawamsevak Sangh
SGPC	:	Sikh Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee
TSS	:	Tarun Shanti Sena
TNV	:	Tripura National Volunteers.
ULFA	:	United Liberation Front of Assam
YSS	:	Yuvak Sanram Samity.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Over the last four decades, especially since the seventies, there has been a visibly dismal trend of erosion in stability and authority of India as a State leading to a situation which Kohli designates as the "crisis of governability"¹— a situation more or less common to all the developing countries. The social and psychological ingredients of what social scientists define as 'crisis' exists in contemporary Indian society, e.g. perception of generalised social and ~~un~~cultural anomie, an acute sense of disorientation both among the intelligentsia and the public, unintended structural shifts and imbalances in society rendering older paradigm of national development open to doubts or even total rejection by some and the breakdown in the national consensus on the social and cultural design of society.² In the initial two decades after independence, many observers on Indian politics were sceptic about India's political viability.³ But the nation did not disintegrate and democracy has survived there. Despite these initial signs of moderate success the political concern that has been growing since the 1970s involves a different sets of questions as to whether India's democratic government will be able to simultaneously accommodate conflicting interests and promote socio-economic development; the basic framework of the Indian political system will remain intact with its basic characteristics; and the society will remain integrated exhibiting a smooth state society relationship. These questions become all the more relevant when one finds that India's governments that have been elected with large majorities have repeatedly failed to translate popular support into effective policies. The ruling elite has lost its contact with the people and even the genuine demands and popular aspirations of the people remain unfulfilled. The country is confronted with a phenomena of peasants revolts, unborn tensions, religious and fundamentalistic revivalism, insurrections and unabated orgy of violence and terrorism. Violence, crime and corruption have come to be associated with political life at all levels and people of India feel deceived and disenchanted with the performance of the system.⁴

Under the circumstances, we witness the proliferation of protest movements with the pronounced aims of expressing dissent from conditions of powerlessness, deprivation, injustice or loss of identity and seeking various remedial empowerments and entitlements. Numerous protest movements are going on in India and no serious effort has been made to find solution to them. In many cases, the cause of these movements is assumed to lie in the economic exploitation of the resources of the state by the people belonging to other states or even by the Union government. In several cases, the ethnic identity of the minorities and sometimes the people desiring to preserve their distinctive cultural and tribal heritage become the sole source of tension and agitation. In addition, protest movements from several segments of the Indian society are raising their voice of anguish and resentment for being ignored by the ruling elite. It is also assumed that the roots of India's growing problems of governability due to numerous protests and dissents are more political than socioeconomic. A highly interventionist state dealing with a poor economy has become an object of intense political competition leading to frustration for some in the game of politics thus resulting in the mobilization of common people for gaining access in and control over the political competition.⁵

It therefore, implies that as long as the feeling of discrimination, deprivations injustice and denial of fair treatment and genuine demands of such groups continue to exist, the phenomenon of protest in one form or other will continue to operate.⁶ As such, past experience shows that these protest movements have affected and are bound to affect the entire process of nation building and national integration in a multi-lingual, multi-regional, multi-religious and multi-ethnic polity of the continental size and importance of India. In fine, these protest movements, in ways as varied as the movements themselves have influenced and tend to influence the working of the Indian social, economic and political system in general and the federal governance in particular.

However, as remedial measures to counter the negative impact of these movements, India has witnessed a number of political accords concluded with the sole aim of meeting the grievances of the agitating section of the people in a particular region. The objective of these accords may also be to contain the intensity and expansion of these movements beyond the region so that they cannot assume the

national dimension thus challenging the legitimacy of the regime in power. But these accords could not provide respite to the ongoing resentments of the agitating people for various reasons.⁷ Hence, protest movements, now turned to be broader ethnic secessionist movements continue to operate with more vigour and intensity thus causing profound impact on the society and the polity as a whole.

Two broad perspectives may be identified on the perception of protest movements in India. At one end lies the view that these protest movements are to be viewed as potential instruments for bringing about desired change in the society. On the other hand, there is the perception which presupposes that these movements are antithetical to the smooth governance of the polity and as such, halt economic growth and social change. Accordingly, protest movements seem to pose threat to the basic structure and characteristic of the socio-political system and its legitimacy in general.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY :

Given this background, the present study seeks to explore the various causes of protest movements, their nature, leadership pattern, ideological orientation, and their overall impact on the political system and process in India. The study, by way of examining the various perspectives and theoretical frameworks about the protest movements also seeks to evaluate whether protest movements in India have been the rational instruments for bringing about desired social change or are responsible for the growing systemic crisis, leading to the so called crisis of governability. In fine, the present study is a modest attempt at explaining the relationship between the protest movements on the one hand and the state and the society on the other.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK :

It has been a worldwide phenomenon that the unprivileged and under privileged sections of the society, whether they are racial, religious or ethnic minorities or low castes and classes, organise themselves to fight against inequalities, and deprivation perceived to be addressed to them. They often violently agitate for their perceived

legitimate share in economic opportunities, social positions and political power. Widespread collective mobilization centered around such objectives has led to organized social movements with defined ideologies and leadership, which have brought about significant structural and organizational changes in the societies from where they originate.⁸

Thus viewed, "social movement and protest, which is a manifestation of it, is an effort to redefine or recapture the past, to restructure the present and reorient the future."⁹ The English word 'movement' derives from the old French verb 'mouvoir' which means to move, stir or impel, and the mediaval Latin "movimentum".

The word has different connotations. It was used to denote, now obsolete, certain "liberal", "innovatory" or "progressive" parties or functions as in 'movement party' in early nineteenth century Britain. The other usage of the term refers to 'historical tendency', 'trend', 'current', or 'drift'. As against these, the general English usage of 'movement', as found in the Oxford English Dictionary, designates a "series of actions and endeavours of a body of persons for a special object."¹⁰

However, there is no precise definition of the term 'movement'. It has virtually become "all things to all men."¹¹ Writing from a political scientist's point of view, Mackenzie argues that although political science cannot afford to neglect politicised movements, it is very difficult, in practice, to prevent such work from becoming "all inclusive and therefore vacuous."¹² Many writers have used the term, almost interchangeably with such words as 'organization', 'association', 'group' and 'union'. They sometimes appear to have hit on the word quite arbitrarily or for purely stylistic reasons.¹³ Like many other words, such as 'people', 'popular', 'democracy', 'equity', 'liberty', the term 'movement' is still regarded as a "hurrah! word."¹⁴

The term 'movement' gained currency in European language in the early nineteenth century—a period of social upheaval concerning the political leaders and authors, using the word 'movement', with the emancipation of the exploited classes and the creation of a new society by changing property relationships. However, since the early fifties, various scholars have attempted to provide thorough going definitions

of the concept of social movements. The works of Rudolf Heberle, Neil Smelser, John Wilson and Paul Wilkinson are important in this regard. Rudolf Heberle defines a social movement as a collective effort to transform established relations within a particular society.¹⁵ Neil Smelser views social movements as directly oriented towards a change in social institutions and social norms.¹⁶ Wilson defines social movement as a conscious, collective and organized attempt to bring about or resist large scale change in the social order by non-institutionalised means.¹⁷ Accordingly to Tilly, this definition by Wilson belongs to the Weberian tradition in sociology which says that a group of people somehow orient themselves to the same belief system and act together to promote changes on the basis of a common orientation.¹⁸ Most writers tend to agree with Paul Wilkinson's view that two basic elements, namely, a minimal degree of organization and a commitment to change, are necessary for the existence of a social movement.¹⁹ Paul Wilkinson gives the following working concept of 'social movement'.

1. "A social movement is a deliberate collective endeavour to promote change in any direction and by any means, not excluding violence, illegality, revolution or withdrawal into 'utopian community'."

2. A social movement must evince a minimal degree of organization, though this may range from a loose, informal or partial level of organization to the highly institutionalised and bureaucratized movement and the corporate group."

3. A social movement's commitment to change and the *raison d'être* of its organization are founded upon the conscious volition, normative commitment to the movement's aims or beliefs, and active participation on the part of the followers or members.²⁰

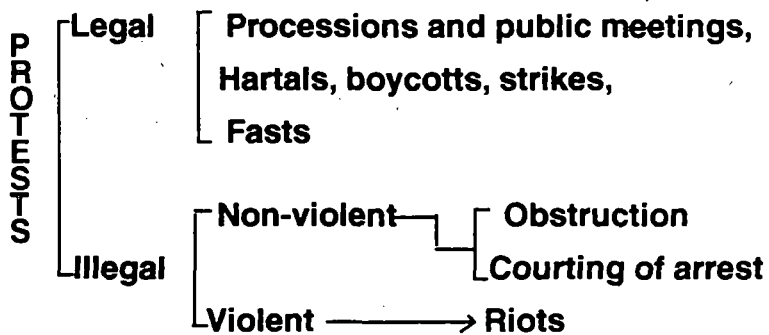
An analysis of the working concept shows that it does not claim to provide a precise definition. It is too broad, and encompasses both institutionalised collective action through legal means as well as violent extra institutional collective action. The 'minimum degree of organization' is problematic because it is difficult to say precisely what this 'minimum degree' is. It is also not clear whether social movement begins

with setting up an organization with committed members, or the organization evolves in the course of time as the movement develops. Finally such a definition may exclude protests and agitations which may not have an organization to begin with. However, despite these difficulties in Wilkinson's working concept, it has indeed, the heuristic value.²¹

Broadly thus, social movements may be defined as a wide variety of collective attempts in which the participants organize themselves to bring about a change in certain social institutions or to create an entirely new order or to resist a change.²² It has specific objectives to be achieved, an organizational structure, and may also have an ideology oriented towards change. It appears from all the definitions cited above that social movements encompass both institutionalised collective actions such as petitioning, fighting legal battles in courts of law etc. and non-institutionalised collective actions such as protests, agitations, strike, gherao, riot etc. Thus, protests may not strictly seem to be social movements. But more often than not a social movement develops in course of time, and it begins with protest which may not have the 'organization' or ideology for change. Taking an example from Shah, when the students of the engineering college in Gujarat protested against the Mess bill, it was a relatively spontaneous act. But that protest led to the Nav Nirman Andolan of 1974 in Gujarat.²³

Thus, it can be safely said that protests is a form of social movement. It is a non-institutionalized mode of bringing about the desired state of affairs—either change in the existing socio-economic and political order or resist that change. There may be a large number of techniques of protests. These include small public meetings, leaf letting, postering, submitting a memorandum, press conference, press statements, mobile announcements, street corner meetings, long marches on foot, holding meeting at public places, mass rallies, processions, celebrating protest days, political drama, mass deputation, torch light procession, demonstrations, hartals, strikes, picketing, satyagraha, dharna, fasting, including chain fast, fast unto death, sympathetic fast, self immolation, destruction of public property, holding up of transport, uprooting of the railway tracks, damaging control boxes, dislocating telephone, and telegraph wires, burning of police stations and other government buildings, disturbing the public meetings of the opponents, gherao, go slow, mass casual leave, looting of public and private property, riot, localised attempts to throw off state authority and run parallel

administration, declared or undeclared warfare in a region etc.²⁴ David Bayley,²⁵ writing in the Indian context, has six primary forms of protests: i) Processions and public meetings. 2. hartals (work stoppage not aimed at employers), boycotts and strikes, 3) fasts, 4) obstruction, 5) courting of arrest, and 6) riots. These general type forms can be divided into two main groups: the legal and the illegal. In turn, the category of illegal protest can be subdivided into violent and non-violent. These distinctions Bayley has organized schematically as:



Though a distinction is sought to be made in terms of organization, ideology²⁶ and strength of participation, nature of the goal and coverage or area of operation between social movements and protest movements, these two virtually overlap, sometimes social movements assume its form through protest while protest in any form happen to be a precondition for social movement. For our purpose, then, protest movement may be operationalized as those collective actions—legal and /or illegal, violent and/or non-violent—which seek to bring about a desired state of affairs either by bringing about change or resisting any change in the existing order. Since it is a collective endeavour it needs to develop an organization and an amount of commitment to the goal and in turn, sharing to a set of ideas for legitimizing the goal and the means to reach the goal. The goal is indeed political, though may appear to be social because, to differentiate between social power and political power in the contemporary world is to obscure the reality and ignore the complexities of political processes.²⁷ Any collective endeavour to bring about social transformation – change in the labour and property relationship – and to struggle for justice, involves capturing or influencing political authority, though it may not be on the immediate agenda.

This has been the general trend that analyses of protest movements follow either a Marxist or non-Marxist framework. Scholars following the Marxist approach locate the causes of protest movements in the economic structure of the society. Antagonistic interests between the propertied and labour classes are inherent in a class based society which generates contradictions. The former use the coercive power of the state, as well as of other institutions, including religion, education, mass media, to impose their ideology on society and to control the exploited classes. The latter resist and protest and occasionally revolt or launch organized and collective action against the dominance of the propertied class. Members of the same class not only have common interest vis-a-vis other classes, but also share a common consciousness regarding their position in society and the common interest they share. This facilitates their collective action against the ruling classes and the state.

However, the dominant Marxist approach has been subjected to criticism by a group of Marxist historians, the Subaltern studies group. They have begun to study history from below. They criticise the traditional Marxists for ignoring the history of the masses, as if the 'Subaltern' classes do not make history of their own, depending solely on the advanced classes or the elite for organization and guidance. It is argued that the traditional Marxist scholars have undermined cultural factors and viewed a linear development of class consciousness.²⁸ On the other hand, the subaltern studies historians are strongly criticised by other Marxist scholars for ignoring structural factors and viewing consciousness as independent of structural contradictions. They are accused of being Hegelian idealists.²⁹

Non-Marxist scholars, while accusing the Marxist studies of being 'reductionist', 'mechanical' and of overdetermining economic factors, also suffer from great deal of variations among themselves in their approach to the analysis of protest movements. It is argued that mass movements are the product of mass societies which are extremist and anti-democratic and hence, masses are to be excluded from the day-to-day participation in politics which hampers the efficient functioning of the government.³⁰ The scholars adhering to the theory of political development, consider that the rising aspirations of the people are not adequately met by existing political institutions which are rigid or incompetent. As the gap between the two widens political

instability and disorder leading to protest and mass upsurge increases.³¹ Writing in the Indian context, some scholars explain that the protests and agitations in post-independence India are the result of the conflict between tradition and modernity³² while others blame the opposition leaders, parties and trade unions for instigating the masses to protest activities.³³ Rajni Kothari argued that protest or direct action was inevitable in the context of India's present day parliamentary democracy because the general climate of frustration, the ineffectiveness of known channels of communication, the alienation and atomization of the individual, the tendency towards regimentation and the continuous state of conflict between the rulers and the ruled—all these make the ideal of self government more and more remote and render parliamentary government an unstable form of political organization.³⁴ Kothari continues to argue that democracy in India has become a playground for growing corruption, criminalization, repression and intimidation of large masses of the people. The role of the state in social transformation has been undermined. People have started asserting their rights through various struggles.³⁵ David Barley observes that before and after Independence, the institutional means of redress for grievances, frustrations and wrongs—actual or fancied were inadequate and hence called for protests.³⁶

However, Kothari and Bayley confine their discussion to the direct action which are against the government. They do not consider the direct actions and protests against socio-economic dominance and power structure in society. A.R. Desai joins issue with Kothari and Bayley and argues that the movements and protests of people will continue till adequate political institutional forms for the realizations and exercise of concrete democratic rights are found.³⁷ He reiterates his position that the civil and democratic rights of the people are not protected by the constitution and hence, the movements for their protection have increased.³⁸

Given the above analyses of different dimensions of protest movements, theories, which are generally accepted as explaining the structural conditions and motivational forces that give rise to a protest movement, may be considered. There are three main theories that are relevant to the explanation of the protest movements:

1) Theory of Relative Deprivation; 2) Theory of Strain; and 3) Theory of Revitalization.

In addition, one more analytical framework is sought to be suggested in the present study for explaining the cause of protest movements. This may be conceptualized as the theory of Relative Deprivation of Elites of the Deprived.

The theory of relative deprivation has developed on two different lines: social mobility and social conflict. Although the authors of the 'American soldier'³⁹ were the first to use the notion of relative deprivation, it was Merton⁴⁰ who systematically developed the concept in relation to reference group theory and applied the concept to analyse social mobility. Later, Runciman⁴¹, following ^{Merton} mention, developed the concept in relation to reference group and problems of inequalities and social justice. In this approach, relative deprivation is made the basis of a study of social mobility as occurring through emulation and positive group behaviour. Marx and Engels⁴² recognized that dissatisfaction with the status quo was not determined by absolute condition but by relative expectations, thus leading to conflicting situation. Aberle,⁴³ defining relative deprivation as a negative discrepancy between legitimate expectations and actuality, treated it as the bed-rock for the study of social movements. Gurr⁴⁴ observed relative deprivation as a gap between expectations and perceived capabilities involving three general sets of value: economic conditions, political power and social status. This gap may originate when expectations remain stable but capabilities decline (decremental deprivation); expectations rise but capabilities decline (progressive deprivation); and expectations rise but the capabilities remain stable (aspirational deprivation).

However, the Relative deprivation theory is limited on that the structural conditions of relative deprivation provide only the necessary conditions. Sufficient conditions are provided by perceptions of a situation and by the estimate of capabilities by the leaders that they can do something to remedy the situation.⁴⁵ The theory ignores the importance of consciousness and the ideological aspects of the participants.⁴⁶ Similarly the theory assumes movements as 'temporary aberration' rather than as 'ongoing processes of change'.⁴⁷ For Gurr, deprivation is primarily psychological; therefore he does not deal with the socio-economic & political structure which is the source of deprivation.

The strain theory propounded by Neil Smelser⁴⁸ treats structural strain as the underlying factor leading to collective behaviour. Smelser considers from the structural functional framework, strain as the impairment of relations among parts of a system leading to the malfunctioning of the system and includes deprivation under strain. Structural strain occurs at different levels of norms, values, mobilization and situational facilities. While strain provides the structural condition, the crystallization of a generalized belief marks the attempts of persons under strain to assess their situation, and to explain the situation by creating or assembling a generalized belief. Both strain and generalized belief require participating factors to trigger off a movement.

Wallace⁴⁹ championed the theory of Revitalization. According to the theory, individuals involved in cultural revitalization process usually first of all realize the culture as a whole and then move gradually towards a movement for cultural change. Wallace posited that social movements develop out of a deliberate, organized and conscious effort on the part of members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture for themselves. He analysed the dynamics of revitalization movements in four phases: period of cultural stability, period of increased individual stress, period of cultural distortion and consequent disillusionment, and period of revitalization.

In all these theories what is common is the prime emphasis on the participants of a movement. The assumption is that if the people feel deprived of, or are under strain, or feel the necessity for the cultural revitalization, the movement will emanate, as if other factors and conditions of the movement will automatically follow. To accept this basic analytical framework in its totality is to oversimplify the reality. May be that there exists the objective conditions for a movement, namely, deprivation, strain and the urge for revitalization but the mere presence of this necessary condition will not lead to a protest or movement unless driven by a driving force—leadership, ideology and organization. It is true that at the initial stage of a protest or movement there may not be any well defined organization and ideology and once the movement gets triggered off, organization and ideology will get articulated. But it cannot be denied that to trigger the movement off, leadership is a concomitant necessity with the

prime necessary condition i.e. the people. Leadership provides the driving force for the movement. Under this framework of analyses, people's feeling and leadership to channelise the feeling need to be present simultaneously.

It is on this that the present study seeks to float the analytical framework that movements, and for that matter protests do not originate; they are made to originate and imposed on the passive, ignorant masses. Taking cues from Elic Kedourie's 'Nationalism'⁵⁰ and 'Nationalism in Asia and Africa'⁵¹ that nationalism is not a reaction against European political or economic exploitation (feeling of deprivation causing strain and/or, urge for revitalization!) but essentially an emotional reaction by Asian and African intellectuals against their rejection by Europeans.

On a similar vein, Banton observes "National consciousness was not an inherent feeling, but something taught and cultivated to serve specific ends."⁵² The role of elites in the emergence of nationalist movements is critical in Smiths' analysis. He distinguishes between the intellectuals' who formulate ideals and definitions, and the professional intelligentsia which actively pursues nationalist goals which it perceives as being in personal as well as collective interests.⁵³ If we stretch the argument it will lead to the observation that consciousness is created, mobilised and imposed by the few for their own parochial interest to be garbed as universal interest for legitimacy. Iqbal Narain asserts that political elite exploits situations of regional deprivation and unrest and converts them into movements to forge and strengthen its individual and factional support bases.⁵⁴ Thus, it implies that political leaders excite regional or nativist sentiments (in the middle class) for their political ends. The framework may be elaborated as under:

As has already been mentioned, the poor economy and the limited economic resources on the one hand, and almost inevitably interventionist nature of the state in the developing countries entail intense political competition. Remaining in and around the power centre only ensures access to and control over the poor but otherwise lukrative economy and thus begets social and political status. Hence, one witnesses intense political competition among the aspirants of power and the aspirants even go to the extent of adopting irrational means to be in and around the power

centre. In view of the intense competition some of the aspirant political leaders in the game of politics, inevitably get frustrated because they are defeated in the game of power. This section of the frustrated leaders who are out of the of the helms of power centre/s but want to be around it mobilized the already deprived common people, mostly on primordial considerations, to protest, against their injustice, discrimination and deprivation. In reality, however, this section of the leadership wants to serve their personal parochial interest of achieving or regaining their social, economic and political position but that too, in the name of universal common interest. Thus, it implies that objective or necessary conditions of discrimination and deprivation alone may not necessarily lead to the protests and movements as is assumed by the relative deprivation theorists. Observation shows that in most of the cases, it is the frustration of the section of the leadership and the desire to be near the power centre that actually lead to the actual or perceived deprivation of the common people to be channelised into protests and agitations. Hence, it is not the existence and content of deprivation but the politics of deprivation that originates protest movements.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

Given the objective of the study and the theoretical framework outlined above, the present study, while seeking to find out the general implications of the protest movements in India, seeks to address itself to the following questions:

1. To what extent, are these protest movements capable of expressing legitimised form of conditions of powerlessness, injustice or loss of identity of the different sections of the people ?
2. How far are these protest movements essentially remedial in nature ?
3. In which way, can these protest movements be related to the issues like relative deprivation of a section of population ?
4. What have been, in general, the leadership pattern and the strategies of

these protest movements ?

5. What has been the specific role of the Indian state in providing remedial reliefs to redress the oppressive aspects of state policy in contemporary times?

6. How can the protest movements be related to the issues of change and national integration in India ?

7. What are, in general, the nature and content of challenges of the protest movements and how do they affect the process of secularisation of politics and democratisation of the Indian polity?

8. How far is it correct to say that the Indian state, being substantially interventionist in character, has failed to change the deeper structures which operate in the background of the policy making process ?

OVERVIEW OF EXISTING LITERATURE :

In recent years, sociologists and social anthropologists have shown increasing interest in the study of protest movements—a field that has long been considered to be the field of the historians. Political scientists have, by and large, ignored this area.⁵⁵ And in India, Political Science has largely concentrated on the analyses of political institutions such as the executive, legislature parties, elections. The study of the politics of masses, their aspirations and demands, the articulation of their problems and their modus operandi in the assertion of their demands outside the formal institutional framework is, by and large, ignored by the political scientists.⁵⁶

The reasons for such an apathy is said to be the heritage of Indian political science. Earlier, under the influence of British tradition, Political Science was confined to political philosophy, formal government institutions and international relations. From late fifties, emphasis shifted to empirical studies under the influence of the Behavioural school developed in America. Positivism dominated analysis, and the question 'why' has been relegated to oblivion. Again, the concept of politics adopted by political

scientists influenced by the American and British tradition, confined to the narrow area of the political system. This dominant concept of politics delimit the study of politics to the functioning of the government and the state; or politics of the ruling class or elite. Finally, due to the dominance of the post world war II liberal political ideology and the structural functional approach there is greater emphasis in the social science literature on 'equilibrium and harmony' rather than on conflict and change. Political science though primarily concerned with power and conflict, has refrained from researching the issue of societal conflict for social change.⁵⁷ However, a small section of political scientists, both liberal and radical have begun exploring the area of protest movements for greater understanding and identifying their impact on the Socio-political and economic environment.

At the outset, mention must be made of Ghanashyam Shah's "Social movements in India : A Review of Literature."⁵⁸ In this volume, Shah reviews the literature available on social movements in India in general in an exhaustive and intensive manner thus making the task of a researcher on social movements in India easier. His other two works, namely, "Protest movements in two Indian states"⁵⁹ and " Caste association and political process in Gujarat : A study of Kshatriya Sabha " deal exclusively with protest movements, their origin, expansion and consolidation in specific context.

David Bayley,⁶¹ writing in the early sixties, observed that the parliamentary form of government in India could not redress the grievances of large number of people and hence, ~~the~~ was the functional utility of public protests. Rajni Kothari, taking similar stand, argues that direct action is inevitable in India's present day parliamentary democracy⁶² and feels that mass mobilization at the grassroots level is both necessary and desirable.⁶³ His other works-'State against democracy'⁶⁴, 'Transformation and Survival'⁶⁵. Rethinking development,⁶⁶ 'Politics and people'⁶⁷ also deserve mentioning as he, in all his studies succinctly analyses the internal dynamics of Indian politics. Taking an opposite stand, scholars like Phadke,⁶⁸ Aiyar⁶⁹ and Srinivasan⁷⁰ disapprove of agitations and protests in India after independence because they feel that recognised formal/constitutional means are enough for redressing the grievances of the people.

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Some scholars assert that protests are redundant in the Indian culture and civilization due to its 'multilinear character' and 'all pervasive hierarchy. Moore⁷¹ Pratap Chandra⁷² and Badrinath⁷³ observe that because of the Brahminical ideology and hierarchical social structure, the oppressed classes have become docile, obedient, and fatalist. Gough⁷⁴, Thapar⁷⁵, Damle⁷⁶ and Dhanagare⁷⁷ refute such assertions and point to a number of struggles by the oppressed classes in the pre and post Independence India.

A. R. Desai, a noted sociologist has made significant contribution to this field. As a sociologist and social activist, he has analysed the problem from mainly human rights perspective. He feels that the parliamentary form of government, as a political institutional device, has proved to be inadequate to continue or expand concrete democratic rights of the people. The protests of people will thus continue till adequate political institutional forms for the realisation and exercise of concrete democratic rights are found⁷⁸. Desai reiterates his position that the civil and democratic rights of the people are not protected by the constitution. Consequently, the movements for their protection have increased 79, 80.

T. K. Oommen⁸¹ analyses the potentiality of protest as a source of change. He argues that the basic sources of change have been taken to be the economy or the agrarian, industrial or information revolution. In contrast, political revolutions, by definition, imply the transfer of power from one category to another and those likely to be deprived of it, as also those sections of the population who support the ruling elite, disapprove of protest. This 'displacement syndrome', Oommen says, renders the potential of protest as an instrument of change. In another book, Oommen⁸² explores and analyses the problematique of nation building in India. Some of these problems, the author argues, are the result of erroneous conceptions arising out of misplaced polarities juxtaposing nation vs. state, political nationalism vs. cultural nationalism, Indianism vs. localism. These dimension coexist and are mutually reinforcing and enriching. The Indian genius is one of gradual transformation, piecemeal accretion and cautious reconciliation. Therefore the real task of nation building entails nurturing pluralism in all contexts : values, technology, culture.

Atul Kohli⁸³, in his penetrating and insightful study on Indian politics, describes how and explains why India has become difficult to govern. Kohli observes that the roots of India's growing problems of governability are more political than socio-economic. A highly interventionist state dealing with a poor economy has become a subject of intense political competition. The spread of egalitarian political values and the opportunities provided by democracy have, in turn, helped to transform what was once a heterogeneous social structure into many groups of mobilised activists. Failure of leaders to make timely concessions has only intensified political demands and activity.

Paul R. Brass⁸⁴, in his stimulating analyses of 'Indian Politics Since Independence', has argued that the Indian state, society and economy are in the midst of a systematic crisis which has intensified, revealing itself in secessionist movements and in increased inner caste and inter-religious conflicts. The issue before the country, Brass feels, is whether or not it can find within its own traditions the moral and material resources and the leadership to restore a political and communal balance in state and society. In another work, Brass⁸⁵ looks at elite competition as the basic dynamics which precipitates ethnic conflict under specific conditions. These conditions arise from the broader economic and political environment. He feels that the political economy of India induces strong conflicting drives towards centralization and decentralization in the Indian polity and this in turn, manifests itself in various forms of ethnic upsurges.

Zoya Hasan et.al⁸⁶, edited volume discusses and explores the potentially dangerous challenges posed to Indian polity. The essays in the volume examines in particular the unprecedented upsurge in communal, sectarian and regional tensions in the recent past and simultaneous emergence of religious, class and caste groups as powerful expression of political consciousness. Taken together, these developments have had the effect of bringing the very nature of the Indian state into question.

Another edited volume by Upendra Baxi and Bhikhu Parekh⁸⁷ addresses inter alia on the problematic of tradition and modernity shaping religious and secular

identities. Again, it focuses on the issues of civil loyalty and primordial politics emerging as a part of a dialectic shaping of modern India, the crisis of governability and the nature of Indian politics.

Rudolph and Rudolph⁸⁸ accepting the modernization paradigm seek to explain how the state in India came to play a dominant role in the economy and how the interplay between the state as an interest group and other interest groups in the society brought about a centrist thrust to economic policies. The book's basic thesis appears to be that the formulation and the implementation of economic policies in India have been influenced by the "overload" on the state which has changed its character from 'being autonomous' to 'being constrained.' In a similar way, Pranab Bardhan⁸⁹, Francis Frankel⁹⁰ and C.P. Bhambri⁹¹ deal with the economic dimension of various problems confronting the Indian polity.

David Taylor and Malcolm Yapp's⁹² edited volume deals with the relationship between language, religion and political identity in South Asian perspective. Primary attention in the volume is paid to linguistic and religious factors in the making of political identities and the formulation of new political demands, but the operation of these factors is seen as being conditioned and in some cases determined by grander political and economic forces.

M.S.A. Rao's edited volumes⁹³ are the attempts to bring together twelve studies of diverse social movements in different parts of India. The papers included in the volumes provide valuable insights into the genesis of the concerned movements, their ideological foundations, organization and leadership, event structure, internal dynamics and social and cultural consequences.

Besides these general studies, there are some important contributions on specific studies of protest movements in India. On peasant protests, studies by Mishra⁹⁴ Kling⁹⁵, Mitter⁹⁶, Natarajan⁹⁷ deal with indigo movement in Bengal and Bihar; studies by Gopalan⁹⁸, Dale⁹⁹, Hardgrave¹⁰⁰, Choudhary¹⁰¹, Hitchcock¹⁰², deal with the Moplah rebellion in Malabar region, Kerala; studies by Dhanagare¹⁰³, Sarkar¹⁰⁴, Custers¹⁰⁵ examine the Tebhaga movement in Bengal; studies by Rao¹⁰⁶ Dhanagare¹⁰⁷, Elliott¹⁰⁸, Pavier¹⁰⁹ deal with the Telengana movement in Andhra

Pradesh; and the Naxalite movement in West Bengal, Bihar and Andhra Pradesh has been studied by Dasgupta¹¹⁰, Ghose¹¹¹, Banerjee¹¹², Sengupta¹¹³. Historical analysis of peasant movements have been offered from different perspectives by Choudhary¹¹⁴, Kaviraj¹¹⁵, and Sen¹¹⁶ on Bengal, Das¹¹⁷ and Henningham¹¹⁸ on Bihar; N.G. Ranga¹¹⁹ on Andhra Pradesh; and by Namboodripad¹²⁰, Oommen¹²¹ and Kannan¹²² on Kerala. However, a comparative approach to regional struggles is missing in these studies though the studies by Dhanagare¹²³ and Custers¹²⁴ are the exceptions in that direction.

Various studies on tribal /ethnic movements highlight militancy of tribals in various struggles during pre and post-Independence period. They also point out the line between the changing nature of issues that the tribals raised in the past and the present movement is getting blurred as tribals become peasants. Though the number of studies on tribal movements is large, only a few are intensive and well documented. Political Scientists and social historians have almost neglected the field. Mention may be made of the studies by Singh¹²⁵, Anand¹²⁶, Augustine¹²⁷, Sareen¹²⁸, Weiner¹²⁹, Bhattacharjee¹³⁰, Chattopadhyay¹³¹, Das¹³², Dutta¹³³, Hall¹³⁴, Hussain¹³⁵, Goswami¹³⁶, Mathur¹³⁷, Nibedan¹³⁸, Phukan¹³⁹, Bhattacharjee¹⁴⁰, Lama¹⁴¹, Subba¹⁴², Syangden and Moktan¹⁴³, and Mukharjee¹⁴⁴.

The studies on the Dalit protests in pre and post Independence period are not many. Most of the studies available so far are confined to Maharashtra. The studies on Dalit movements include Pimpley and Sharma¹⁴⁵, Kamble¹⁴⁶, Lynch¹⁴⁷, Rajendran¹⁴⁸, Rao¹⁴⁹, Shah¹⁵⁰, Shyamlal¹⁵¹, Verba, Ahmed and Bhatt¹⁵², and Kothari¹⁵³.

The theme of protest movements has also attracted, though marginally, the scholars dealing with state politics in a general way. The studies conducted so far from different perspectives of state politics either as a specific case study or in a general comparative way have touched upon this vital aspect affecting the governing process in India. In this connection mention may be made of Innai¹⁵⁴, Irani¹⁵⁵, Kapoor¹⁵⁶, Katzenstein¹⁵⁷, Narang¹⁵⁸, Nayar¹⁵⁹ and the like.

On the government response to various protest movements by way of signing accords the study by Dutta¹⁶⁰ deserves special mention. In this volume, the author brings together the full text of all the peace accords since 1947 signed between various protesting groups and the government.

Besides, there are innumerable research articles published in periodicals on various aspects and dimensions of protest movements all of which could not be covered in this review. However, these too, provide sufficient insight into the different contours of protest movements and their impact on the socio-political and economic environment in India.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY :

It is evident from the literature reviewed above that in most cases, the studies are unidimensional in character. Hardly, in any work, specific, in depth analyses of the political implications of protest movements in India has been made. The present study in this sense, seeks to bridge the existing research gap in this area. Herein lies the significance of the study as it seeks to fill the research gap thus opening the possibility of formulating a broad theoretical framework to understand the political processes of the developing countries in general and India in particular. The applied aspect of the present study is also significant as it has a prescriptive suggestions for the stability of the political process in India in the face of the protest movements of varied nature that tend to affect the governing process in general and the federal polity in particular.

METHODOLOGY :

The method for collecting informations for the present study is essentially historical analytical and as such, exploratory in nature. As such, the informations were collected mainly from the secondary sources i.e. published books and articles on protest movements as also the documents and/or reports by the Government on various movements. Thus, the specific method that has been followed is the content

analyses of materials published on protest movements. As the purpose of the study was to explore, reliance was on review of the available literature on the subject. By its own logic, the study is thus limited on the ground that it could not undertake any field work for collecting primary data. But it is also obvious that the objective of the study was too broad to permit field work and the nature of the study was so that there was, infact no scope for field study. Besides, one of the important technique to understand properly any movement is to resort to participatory action research that is, study of on-going movements. The present study could not go for the participatory action research too because the objective is a holistic one to cover a large number of protest movement to arrive at generalised formulation of the impact of the movements on the plitical system and processes in India. In fact, impact study can be made only after some amount of progress have been there in a movement.

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CHAPTER-II

INDIAN POLITICAL SYSTEM : MAJOR CONTRADICTIONS

India stands for an ideal example of a plural society - a society that is divided by what Harry Eckstein calls, "segmental cleavages". Segmental cleavages, he writes, may be of religious, ideological, linguistic, regional, cultural, racial or ethnic nature.¹ A further characteristic, already implied by Eckstein's definition, is that political parties, interest groups, media of communication schools, and voluntary associations tend to be organized along the lines of segmental cleavages.² It has been a well established proposition in political Science that in a plural society, it is difficult to achieve and maintain stable democratic government.³ The root of this proposition may be traced to Aristotle's observation that "a state aims at being, as far as it can be, a society composed of equals and peers."⁴ Social homogeneity and political consensus are treated as prerequisites for, or factors strongly conducive to, stable democracy while deep social divisions and political differences within plural societies are regarded as responsible for instability and breakdown in democracies.⁵

As such, India, like other plural societies, has been witnessing a spurt of protest movements during the last four decades and these protests emanate mostly from the plural character of Indian society leading to the direction of ungovernability. The hopes and aspirations, envisioned during the freedom struggle and incorporated in the Constitution have turned bitter leading to a sense of despair and agony strengthening the already existing segmental cleavages. Thus, India has moved from stability to instability and has even acquired the reputation of a 'functioning anarchy'.⁶

Under the circumstances, an understanding of the genesis, nature, content, direction and impact of protest movements in India would inevitably require an analysis and understanding of the social, economic and political dynamics of the system involving the major contradictions operating at different levels. The root of dissent, agitation and protest can never be a sudden outburst; it is to be found in the dynamic

interaction of the various parameters of the system covering the social, cultural, ethnic, religious, economic and political dimensions.

SOCIAL CONTRADICTIONS :

By the logic of a plural society, India exhibits the heterogeneous presence simultaneously of modernity with tradition, relatively developed urban centres with all the modern facilities and amenities with the backward rural peripheries, all pervasive pressure and getting ascendancy in the recent years, of caste as a social phenomenon having large scale political penetration and leading to a situation characterised by caste hierarchy with pronounced equality, and rampant corruption at all spheres of the society. Undoubtedly, all these contradictions tend to impair the legitimacy of the political system.

In terms of population, India is the second most populous polity in the world. The beliefs and behaviour pattern of the vast mass of India's population are characterised by great antiquity, continuity and diversities and that also on a scale unmatched by any other political system.⁷ The Indian actually live in one country but in many centuries. For example, the scientists working in the most sophisticated Bhabha Atomic Research Centre at Bombay spatially coexist with millions of people plying bullock - carts in villages. These two may represent two extreme cultural polarities in their outlook and lifestyle and yet these may also be congruent in some respects.⁸ There have been great techno-economic achievements in the fields of science, technology and engineering but most Indians still continue to subscribe to beliefs whose philosophical foundations were moulded several centuries ago and whose ideational core has remained intact, despite momentous changes in the political realm and regular contacts with different and/or divergent cultural traditions.⁹

Observers like Morris - Jones¹⁰ and Weiner¹¹ have attempted to encapsulate the process of contradiction and adjustment that is going on by arguing that there are several "idioms" or "cultures" in fundamental conflict with each other. A modern idiom, according to Morris - Jones, centres in the ideas of the nationalist elite and in the

institutions in Delhi, a 'traditional' idiom is rooted in the kin, caste, and communal relations of village, locality and province. It has a complete social ethos and comes into politics not with a list of demands but with a way of life. A "saintly" idiom is characteristically Indian and is associated with Gandhi and his disciples involving selfless devotion to constructive work for the good of the society and immune from the mimicking of foreign models or from contaminated by the archaic superstitions and feudal practices of the Indian society.¹²

According to Weiner, in post-Independence India, two political cultures emerged at different levels of Indian society. One is rooted in the districts permeating local politics, local party organizations and administration. The second predominates in the national capital, is found among planners, many national political leaders, and in the administrative cadre. The first may be called an emerging mass political culture and the second, an elite political culture. While the mass political culture is an expanding political culture, the elite political culture is a defensive one and very critical of the emerging more popular mass political culture, its own creation.¹³

If one compares the characteristics of the two main political idioms of Morris-Jones with those of the two political cultures of Weiner, it becomes clear that the "traditional idiom" is the idiom of "mass political culture" and the "modern idiom", the idioms of "elite political culture". The first idiom and culture are found in the rural areas and the second idiom and culture in the cities. In fine, there are two basic and general pattern of political culture in India from the village to the national level denoting a distinct manner of political thinking and behaviour.¹⁴

Besides the modernity - tradition dichotomy, there exists the rural-urban divide. The urban areas actually monopolise most of the modern and basic amenities of life. The rural areas are left to the basic minimum, even less of the basic needs. In terms of education, health, marketing the products, and purchasing for sustained livelihood the rural areas have virtually no option but to look to the urban areas. The consequences become deplorable when the people of the rural areas cannot afford to go to the urban areas for education or for medical purposes. Under the circumstances,

they are left to the predistined option of remaining uneducated or half educated, unemployed or underemployed, traditional in outlook, and victims of traditional ways, of medical treatment by the 'ojhas' or the local quacks. However, during the last few years, the picture has started changing. With the revitalization of Panchayati Raj, the horizontal and vertical penetration of political parties in the rural areas, particularly in West Bengal and the policy of the Central government to allocate adequate funds for rural development and agriculture, the level of the consciousness of the rural people is expected to have become high and the rural people is supposed to feel integrated with the mainstream of the political system. But it cannot be denied that much still remains to be achieved. If the rural people are left to feel alienated and if the rural urban divide is allowed to continue it will not be a healthy sign for the integrity, cohesion and development of the system.

Another social contradiction that affects the social, economic and political system in a big way is the organization and persistence of the society on caste hierarchy and the constitutional declaration for equality. It is not surprising to note that caste - a homogeneous, endogamous social organization with distinctive rituals, especially those pertaining to a religious purity¹⁵ - has not disappeared from the society despite the termination of British policy of divide and rule; rather the new constitutional arrangements, may be unintentionally, have given a fresh lease of life to caste politicisation. A close examination of the social and political process in India reveals that, in a wider sense, caste ties have grown significant and every political party, including the Communists, have taken due note of it though overtly caste factor has been denounced by most¹⁶ of the parties and their leaders. In this connection, Kothari observes that a relative decline in the importance of pollution as a factor in determining caste hierarchy and the diminishing emphasis on the summation of roles as involved in the 'Jajmani' System, do not by themselves involve any basic destruction of the caste system but only a shift in the critical criteria of social awareness and the structural differentiations through which such an awareness is mobilized and organized.¹⁷ Thus, the process of transformation revealing certain notable changes in the Indian Social System does not at all mean end of caste framework.¹⁸

It was commonly argued before Independence, particularly by the British rulers of India, that parliamentary democracy was not suited to a society which was intensely divided into religious and communal groupings and whose social structure was imbued with an ideology of hierarchy rather than equality. It was also argued that caste Hindus and untouchable and other low castes could hardly be expected to work together as equals in a democratic political order. The former would continue to maintain, even under constitutional guarantee for equality the rigidity of traditional hierarchies and caste discriminations which would prevent the poor and disadvantaged low castes from participating effectively in the political process and social interaction.

Indian nationalists, however, argued strongly against such ideas. Thus, at Independence, though they resisted any efforts to create separate electorates for the low castes, the constitution and the government policies instituted mechanisms and procedures to ensure their full participation as equal citizens in the new order. These mechanisms and procedures included reservation of seats in the legislatures and other bodies, the maintenance of a list of low caste groups on a schedule entitling them to special privileges and preferential policies of all sorts, the abolition of untouchability, and the like. But these mechanisms and procedures have further aggravated the caste relationship in India and thus have provided fresh impetus to caste induced social tension.

True it is that the role of caste in Indian society has been decried as a fissiparous threat to national unity.¹⁹ But it has also been lauded as a channel of communication thus being conducive to societal integration. Rudolph and Rudolph observe, "By mobilizing.... jatis of village and locality in horizontal organizations with common identities, caste associations have contributed significantly to the success of political democracy by providing bases for communication, representation and leadership. They have taught illiterate peasants how to participate meaningfully and effectively in politics. Lower castes, whose large members give them an advantage in competitive democratic politics, have in many areas gained influence, access and power in state and society. With these at their command, they can change in their favour the allocation of resources, privileges and honours. Rather than providing the basis for a reaction,

caste has absorbed and synthesised some of the new democratic values."²⁰ This view of caste and caste associations has been shared by a number of social scientists.²¹

But, however, strengthening of the democratic values has, probably, never been the aim of the caste 'association'.²² In practice, the leaders of the caste associations project their interests as those of their castes and their interests are generally directed towards gaining or retaining or promoting their own political and economic dominance. Caste conflicts are thus more an extension of the conflict of interests of caste leaders. Such conflicts promote what Rajni Kothari calls, 'negative communalism'.²³ As such, violence in the name of caste is growing both in number and severity.

The division between the caste Hindus and the lower castes is not the only kind of problem posed by the caste hierarchy. In most villages, one or two large elite castes control most of the land and other resources, constituting what anthropologists call "dominant castes". After Independence, these dominant castes have often been able to control and mobilize the roles of their clients among the low castes, who are considered to constitute the "vote banks". Since Independence, the spread of conflict between these "forward" or elite castes and the backward castes has become a major source of social tension.²⁴ Leaders in the states have utilised "reservations" - the Indian version of affirmative action - as means to gain the electoral support of numerically significant backward castes. Higher castes, feeling that their interests are threatened have resisted these moves. The acceptance of the recommendations of the Mandal Commission extending the coverage of the reservations for the backward castes and the subsequent anti-reservation movement throughout the country is a case in point. In fact, once set in motion, those who have been mobilized have been difficult to satisfy or control. Conflict has often been the result.²⁵ The issue of the integration of the low castes as effective participants in a democratic political order and of caste conflict between the elite castes and backward castes have persisted throughout the the post-Independence period upto the present and have posed recurring challenges to the maintenance of an integrated society, an equalitarian polity, and non-violent mechanisms of conflict resolution.²⁶

Finally, of late, the society is experiencing unprecedented amount of corruption, moral degradation, and erosion in the integrity in the component parts of system, thus questioning the very legitimacy of the system itself. Previously, petty corruption at the bottom level of administration was within the limits of tolerance of the society. But the extensive level of corruption at the top level politics and administration like the Bofors payoff scam, Security scam, Hawala scam, Fodder scam, Urea scam and the like has virtually shattered the foundation of the trust of the society over politics. Excepting the left political parties, all the national political parties and their leaders have been indicted on charges of corruption. This has led to the distrust of the people to the politicians and the political parties. But this also signifies the institutionalisation of corruption and the elasticity of the social system to absorb the vice without much resistance. This is itself a contradiction in the social system of India - the contradiction between the rhetoric of moral considerations and the reality of moral degradation.

ETHNO-CULTURAL CONTRADICTION :

In the Indian political system, a major contradiction revolves around the ethnic and cultural domain - the contradiction between 'nationalism' - an attachment to the broad identity of being Indian - and a variety of what is called 'subnationalisms' - cultural, linguistic and ethnic - denoting narrow - loyalty or attachment to a particular culture or language or group as constituting primary identity. All these varieties of subnationalism actually lead to the regionalization of politics thus extending the contradiction to national integration and regionalism.

There are two schools of thought on the role and impact of these micro nationalistic variations. One school believes that the activities of the groups at micro level would certainly hamper the nation building process and consequently it would destabilise the balance of the state system.²⁷ The other school, does not find any reason to believe that micro loyalties are disastrous move of the human collectivities to thwart the very basis of the concept 'nation-state'.²⁸ Rather, these may contribute to the strengthening of the nation state.²⁹ Thus, it is argued that no contradiction

need to be perceived in describing India as a 'multi-national nation state, based on the principles of democracy, federalism and secularism.'³⁰

Viewed thus, it seems necessary to distinguish between 'state formation' and 'nation-building'. Most of the developing countries and India in particular emerged as states but they had yet to mature as nations. Maturity to a nation implies an emotional - affective attachment of an average citizen to one's own country transcending those based on his primordial attachments of religion, race, caste, language etc.³¹ This passage from a 'nation - in - the becoming to a 'nation in - the being' is the period of 'nation-building.' The coming into being of a nation-state implies a national consensus on the institutions and mechanisms of the state through which social conflicts get articulated and resolved. But before such a consensus is reached, more often than not, this period is likely to be characterised by internal strifes and conflicts over clashing values and interests, over issues of discrimination, exploitation and oppression. Hence, conflicts taking place within the state need not be interpreted necessarily as destabilising, anti-national forces bent upon destroying the country. On the contrary,, these should be considered as constituting the very stuff out of which a nation-state will get galvanized.³²

However, in spite of the optimism of the second school of thought, the Indian situation in the recent past shows something different. The reorganization of states on linguistic consideration has not contained the proliferation of regional movements. Rather, regional movements on ethnic grounds having secessionist as well as autonomy orientations have been going on with considerable intensity and as such, pose challenge to the very foundation of national integration and the nation-state itself. All these movements vindicate the divide between scular national identity and primordial regional identity. The institutional and procedural incapacity of the political system to tackle and resolve these conflicts further aggravate the perceived feeling of deprivation, discrimination and oppression of one group by the other. Logically concomitant option to this feeling further widens the gap between nationalism and regionalism and the alienation of the deprived section from the mainstream of the Indian political system. Thus, whatever may be the cause of their origin, these regional

movements pose threat to the national identity of India. The intensity of these movements is such that questions like "Is the Republic breaking up"? are raised.³³

The foremost threat to national integration comes from the North Eastern states, Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, and to a limited extent, the activists of the Gorkhaland movement and the Jharkhand movement. From the North East, the threat is apparent from Naga National Council (NNC), National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN), Mizo National Front (MNF), Peoples Liberation Army (PLA), Peoples Revolutionary Party of Kanglei Pak (PRE PAK), All Tripura Tribal Force (ATTF), Tripura National Volunteers (TNV), United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), Bodo Security Force (BDSF), and All Bodo Students Union (ABSU), National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB), Bodoland Liberation Tigers (BLT) and the like. Armed rebellion has been organised by these organizations and thus insurgency has been the most popular method for the realisation of the goal. It started with Nagaland as late as in 1956 and inspired the other disgruntled underground tribal leaders to demand sovereignty from the Indian State. It is argued that their ethnic cultural background is derived from the Austro Mongoloid origins and their territory has been subjugated by India. They claim that neither the Hindu norms nor any Indian traditional pattern match with the conglomeration of the myriad ethnic tribes in the region.

In Nagaland, the NSCN came into being in 1979 as a reaction to the NNC's (Pro-Phizo) acceptance of the constitution of India in 1975 as per the Shilong Accord. Since then, the NSCN has been carrying out an armed struggle to bring an end to Indian rule over the Naga people. Only recently, the NSCN has agreed to a moratorium to its armed struggle for the sake of negotiation with the government of India. The secessionist movement in Mizoram is led by the MNF which has been campaigning for a sovereign Mizoram since 1968. It has created tension between Mizos and non-Mizos and has gone to the extent of identifying the Mizos as non-Indians. In Manipur, Separatist movement is spearheaded by the Revolutionary Peoples Front (RPF) and its army wing PLA and PREPAK and its offshoots like the armed wing of PREPAK called the Red Army and the Kanglei Pak Communist Party (KCP) and KCP's Red Army. The declared objective of these organization is the formation of an independent Manipur. The RPF which appeared in May, 1989 is running a sort of government in

exile in Bangladesh. In Tripura, it is the TNV which is organising and leading the secessionist movement. The tribal extremists have also organized an armed wing called the Army of Tripura Peoples Liberation Organization (ATPLO). In Assam, the fear of the Assamese of becoming a minority in their own state led to the rise of the separatist organisation like the Lachit Sena in 1960s. Then, the ULFA came into being in 1979 - a direct descendent of the AASU which spearheaded the antiforeigner agitation in Assam between 1979 and 1985. The ULFA is the proponent of the sovereign Assam. 'It has vowed to liberate Assam from the exploitation of the centre which is treating the state as its colony.'³⁴ Within the State of Assam, there has emerged the demand for separate state of Bodoland spearheaded by All Bodo Students Union (ABSU) against Assamese chauvanism. The phases of the Bodo movement ascertain the inability of caste Hindu Assamese governing elite whether belonging to national or regional political parties to appreciate the aspirations of the tribals thereby pushing the leadership from softer options to violent methods (from Plain Tribal Council of Assam (PTCA) via All Bodo Students Union, Bodo Peoples Action Committee to Bodo Security Force (BdSF) and pushing the leadership from matured politicians to the young and militant blood. The whole situation has been emotionalised, bloodshed continues and ethnic divide continues to expand in a land known for its capacity to absorb people from various parts of the country belonging to various ethnic groups.³⁵ Another development in this connection to be noted in relation to the identity formation in this region is that recently, the rebel groups have formed some sort of a pan-Mongoloid federal set up called Manipur-Nagaland-Tripura-Assam Consolidation (MNTAC) for tactical coordination.

In Punjab, Sikhs were minority before 1947. To safeguard the Sikh position, the Akalis submitted a memorandum to the minorities sub-committee of the constituent Assembly demanding some statutory rights. As the demands were rejected the Akalis refashioned their demands as a cry for 'Punjabi-Suba'. Later, the efforts of the orthodox Akalis to mobilise the Sikh population under the slogan of a theocratic state- 'Raj karega Khalsa' gradually made an impact on the growing vested interests, and on the unemployed little educated rural youth.³⁶ As the Jan Sangh became a potential contender of Congress Hindu vote bank, the Congress, as a reciprocal move, started playing the communal card. This was the background of the emergence of Sant

~~move, started playing the communal card. This was the background of the emergence~~
of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala and the demand for Khalistan - an independent sovereign state. The widespread terrorism and the resultant massive state repression are the factors that come in the way of the bridge between Punjabi identity and India's national identity.

In Kashmir, the fear of the Kashmiri Muslims (who constitute 95 per cent of the population of the valley) of cultural marginalization due to a process of state sponsored imposition of Sanskritised pan-Indianness along with manipulative politics of the ruling elites, impoverishment, unemployment, corruption and ad-hocism of the government, acted in favour of exclusivist interest and ideology.³⁷ The Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) leads the agitation in Kashmir Valley and demands a totally independent State of Kashmir.

As against these anti-Indian movements, the movements for Jharkhand and Gorkhaland do not pose serious threat to the unity of the country though they impair substantially the integrity of the society. Though ethnic movements in Darjeeling of West Bengal have a history of over eighty years the threat to the Indian political system actually came with the demand by the Communist Party of India (CPI) in April, 1947 for 'Gorkhasthan', an independent nation comprising Nepal, Darjeeling district and parts of Sikkim. However, this demand was in line with Soviet concept of right to self determination and the CPI being ideologically close to Soviet Union supported Gorkhasthan till 1951 after which they started propagating for 'regional autonomy'. Systematic demand for separate statehood for the district of Darjeeling and its adjoining areas surfaced via the Nepali Bhasa Movement, with the establishment of the Pranta Parishad in 1980(April) and the Gorkha national Liberation Front in July 1980. The basic thrust of the GNLF movement was for a separate state of Gorkhaland so that Bengali hegemony over the hill people could no longer be there. However, the GNLF movement was not basically a secessionist movement. It was the movement of the hill people with distinctive identity against the 'Bengali hegemony'. And the gap between these two identities has not yet been bridged even though partially, the demand of the GNLF has been fulfilled with the formation of the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council.

Similarly, the Jharkhandi demands should be viewed in the context of identity formation. Inconsiderate industrialisation and deforestation of the area have severely affected the life-style of the indigenous tribal population. Tribal movements in this area for preserving the distinctive tribal identity have also a long history. However, after the formation of the All Jharkhand Students Union in 1986, the movement has acquired a new dimension. A charter of demands published by the activists of the movement contains among others - demand for a Separate State within the Indian territory, stoppage of anti-people industrialisation and urbanization policies and uprootment of tribal population from this traditional homeland; inclusion of all tribal languages into the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution; acceptance of the old Panchayati System and the System of 'para-patti-majhi - pargana' in all social, religious and land questions related to the tribal population. An analysis of these demands indicates that these are related more to the intricate process of nationality formation - an identity which is to be different from the mainstream national identity. Thus, here also reflects the divide or contradiction between two attachments - nationalism and regionalism.

CONTRADICTIONS RELATING TO COMMUNALISM AND SECULARISM:

One of the most ominous aspects of the political crisis in India today is the conflict between professed secularism and communalism spreading hatred and inflaming passions in the name of religion. In recent years, these two ideals have reached to such a pass that the century old Indian tradition of communal assimilation and harmony have been subjected to major challenge acquiring truly explosive dimensions.³⁹

In common parlance, secularism is identified with three western connotations: a) separating man and society from the transcendental and divine; b) institutionalizing rationality through a process of displacing religiosity; and c) relegating religion to the private realm of human activity. However, all these connotations are shown to be conceptually untenable and impossible empirically.³⁹ As a way out of this conceptual impasse and empirical deadlock, secularism may be conceptualised as religious

pluralism - a societal situation in which different religious collectivities would not only respect one another in terms of their respective beliefs and worship patterns, but would be eager to enter into creative and critical dialogue so that they could empathetically understand one another and collectively shape a humane and just society.⁴⁰

In defining secularism in the Indian context, Donald Smith refers to three provisions that have been incorporated in the constitution of India : i) freedom of religion both individual and corporate; ii) citizenship based on equality of all individuals regardless of religious persuasion; and iii) separation of state and religion.⁴¹ Thus viewed, the secular state is a state which guarantees individual and corporate freedom of religion, deals with the individual as a citizen irrespective of his religion, is not constitutionally connected to a particular religion, nor does it seek either to promote or interfere with religion.⁴²

Communalism, on the other hand, is generally viewed as the degenerate manifestation of religion. It is believed to be a negative social force. Smith defines communalism as the functioning of religious communities, or organizations which claim to represent them in a way which is considered detrimental to the interests of other groups or of the nation as a whole.⁴³ Communalism thus includes an appeal to a common religious heritage - an appeal for politicised goal. It involves the politicization of religious rituals and symbols and religion becomes transformed into a political instrument. Communalism goes further and attempts to eliminate the natural heterogeneity which exists within the Hindu, as well as the Muslim communities, in India and transform the community into a unified political corporate group.⁴⁴ It stresses not merely Hindu or Muslim unity, but the antagonism between Hindus and Muslims. In socio-economic terms, W.C. Smith defined communalism as the ideology which has emphasized as the social, political and economic unit, the group of adherences of each religion and has emphasized the distinction, even the antagonism between such groups.⁴⁵

Communalism in India has been viewed from three different perspectives by different scholars. First, despite considerable variation in their treatment of the subject, the works of Bipan Chandra, P.C.Joshi and Asghar Ali Engineer may be clubbed as the left oriented perspective. Bipan Chandra⁴⁶ traces the growth of communal ideology and politics to the social framework provided by the colonial economy and polity. Colonial underdevelopment and crisis of the colonial economy resulted in widespread unemployment, which led to widespread scramble for jobs among middle classes. This helped communalism acquire its real mass base. To him, the Hindu-Muslim contradiction had no basis in reality ; it was not an efficient or real causation of communalism, the basic contradiction during the colonial period was between the Indian people and colonialism. P.C.Joshi⁴⁷, while discussing the causes which led to Muslim separation, utilises the model of 'cumulative causation'. For the Indian Muslims, the British colonial impact led to a setback in the economic and political sphere vis-a-vis the majority community. And this engendered in them the feeling of deprivation which ultimately prepared the ground for secessionist demands. Asghar Ali Engineer⁴⁸, viewing the subject from the Marxist perspective and also recognizing the great mobilizatory potential of religion, observes that communalism emerged during the struggle for independence and kept on going into higher and higher gear as the day of independence drew nearer and nearer. The explanation has to be sought, apart from other factors, in the socio-economic situation and socio-political climate in the country.

The second perspective is associated with the works of prominent Indian and Western sociologists and some historians who have tried to explain communalism through their insight into the social structure, cultural heritage and social change in India. Under the perspective come the studies of Louis Dumont, Satis Saberwal and Ratna Naidu. Louis Dumont's⁴⁹ cultural historical perspective shows that the more or less peaceful coexistence of the two communities after the Muslim conquest did not produce any "general ideological synthesis" and lack of this ideological synthesis created "lasting social heterogeneity of the two communities". Satis Saberwal⁵⁰ emphasizes the role of ideas and traditions, religious beliefs and institutions for understanding communalism. He establishes the linkage of religious ideas and symbols to the social structure. Naidu's⁵¹ work is more definitive and she explains

communalism in terms of politico-economic and cultural factors.

Finally, studies by Paul R. Brass,⁵² Joseph Rothchild⁵³ and Francis Robinson⁵⁴ treat the phenomenon of ethnic identities and ethnic conflict from political perspective assigning primacy to political determinants that is, to political elites, party organizations in mobilizing communal and/or ethnic consciousness among the competing groups.

The history of communalism in India dates back to the later half of the 19th century, although a few communal riots had taken place as early as 1781.⁵⁵ It was mainly because of the growth of consciousness that one community is being subjugated by the other and also because of the competition between these two people in economic field that their relations got strained in the later centuries. The British became cautious from the lesson they derived from the 1857 Mutiny and hence, adopted the policy of balancing one community against another for weakening the nationalist movement and perpetuating their rule in India. Besides, English education not only gave tremendous opportunities of employment to the Hindus, but it also broadened their mind to accept the challenges of new industrial age. Number of intellectuals came forth to reform the Hindu society on modern lines. As for the Muslims, the introduction of English education by the British for administrative and other purposes belittled the importance of the Arabic and Persian and adversely affected the position of the Muslim intelligentsia. As such, advancement of the Hindus in all walks of life and their rapid march towards monopolizing the administrative, industrial and commercial fields raised a fear among the intellectual elite of the Muslims that their own existence as a major group was in jeopardy and, instead of blaming themselves for their lagging behind in the race, the Muslim leaders started expressing the fear that the Muslims would be dominated by the Hindus in future India. Moreover, some of the revivalist movements among the Hindus like Arya Samaj, had a narrow Hindu basis and a negative attitude to Islam which led the Muslims to mobilise themselves on a corresponding communal basis.⁵⁶

Under the circumstances, no social movement of secular character came on the scene to bring these two communities together. Even the political movement of

national independence could not unite them. Besides, number of communal organization which sprang up gradually among both the communities, like the Muslim League, Jamiat-Ul-Ulema, Hindu Mahasabha and Rashtria Swayamsevak Sangh, alienated them further from one another. The creation of two separate states, namely, India and Pakistan, in 1947, could not solve the problems as, by that time, the cancer of communalism had spread its virus too wide and deep in the body politic of India.⁵⁷ The partition, as it was expected, did not put an end to communalism but instead, it proved to be the beginning of a series of new conflicts and problems on the basis of communalism.⁵⁸

The violent partition of the country and the Hindu-Muslim killings which preceded and accompanied it discredited for several decades the ideologies of both Hindu nationalism and Muslim separatism and made secularism appear the only possible basis for the modern Indian state. But more than four decades after partition, Hindu - Muslim communal division has once again become a central feature of Indian politics and vicious communal killings have been increasing in numbers and frequency and spreading geographically in recent years. The root of this phenomenon may be found in the varied perceptions prevalent in both the communities. The Congress Party which was the ruling party for a number of decades, has been looked upon by the conservative or extremist Hindus as a pro-Muslim party and this has made the Hindu communalism more aggressive in the post-Independence era. The Congress Party's, approval to the scheme of partition, Nehru's opposition to the revivalist tendencies among the Hindus, prominent positions assigned to many Muslims in political and administrative fields, reluctance shown by the Congress to initiate reforms in Muslim Personal law and, above all, the political alliance it entered into with the Muslim League in Kerala are the reasons why the Congress has a pro-Muslim and communal image among the Hindus. The helplessness of the Hindus in prevailing upon the ruling party to follow the harsh policy towards the Indian Muslims makes them adopt aggressive attitude towards the Muslims.⁵⁹ As a result, Hindu nationalism represented in the RSS and its "family" of organizations⁶⁰ - the Bharatiya Janata Party, Vishwa Hindu Parishad and Bajrang Dal - has reached a new peak of popular support and political importance.

Muslim solidarity as a counterforce has increased in recent years as well, as a consequence of the belief that the constitutional protection and the secular overtone of the Congress party have proved to be too inadequate to wipe out the Muslim fears about the growing Hindu communalism. Legislations passed by the states like Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan on the Ban on cow slaughter, government's lukewarm attitude towards Urdu, less opportunities given to them or received by them in administrative or industrial fields, deliberate ineffectiveness shown by the law and order machinery at the time of communal riots⁶¹, shifting alliance of the Congress Party during Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi towards using the Hindu card for neutralizing the Bharatiya Janata party and winning the majority Hindu segments, and the demolition of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya - all these make the Muslims think that the Constitution is too inadequate a safeguard for them. For the Muslims in India, "The state has remained committed to secularism but the widely diffused communalism and the highly strung atmosphere of the country has made it impossible for the secular values and ideals to be realised."⁶²

As Hindu nationalism and Muslim consciousness have intensified, the secular ideology has been subjected to challenge from several quarters. Hindu nationalists consider it false, a 'pseudo-secularism', which has actually favoured the Muslims and other minorities. Muslims find that the 'so-called' secular state has not been able to protect their lives, property, and even their mosques against Hindu attacks. Many intellectuals who are neither Hindu nationalist nor Muslim separatist also now argue that India needs a new state ideology that recognizes religious pluralism and the importance of faith in peoples' lives, and stresses the message of tolerance said to be present in all Indian faiths rather than secular neutrality.⁶³

ECONOMIC CONTRADICTIONS :

The economic contradictions in India emanate from the disparity or contradiction between growth and equity, that is, economic growth on the one hand, and the pattern of distribution of the growth on the other. This has been the inevitable result of the contradiction between the rhetoric of welfarism and the reality of capitalism.

India is, besides being pluralist, a multi-structural society where one finds the coexistence of archaic feudal and semi-feudal relationships with pre-capitalist and highly developed capitalist social formations. The most important characteristic of Indian society is absolute unequal distribution of social and economic power in the various segments of the society. The largest cultivable land area is owned by a minority of people. And in the urban sector are found petty shop - keepers and small entrepreneurs in thousands overshadowed by the economic empires of the big industrial houses. In this social milieu characterised by absolute unequal distribution of power, the state in India operates.

After Independence, the public policy makers opted for rapid industrialisation of the country in the overall framework of economic planning and mixed economy. The pronounced objective of the policy was to raise the standard of living of the masses and to eradicate poverty and gross inequalities. The draft of the First Five year Plan stated that "It is essential that private enterprise should function in conformity with the social and economic policy of the state, recognize its full responsibilities, and cooperate in the implementation of such measures of control and regulation as are considered necessary....".⁶⁴ Similarly the second Five Year Plan defined the appropriate role of the private and public sectors in the economic and social development of the country. The plan document stated : "For creating the appropriate conditions, the state has to take on heavy responsibilities as the principal agency speaking for and acting on behalf of the community as a whole. The public sector has to expand rapidly.... The private sector has to play its part within the framework of the comprehensive plan accepted by the community."⁶⁵

The constitution of India also lays down the objective of harmony between economic development and social justice. The Directive Principles of State Policy enunciated in Article 39(B) and (C) of the Constitution, stipulates :

"The state shall in particular direct its policy towards securing i) that the ownership and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as best to subserve the common good, and ii) that the operation of the economic

system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment."

However, the framework of economic development as provided by the Five Year Plans and the Directive Principles of State Policy have got distorted in actual operation. Today, despite over four decades of planning under the mixed economy, which was meant to reconcile 'growth' with distributive justice', the scenario of the national economy remains dismal.⁶⁶ Soaring prices, increasing unemployment, and the decreasing purchasing power of the rupee are visible and alarming symbols of the malady. Hence, India has witnessed growth and poverty, not growth eliminating poverty.⁶⁷ The root of this phenomenon may be found in the evolution of capitalism in India.

Capitalism in India did not emerge as a natural transformation from one stage to other, but it was a product of colonial development. The modern Indian state, like capitalism in the country, was established by the British to safeguard the class interests of the metropolitan capitalism. Thus, the indigenous capital found a powerful colonial state as an objective obstruction in its development. As a result, the Indian bourgeoisie involved itself in the struggle for transfer of state power from capitalist class of the metropolis to the bourgeoisie of the oppressed society.⁶⁸ The bourgeois-led Indian nationalism fought against imperialism, mobilised the Indian masses for struggle but did not allow radicalization of the mass struggle against internal and external oppressors and exploiters.⁶⁹

Thus, when power was transferred, the state power was handed over to the bourgeoisie and their political representatives and the state became the sole instrument in the hands of the bourgeoisie for their development. Thus the state was the only instrument to achieve development of capitalism in India and as such, it would not be a passive state but a very active and pre-eminent state subserving the interests of the exploiting class over the exploited.

The consequences of the capitalist path of development have been contradictory. On the one hand, the social base of Indian capitalism has expanded by bringing numerous social groups into the capitalist process. On the other hand, in spite of the Monopoly and Restrictive Trade Practices Act, indigenous monopoly capitalism has been strengthened as a leading group of the capitalist classes. Under the circumstances, 'politics in India has become an instrument to exercise power and use public resources for sectional and personal political advancement.⁷⁰ The road to political legitimation has been sought through electoral alliances based upon caste, communal, religious, linguistic and regional loyalties and identities, and the overall framework of universal adult franchise. There have also been some rhetorical forms like 'Socialism', 'Garibi Hatao' etc. of political legitimation. But the basic tensions generated by a distorted path of capitalist development could not be sustained for long. Similarly, the capitalist path of development has been under severe strains, impinging, in the process, on the vulnerable and deprived strata of the population and thereby leading to social tensions and conflicts of various sorts.⁷¹ As such, the coercive apparatus of the state has increasingly been used to manage the system.

Since the early 1990s, there has been a shift of policies from mixed economy with centralised planning to liberalization of the economy and its concomitant outcome - privatization and globalization. The combined policies of liberalisation of the import export regime, dismantling of state directed detailed planning, and export-led growth have been adopted with the pronounced expectation that such policies would lead to expansion and diversification of manufacturing capacities, increased employment and stimulation of agricultural production. These policies, like the capital intensive heavy industrialisation policies which preceded them, only expect that the conditions of the poor would improve through the general 'trickle down' effects of an expanded economy. But in reality, these policies offer no direct benefits to the poor. In fact, the Manmohanomics, as the New Economic Policy in India is popularly known, is the reflection of the interests of the India's emerging capitalist class. The capitalism in India developed under state protection during the last four decades has reached to such a stage that the domestic market is not adequate enough for its operation. Hence, it needs foreign markets. Similarly, under state protection, Indian capitalism has developed to the extent of competing with the foreign and transnational

capital.

Under the circumstances, one can safely conclude that the pronounced rhetoric of peoples' welfare as found in the Constitution of India and other policy documents have little implications for the reality. Rather, the reality is that the assets of the big business and industrial houses are ever increasing while poverty in India is not eradicated. So comes the contradiction leading to social tension and conflict.

POLITICAL CONTRADICTIONS :

Closely linked with the economic contradictions of growth and justice emanating from the inevitable outcomes of capitalism is the political contradiction centering around the principles of democracy and freedom on the one hand, and authoritarianism, interventionism, repression and hegemony on the other. An analysis of the composition of the personnel of the state system, its ideology, policies pursued by the government, the relationship between the ruling class and the state and the relationship between the rulers and the ruled clearly underlines the character of the Indian state. It is intolerant of all dissent, hostile to the demands of the toiling masses. It claims to be wedded to democracy, that is democracy with elite foundation. Its foundations are threatened then curbing freedom, enactment of anti-people legislation, ⁷² ~~asserting~~ ⁵ the opposition leaders, brutally murdering the dissenters or rebels, promoting extra-constitutional centres of authority, personalising power and imposing emergency - official or otherwise - is permitted under the cover of "national" interest.⁷² Given this, one would agree with E.M.S.Namboodripad that the state in India has run from 'crisis into chaos.'⁷³

An analysis of over four decades of the functioning of democratic, secular, federal and activist political system in India reveals its achievements and failures - failures ^a for outweighing the achievements. However, the most important achievement of the Indian political system is the holding of periodical elections on the basis universal adult franchise and at regular intervals. The impact of elections on Indian

society is claimed to have been qualitative, the percentage of voters' turn out has been extremely satisfactory, competition in politics has been legitimized. Participatory politics has raised the level of political awareness of the masses and government has become a critical factor in voter's life. Politicization of an indifferent and apathetic community is the first step towards democratic advancement of a society and elections have achieved this in India.⁷⁴

But there are negative forces which tend to blur the achievements of the democratic process in India. The appearance of democracy is different from the reality of democracy. Elections legitimize the wielders of political power but this does not determine the totality of politics.⁷⁵ In practice, the power coalition which weilds power in India consists of the exploiting classes, that is, the capitalist classes, landlords and rich peasants and their power goals are different from what they appear to be.

Since Independence India has been involved in building a capitalist society and in this basic task the political system is actively involved. The industrial policy of the Government of India recognizes the supportive role of public policy for the development of private corporate sector. All important infrastructural industries are owned and managed by the government and through infrastructural support the government has facilitated the growth of private corporate sector during the last decades. Similarly, the government mobilises national resources for industrial development and these resources are shared by the state capitalist sector and the private corporate sector. The nationalised banks, the LIC, the IDBI, the ICICI, and other financial institutions owned by the government provide financial resources for private capitalist enterprises. Moreover, the government controls the setting up of industries and thus has facilitated the development of private capitalism by regulatory, supportive and subsidy mechanisms. During the past four decades the expansion and diversification of private capitalism has taken place under the protective umbrella provided by the Indian government. The government legislation to check monopolies under the MRTP Act is just a formal intention than a reality. Under the circumstances, one can easily smack of the real and operational motive of this private capitalism and the Indian state vis-a-vis the needs and aspirations of the common people. The

logic of capitalism and capitalist development does not permit the state to look for the fulfilment of interests of the common people.

Ever since the heyday of the freedom movement, people were given hopes and promises of plenty and prosperity - even the rudiments of which remain like something fashioned in a dream out of reach of the bulk of the population.⁷⁶ The very development programmes initiated by the government have contributed to at least two kinds of imbalances in the society - the regional imbalance and the class imbalance. Thus, the post-Nehru era has witnessed a remarkably rapid escalation in confrontations between the government and the people all over the country. Whenever these confrontations tend to challenge the foundation of the existing order, the state - the instrument in the hands of the exploiting class favouring the maintenance of the existing order - intervenes with all its resources and becomes more and more repressive and authoritarian. Given this background, democracy in India remains a rhetoric, the reality is the repression and hegemony of the state acting on the behest of the ruling class. And hence, this contradiction of democracy and authoritarianism provides ground for social tension and social conflict thus paving the way for more organized protest movements.

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CHAPTER - III

PROTEST MOVEMENTS IN INDIA : HISTORICAL - ANALYTICAL SURVEY

The preceding chapter has shown the contradictions obtaining in the Indian society, economy, and polity that sufficiently suggest the causes for dissent and protest. However, it should be noted that the historical experiences of the protest of the Indian people against the repressive and discriminatory policies of earlier rulers give us a meaningful clue to the understanding of the protest movements in India. The mode, mechanism, and path of protest in India has been partly influenced by historical legacies and partly on account of the prevailing conditions in contemporary Indian society.

Although protest movements have been witnessed throughout India's history, those acquired a new significance during British rule which provided a different source of legitimacy to the protest movements.¹ Several new avenues for claiming higher status opened up, and there was greater scope for the channelling of new aspirations. Thus, the socio-religious revivalist movements of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century and the launching of the liberation movement against the colonial rule of the British not only influenced the social and political outlook of the people but significantly added new dimensions to the form and pattern of protest and dissent. The Brahma Samaj, founded in 1825, the Prarthana Samaj, founded in 1867, the Arya Samaj in 1875 and the Theosophical Society in 1875 were all reformist protest movements which influenced the Hindus and also contributed to the growth of Indian nationalism by raising the pride of educated India's past traditions. The Brahma Samaj organized welfare work for the depressed classes under the leadership of Keshab Chandra Sen. The influence of the Brahma Samaj spread to Madras where a theistic society was started in 1864 under the name of Veda Samaj which was later changed to Brahma Samaj of South India.² In Bombay, the Prarthana Samaj worked actively for the depressed classes under the leadership of M.G. Ranade, R. Bhandarkar, and N.G. Chandravarkar. The Arja Samaj started working with the

depressed classes mainly with a view to preventing conversion to christianity and regaining converts to Hinduism. It launched the 'Suddhi' movement in 1891 under the leadership of Lala Munshi Ram, aimed at reconverting to the Arya Samaj the Christian and Muslim converts who were mostly from the lower castes.³ It also gave the new recruits from the lower castes and the depressed classes the right to wear the sacred thread - the symbol of high caste status. It gathered momentum in Panjab, Kashmir, parts of U.P. and Bihar. The Theosophical Society, established in Madras under the leadership of Ms. Annie Besant and the Ramkrishna Mission under the leadership of Swami Vivekananda worked for the weaker sections, especially in the field of education. All these early reform protest movements were basically inward looking and sought to abolish customs and mores that seemed contrary to the liberal ideas of the French Revolution.⁴

Among the Indian Muslims, there arose similar movements. The Wahabi Movement laid emphasis on the virtues of Islam and the oneness of God. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan (1817-1898) and Syed Amir Ali (1849-1928) wanted the Indian Muslims to accept the Western culture and to reconstruct Indian society in accordance with it. The Ahmadiya Movement founded by Ghulam Ahmed (1839-1908) was a protest movement against christianity and westernization.

However, all these movements which reflected religious and sectarian basis had some unfortunate repercussions arising from the fact that while the Hindus went back to their religious and historical past to assert their self-confidence, the Muslims went back to early Islam and the past history of Arabia. Among many other factors, this also contributed widening of the gulf between the Hindus and Muslims, because the Hindu religious reform movements and the Muslim reform movements tried to rely on two separate sources of spiritual and intellectual sustenance.⁵

The liberation movement in India reflected three strands of political protest. The first phase of the liberation movement (1885-1905) was led by the moderates who are often referred to as the liberals and owed their allegiance to western political ideas. Consequently, they abjured the methods of violence, force, agitation and bloodshed for the redressal of grievances of the people of India. These moderate

leaders believed in the peaceful presentation of their grievances to the government and in requesting the latter to redress them. "Petition and prayers" were the usual tools which they employed.⁶

The second phase of the liberation movement (1905-1919) saw the emergence of the extremists who challenged the leadership and political ideas of the moderates. This political radicalism was the outcome of the activities and frustration of earlier phase of the nationalist movement. The increasing authoritarianism and repression of the British Government in India aroused political awakening among the people. Unlike the moderates, the political agitation of the extremists brought larger number of people to the political field and it incalculated the spirit of sacrifice for the cause of the nation. Among the extremists, there arose three different groups - the terrorists believed in the philosophy of organized conspiracies and planned murder of Britishers and their agents. Another group called revolutionaries did not approve the activities of the terrorists and they believed that only a mass uprising would drive the British out of India. They advocated the use of the strikes, 'hartals', guerrilla warfare to be carried on with arms from foreign countries. Finally, the militant nationalists, unlike the terrorists and the revolutionaries, devised a three fold programme for effective political action. it comprised boycott, swadeshi and national education. They also believed in "passive resistance" i.e., non-violent, civil disobedience, and non-cooperation with the government to achieve the goal of independence.⁷

The third phase of the nationalist movement (1919-1947) was guided and directed according to the genius and philosophy of Gandhian technique of protest. Under the inspiring leadership of Gandhi, several movements were launched to pinpoint the urgency and need for granting independence to India. The non-cooperation movement of 1920-21 was one of the landmarks of Gandhian era which saw the use of peaceful protest on the part of the Indian people on a massive scale. The Civil Disobedience movement of 1930-31, the individual disobedience of 1940 and the Quit India Movement of 1942-45 exhibited different variety of protest against the British colonial government.⁸

The historical legacy of protest movements of pre-independent India left a deep imprint on the minds of Indian people. Obviously, therefore, Indian masses use

those very modes of protest which had been used by the nationalist leaders for raising their grievances against the British. However, an understanding of the historical analytical aspects of protest movements in India needs to be viewed from the survey of separate type of protest movements that took place in post-independent India. Broadly, these types may be peasant protests, ethnic protests, students' protests, women protests, working class protests, and secular political protests. Though all the types of protests are invariably bound to be politically oriented, the secular political protests, are those which aim exclusively to affect the political process and the political system.

PEASANT PROTESTS :

India has predominantly been an agrarian country. About seventy per cent of its population still depends on agriculture for their livelihood. They are differentiated in terms of their relationship with the ownership of land, such as supervisory agriculturists, owner-cultivators, share croppers, tenants, and landless labourers. In common parlance, they are known as the 'Kisans' and 'Kisan' is often translated as 'peasant' in English. However, the term 'peasant' is ambiguous and used differently by different authors or variously by the same author in different studies. Eric Wolf emphasised in 1955 that ownership of land was critical criteria for defining 'peasants'⁹ In 1966, he defined peasants as those who are 'rural cultivators' whose surpluses were transferred to a dominant group rulers.¹⁰ In 1970, his emphasis was neither on, ownership nor exploited surpluses, and 'peasants' were defined as "populations that are existentially involved in cultivation and make autonomous decisions regarding the process of cultivation".¹¹ The category is thus made to cover tenants and share-croppers as well as owner - operators as long as they are in a position to make the relevant decisions on how their crops are grown. Besides this various use of the concept peasant by Wolf, it is, on the one hand, used for those agriculturists who are homogeneous, with small holdings operated mainly by family labour, and on the other hand, it includes all those who depend on land including landless labourers, as well as supervisory, agriculturists¹² Andre Beteille feels that the term 'peasantry' is misleading, in the Indian context.¹³ In the conventional meaning of 'peasant', the agricultural labourers, small and marginal farmers are not properly

taken into consideration. Irfan Habib argues that the history of agricultural labourers remains part of peasant history.¹⁴ Under the circumstances, the term 'peasantry' is preferred to be used for the analysis of agrarian relationship in the subcontinent.¹⁵

Regarding the peasant protests in India, Barrington Moore Jr. questions the revolutionary potential of the Indian peasantry.¹⁶ To him, peasant rebellions in pre-modern India were relatively rare and completely ineffective and where modernization impoverished the peasants at least as much as in China and over as long a period of time. The Indian peasant, to Moore, is traditionally docile and passive.¹⁷ In the similar vein, Eric Stokes also finds that peasant protests look strangely absent in Indian history. This situation is attributed to the peculiar Indian social structure, i.e., the caste system and the village structure.¹⁸

Moore's contention regarding the 'passive' and 'docile' character of Indian peasants and Stokes' obstructive nature of the Indian social structure have been challenged by Kathleen Gough, A.R. Desai, D.N. Dhanagare, Ranajit Guha and others. Gough argues that peasant revolts have been common during the last two centuries in every state of present day India. She disagrees with Stokes regarding the obstructive role of caste in peasant uprisings and observes that a number of movements were led by lower caste Hindus; therefore it is an oversimplification to say that the caste system has seriously impeded peasant rebellion in times of trouble.¹⁹ Desai observes that "the Indian rural scene during the entire British period and thereafter has been bristling with protests, revolts and even largescale militant struggles involving hundreds of villages and lasting for years."²⁰ Guha is of the opinion that agrarian disturbances of different forms and scale were endemic throughout the first three quarters of the British rule, i.e., until the very end of the nineteenth century. According to him, there were no fewer than 110 known instances of revolts during the 117 years though forms of resistance varied.²¹ Dhanagare also argues that Moore's conclusion is not deduced from any systematic theory and as such, needs reexamination in the light of a more extensive survey of various peasant resistance movements and revolts in India.²²

Available literature indicates that the peasant protests have been widespread in both the post and pre-independence periods. The intensity and nature of the protests vary, and certain areas appear to have a strong tradition of peasant movements. Kathleen Gough observes : Bengal has been a hotbed of revolt, both rural and urban, from the earliest days of the British rule. Some districts in particular, such as Mymensingh, Dinajpur, Rangpur, and Pabna in Bangladesh and the Santhal regions of Bihar and West Bengal, figured repeatedly in peasant struggles and continue to do so. The tribal areas of Andhra Pradesh, and the state of Kerala, also have long traditions of revolt. Hill regions where tribal or other minorities retain a certain independence, ethnic unity, and tactical manoeuvrability, and where the terrain is suited to guerilla warfare, are of course especially favourable for peasant struggles, but these have also occurred in densely populated plains regions such as Thanjavur, where rack-renting, land hunger, landless labour and unemployment cause great suffering.²³ According to Andra Betelle, the areas with a larger number of agrarian revolts are predominantly rice-producing regions. These regions not only have a large proportion of agricultural labourers but land is also unequally divided among those who cultivate, either as tenants or owners.²⁴

An analysis of the peasant protest in India shows that the organizational development of the peasant protests was slow and as such, the landlord groups were able to influence the state legislation on agrarian reforms. Thus, Winer has rightly observed that "the success with which the landlord-groups have influenced state legislation calls attention to the weakness of peasant movements in India."²⁵

There were many peasant agitations in the nineteenth century - the famous Santhal and indigo revolts in Bengal, and others in the Punjab and Maharashtra - But none of these survived in the form of organized groups. In the early twentieth century, Gandhi and his supporters organised the peasants of Champaran, Bihar against the exactions of indigo planters in 1917; and in Gujarat, Gandhi led the famous Kaira Satyagraha against the realization of land revenue in 1918. In 1928, the Bardoli Satyagraha against the enactment of land revenue was organized by Sardar Patel. In fact, throughout the 1920's Congressmen penetrated the countryside to win peasant support for "Swaraj" - freedom, defined by Gandhi, in the broadest sense,

freedom from deprivation as well as freedom from the British raj. At the Lucknow session of the Congress, an agrarian programme was adopted demanding removal of British imperialist exploitation, a thorough change of the land systems and a recognition by the State of its duty to provide work for the unemployed rural masses.

In the same year, a group of congressmen, some members of the communist section, some from the newly formed Congress Socialist Party, and some of Gandhian persuasion, formed the all India Kishan Congress. Many sections of the Congress Party criticised this attempt to form a peasant movement distinct from the Congress organization. Their uneasiness grew into antagonism in some states when the Kisan Congress became critical of the agrarian policies of the new Congress-controlled state governments. In 1937, the Kisan Congress dropped the word "Congress", renamed itself the All India Kishan Sabha, and adopted the Red Flag, then the symbol of all leftist groups in India.

In his presidential address before an All India Kishan Sabha national convention in 1939, Acharya Narendra Dev explained why a separate Kisan group was necessary, even though the Congress membership, was predominantly peasant and many of the peasants demands had been incorporated into the Congress agrarian programme of Faizpur and the Economic Rights Resolution of Karachi. Congress was, he argued, a multiclass organization within which the peasants were not fully able to exert their influence; many Congress resolutions could not be implemented because Zamindars controlled parts of the Congress organisation. Thus, a separate Kisan Organization could exert greater pressure on the Congress to adopt and carry out the demands of the peasants.²⁶

The new Kisan organization was a federation of state peasant movements the largest of which were in Bihar, Andhra, Panjab and United Provinces. In both Panjab and Bihar, the Kisan Sabha launched mass movements against the government - in Panjab, it opposed a new system of tax assessment; in Bihar, it pressed the government to abolish the Zamindari System, reduce rents, pass new tenancy legislation, place a moratorium on debts, and guarantee higher prices for crops.²⁷

However, during the Second World War itself, the Kisan Sabha virtually became the frontal organization of the Communist Party of India. With the achievement of independence, the Communist Party launched an insurrectionary movement to overthrow the newly independent government. As such, the Communist Party was banned in several states; so also the Kisan Sabha. The ban continued until 1950-51.

However, the Kisan Sabha, the leading leftist organization, believed that the interests of the agricultural labourers and the kisans were the same. This belief was reflected in the Telengana and Tebhaga movements launched by the Communist Party of India. In both these movements rich as well as poor peasants were mobilized to capture state power though one class was more active than the other.²⁸

In the Naxalite movement in West Bengal in 1968-1969, the participants ran from rich peasants to agricultural labourers.²⁹ Besides, the agrarian mobilization and protests organized by Charan Singh, the former Prime Minister of India, Mahendra Singh Tikayat and Ajit Singh's recently formed Bharatiya Kisan Kamgar Party in Northern India; Sharad Joshi in western India, and the left parties in eastern India are worth-mentioning. However, it should be noted that even though there has been debate over ticklish ideological issues³⁰ regarding the nature of the leadership pattern, the agrarian protests organized and launched by the left political parties had been significantly influential in the past, even to the extent of challenging the base of the socio-economic and political system (the Naxalbari Movement), and these protests are influential in contemporary India though their operations are limited to some pockets of the country. The peasant organizations of the left political parties, particularly those of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and the Communist Party of India (Marxist Leninist) are significantly operating in West Bengal, Kerala, Tripura, Andhra Pradesh and Bihar.

ETHNIC PROTESTS :

India is a plural society with a large number of ethnic categories. This plural character of Indian society is also characterised by socio-economic inequality. Given this, it is obvious that Indian society will confront various types of protests on ethnic

lines and identities. The socio-economic inequality of the sections of the society led them search for separate identity and assert on these perceived separate identities. And this assertion on ethnic identities has culminated in the regional secessionist movements threatening the country's unity and integrity. Movements in the North East, the Jharkhand movement, the Gorkhaland movement, the Kamtapur movement and Khalistan movement are the cases of protests on ethnic considerations.

NORTH - EAST :

North-East India, as we find it today, is essentially creation of the British. Assam was known as Praghayotisha in ancient times. The Ahoms who came from Burma about the years 1226 established themselves firmly in upper Assam. By 1750 AD they conquered the whole of the Brahmaputra valley. However, the decline of the Ahom rule began with the Maomari rising in 1769. Later on, the Burmese invaded Assam. The British drove out the Burmese and concluded the Treaty of Yandavoo on February 24, 1826 by which the whole of Assam came under the British rule.

Cachar was an independent State. After the expulsion of the Burmese, the British annexed it to Assam, and in 1853 the whole of Cachar was transferred to the Dacca division and retransferred to Assam in 1874. The Jaintia territory was also annexed by the British and added to Assam. In 1822, the British annexed the Garo Hills. Arunachal Pradesh inhabited by the tribes, was completely isolated from the rest of the country. The British annexed it gradually and constituted it into North Eastern Frontier Agency. The British also occupied the Khasi, Jaintia and Naga hills gradually. Only Manipur and Tripura were princely states during the British rule.

Colonial rulers had experimented with different administrative arrangements in the North Eastern region. The basic objective was to create a permanent chasm between the different ethnic groups so that they could not offer organized resistance against the colonial rulers. In the process, the British also divided east of the tribes into splinters. Thus the Nagas were divided and dispersed into Assam, Manipur, and Burma; Mizos into Manipur, Burma. The Khasis, Garos and the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh met the same fate. In fine, their political objective was regime

maintenance and regime sustenance, the economic objective was to extract surplus in the interest of the colonial rulers. And they were successful in their primary mission.

After independence, the Constituent Assembly constituted a sub-committee under the chairmanship of G.N.Bardoloi to report on the North Eastern Frontier Areas of Assam and the tribal and excluded areas. The Bardoloi Committee recommended for the setting up of the administration of the hill areas based on the concept of regional autonomy in all matters affecting their customs, laws of inheritance etc. This pattern of administration took shape in the form of the Sixth Schedule. Under this Schedule six autonomous districts were created in Assam - United Khasi and Jaintia Hills, Garo Hills, Lushai Hills, Naga Hills, North Cachar Hills, and Mikir Hills. There was to be a District Council for each autonomous district.

The district councils which were set up to democratize the administration of the hill people failed to live upto the expectations. The state bureaucracy looked at them as subordinate organs of the state while the tribals looked upon them as symbols of supra tribal identity. In fact, the district councils which were subservient to Assam became source of growing distrust among the tribal people against the Assam administration. Some of the tribal people even demanded the creation of a hill state comprising the autonomous districts of Assam. In 1955 the Aizal Conference of the Khasi and Jaintia hills, Garo hills, Mikir hills and the Mizo hills resolved to demand a separate state. The matter was examined by the State Reorganization Commission in 1955 which rejected the demand. Then came the Pataskar Commission in 1965 recommending the appointment of a minister for the hill areas and the Ashok Mehta Committee which felt that the federal structure should not be the basis of reorganization of Assam. The hill leaders were unwilling to accept anything short of autonomous state. However, the Government of India had to accept the demand of an autonomous state within the state of Assam comprising the autonomous Khasi hills, Garo hills and the Jaintia hills. The relevant legislation had provided for an advisory council to be called North Eastern Council. The autonomous State of Meghalaya was inaugurated in 1970. The Mizo hills and NEFA were made union territory and Manipur and Tripoura became full fledged states in 1972. The Naga problem however could not be solved so easily as it had many dimensions and ramifications.

It is obvious that the colonial administrative system was adopted after independence with minor modifications without taking into consideration that the colonial administrative system was designed to create a chasm between the plains and the hillsmen with a view to carrying on uninterrupted colonial rule and exploitation. As a result of growing movements and pressures, autonomous states were created but no attempts were made to take care of the problems of the states. The creation of new states raised the hopes of the nationalities. But a highly centralized political system with a very powerful centre stood in the way of fulfilment of their dreams. Added to it was the capitalist model of development which generated unevenness in the development process.³¹ This model of development strengthened the sense of deprivation. And as a result of these, insurgency engulfed the entire North East leaving a direct threat to the unity and integrity of the country.

Thus, in the case of the Assam movement, though some scholars believe that the movement is for maintaining the basic ethnic character of the people of that province either by dispersal or disenfranchisement or by another boundary reorganisation, an indepth analysis of the movement shows that in the context of a stagnated economy, incessant flow of immigrants is viewed as a threat by the Assamese, squeezed as they were between the extra-regional bourgeoisie and immigrants.³² Again, regionalism in the North East is essentially a middle class phenomenon. It was led by the middle class people who suffer under a sense of economic deprivation, as in a highly competitive labour market they find middle class position already occupied by the migrants or their descendants. It makes them resentful against the migrant population. Thus, it is primarily a protectionist movement. The middle class people want protective privileges by imposing restrictions on the migrant population. At the same time, they demand reorganization of the distribution of state resources. It is essentially a grievance against the functioning of the state apparatus.

JHARKHAND :

In India, there has been a large number of tribal movements to protest against oppression and exploitation of their distinct culture, value, and way of life.

Among these, the movement of the tribals for a separate Jharkhand state has acquired the dubious distinction of being one of the oldest movements in the country. Since the formation of the Chhotanagpur Unnati Samaj in 1920 to the emergence of a so-called United Jharkhand Party in the early 90's, for the past seventy years the tribals of Chhotanagpur and Santhal Parganas have been struggling for separate statehood within the Indian Union. Today, the Jharkhand movement is divided into several groups and parties and has to struggle hard to maintain its distinct ideology and organizational identity. Such a state of affairs within the movement has often been blamed on the character of the tribal leadership, the divide and rule policy of the government, the weak pan tribal consciousness etc.

However, the present movement of the tribals of the South - Central part of the country for a separate state of Jharkhand is in very many ways a continuation and extension of their heroic tradition of struggle against the British imperialism and local feudalism. A series of tribal revolts and protests marked the Jharkhand history in the 18th and 19th centuries - revolt of Tilka Majhi (1780), the Kol revolt (1831), the Santhal hul (1855) and the Birsa revolt (1900), to mention only the very well known ones. It must be mentioned however that even prior to the advent of the British, the Zamindars and the petty rajas of the area tried hard but failed to subdue the tribals.³³ In fine, Jharkhand has remained a battlefield of uprisings, revolts and rebellions for more than 300 years against the zamindars, moneylenders, 'dikus' (outsiders), exploiters and the British.³⁴ Thus, prior to Independence, the tribal movements had two distinct features: i) mobilization of the masses against the appropriation of native resources such as forests and minerals, and ii) social and cultural upliftment of the advasis through various organizations such as Unnati Samaj (1912), Adivasi Mahasabha³⁵ (1938).

The progressive erosion of the tribal ways of life, values of communal and cooperative systems, the break up of the land systems and land alienation on the one hand and the imposition of the values and dominance of the non-tribals in collaboration with the British power, provoked the tribals into another series of protests. This resulted in the acceptance by the British of the distinct culture, life style and economic system, and administrative arrangements were accordingly made granting

the tribals a large measure of internal autonomy and protection through a series of measures such as Regulation XIII of 1833 applicable to Chhotanagpur and Act 27 of 1855 applicable to Santhal Parganas. Following independence, however, the substance of the tribal autonomy was more or less eroded, keeping only its shadowy forms through the schedules V and VI of the constitution.³⁶

The two main objectives set out for the Advasi Mahasabha, namely, i) statehood for the Jharkhand region, and ii) protection of the Advasis from the 'dikus'(aliens) could be realised by vocalizing them politically as envisaged by Jaipal Singh. These objectives were clearly indicative of the Jharkhandi sub-nationality. Jaipal Singh therefore, decided to form the Jharkhand Party in 1950 replacing the Adivasi Mahasabha. Concretisation of the Jharkhandi identity and consciousness has become evident more with the upstaging of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), Jharkhand coordination Committee (JCC) and All Jharkhand Students' Union (AJSU). Thus, today, Jharkhand is not merely a geographic region, it is a land of depressed people, it is a mass of destitutes. To Nirmal Sengupta, 'Jharkhand is developing; but not the Jharkhandis. Thus, the identity is not to be seen in terms of its conventional meaning, namely homogeneity of ethnicity, language, caste religion etc. In the Jharkhand region, now the language spoken by the oppressed and the exploited is the basis of their identity formation.'³⁷

On the question of the 'Sons of the Soil', one notices contradictions. Technically, those who have received education for one or two years or whose parents have served in the state could be considered as 'sons of the soil'. But those who are born and have lived for generations do not become 'Sons of the Soil' in the technical sense as they neither have the privilege of going to school or college nor their parents have been in employment of the government. Hence, they remain deprived of the privileged jobs and positions which in fact go to 40% of those people who have settled in the Jharkhand region - the fortunate north Biharis. Precisely due to this reason bifurcation of the Santhal Parganas district into three districts was opposed by the adivasis as it would benefit only the non-adivasis. Similarly, opening of new developmental programmes and projects was resisted fearing that its dividend would be harvested by the outsiders.³⁸

Thus, the tribal movement in Jharkhand as with all other tribal movements is a holistic movement in protest against the totality of non-tribals intrusion and dominance at all levels of life. The movement specifically was and is against non-tribal dominance which is becoming more and more articulate and aggressive. The great revolts of the past highlighted this protest in the areas of autonomy, protection of land, and of honour of their woman; but submerged within these is the persistent cry against the exploitative system into which they were increasingly being drawn. It is precisely this all embracing quality of tribal protest as well as non-tribal intrusion that has kept the movement alive and continues to evoke sympathetic chords in the hearts of the tribal masses even when the movement often fell into the hands of the degenerate leadership.³⁹ In other words, the Jharkhand movement was and continues to be a struggle to resist the imposition of the ideology and dominance of the non-tribal communities and the ruling structure created by them.

PANJAB :

The protest organised by the Sikhs in Panjab over the decades reflects the potential of ethnic and religious considerations for widespread mobilization. Paul Brass has rightly observed that the sikh political movement demonstrates that when an ethnic group turns to politics to achieve group demands, the political movement takes a life of its own to such an extent that political organizations may shape communal identities as well as be shaped by them.⁴⁰ The doctrine of Sikh nationhood, which figures so prominently in the Sikh agitational protests, implies a repudiation of Panjabi nationality based on territory, language and culture.

Whereas the present day assertion of the Sikh Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) and the Akali leaders that 'Sikhs are a nation and the consequent demand for a sect determined status for the sikhs naturally generates heat, apprehensions, and confusion, it seems worthwhile to take note of those political aspirations of the community which spring from a widespread sense of group identity. During the last one century the subjective consciousness of identity with objective marks of differentiation has been vigorously developed giving to the community a sense of distinctive heritage and destiny. Until 1880s "the Sikhs regarded themselves

and were regarded by everybody else as an integral part of the Hindus.⁴¹ The Sikh Sabha movement - that was started during that decade by a small section of Sikh landed gentry, theologians and the emerging urban middle class aimed at protecting the Sikhs from their absorption in Hinduism. Initial encouragement for that purpose came from the British historians of Sikhs, Cunningham and Macauliffe, as also from the British military authorities.⁴² Subsequently this communal identity took shape in the form of chief Khalsa Dewan and the Akali Dal. The inauguration in 1920s of the Gurdwara Reform movement further contributed to the sharpening of this separate identity. Brass has observed that Sikh historians and politicians got engaged in symbol selection from the past, adapting those which would best support contemporary self-consciousness, rejecting those which would not.⁴³

But the religious cleavage in Panjab was "like the visible part of the iceberg, a mere facade" for social and economic cleavages. The basic cleavages were between the agriculturists and non-agriculturists, feudal landed interests and incipient capitalists, which further coincided with rural vs. urban, urban caste Hindus vs. rural dominant castes; and finally weak class conflict between the landlords and the tenants, but a stronger conflict between the peasants and finance capitalists.⁴⁴ Party alignments among the Sikhs proceeded to economic interests. Yet in the given environmental milieu communal identity retained a very powerful mobilisatory potential.

Before 1947, Sikhs were a minority in Panjab. In order to safeguard sikh interests the Akalis thus submitted a memorandum to the Minorities Sub-committee of the Constituent Assembly demanding some statutory rights. These included : i) 50% seats in the Panjab Assembly for the Sikhs, ii) 5% seats in the central legislature; iii) communal representation of the Sikhs. The demands were rejected. Then the Akalis refashioned their demands as a cry for Panjabi Suba which was made a part of agitational politics.

After the death of Chief Minister Pratap Singh Kairon in a terrorist attack class alliances within Panjab politics started to change. This process of change was aggregated for two reasons : First, Green Revolution changed the agricultural scenerio

of rural Panjab, as a result of which a new class of rich peasants emerged with a more articulate political aims and a more aggressive class attitude. They had marketable agricultural surplus in their hands. But in spite of this economic development, unemployment among the youth of the comparatively low income peasant family grew mainly because of the fall of military recruitment. Secondly, religion continued to constitute an integral part of the Sikh-psyche. 'Raj Karega Khalsa' was a politico-religious chant, which Sikhs dutifully recite in their religious congregations. Thus, the efforts of the Akalis to mobilize the Sikh population under the slogan of a theocratic state gradually made an impact on the growing vested interests, and on unemployed little educated rural youth.⁴⁵ On the other hand, during this period, Jan Sangh and later the Bharatiya Janata Party became a potential contender of Congress Hindu Vote bank. Under the circumstances, Congress started playing the communal card. This was the background of the emergence of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala, as the leader of the most orthodox, backward looking, reactionary but economically prosperous section of the Sikh peasantry, who played with both the Congress and the Akalis with equal command the result of whose growing influence was the development of the demand of Khalistan.⁴⁶

GORKHALAND :

Ethnic movements in Darjeeling, the centre of Gorkhaland Movement, have a long history. But the history is not of a unilineal progress of these movements primarily because the people of Darjeeling were experiencing with this or that demand, this or that strategy. What is most notable of their long history is that they were absolutely non-violent until mid 1986.⁴⁷

In 1907, the first ever demand for "Separate administrative set up" for the district of Darjeeling was placed before the Government by the leaders of the Hill people (Lepchas, Bhutias and Nepalis) The demand is thought of arisen due to the widespread idea of reforms and the anti-partition wave in Bengal. However, some other factors may be attributed to the root of the demand such as the Bengali hegemony and the reluctance on the part of the British to concede to the demand for their strategic interests.⁴⁸ On November 8, 1917, the representatives of the Darjeeling

District submitted a memorandum to the Chief Secretary, Government of Bengal, demanding 'creation of a separate unit' comprising of Darjeeling district and the Dooars areas of Jalpaiguri district. They also suggested to the Government to consider the creation of a "North-Eastern Frontier Province (NEFP)" consisting of the district of Darjeeling, Dooars, Assam, and Arunachal Pradesh. The demand for the separate unit was reiterated in their memorandum to the Simon Commission in 1929, which, however, did not materialise. The Hill Men's Association (born sometime after 1917 but before 1919) in collaboration with other local associations submitted a memorandum in 1930 to Sir Samuel Hoare demanding exclusion from Bengal, reiterating for an "independent administrative unit". The Darjeeling District Committee of the CPI through a memorandum to Jawaharlal Nehru in 1947 demanded Gorkhastan for the Gorkhas which would comprise the present Nepal and Darjeeling district to form an independent nation. But in 1954 the CPI leaders revised their stand and spoke in terms of regional autonomy for the Darjeeling hills, which was jointly approved by the Congress, the CPI, and the All India Gorkha League (AIGL) leaders and was placed before Nehru on his visit to Darjeeling.

Besides, the Nepali Bhasha movement had its impact on the Gorkhaland movement. The Nepali Bhasha Movement can be categorised into three tentative phases. The first phase beginning in the early 20s was characterized by the demand for introduction of "Nepali" as a medium of instruction. The second phase beginning in 1953 clamoured for recognition of "Nepali" as an official language in Darjeeling. The demand for its inclusion in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution was also raised in this phase but it remained dormant. The third phase began in 1972 and was wholly concerned with the demand for its constitutional recognition.

More systematic demand for separate statehood for the district of Darjeeling and the adjoining Dooars areas of Jalpaiguri appeared after the appearance of the Pranta Parishad in April, 1980 and the Gorkha National Liberation Front in July, 1980. The Swatantra Manch, which was established in May, 1985 also strongly supported this demand. Each of these three organizations had other demands too but carving out a state from West Bengal was by all means the most important of them.

The movement was peaceful and democratic in nature for many years. The AIGL leaders joined hands with the Congress, the CPI and CPI(M) at different points of time with the hope that this would help them achieve their goal. Even the GNLF followed the same path until such a situation developed from ever increasing dissatisfaction and frustration that Subhas Ghising appeared on the scene, adopted the strategy of violence - deviating from the line drawn by his predecessors. That Ghising could gain something which his predecessors could not was due to different strategy that he used.⁴⁹

KAMTAPUR :

The Northern part of West Bengal, particularly the districts of Coochbehar and Jalpaiguri, is witnessing a movement since the 1980s though not in an organized and mobilised way. The objectives of this movement range from mere assertion of cultural identity based on language and heritage to a separate state 'Kamtapur'. The root of this movement may be traced to the movement launched by Thakur Panchanan, the ideological - spiritual saint of the Rajbangshis of this region. His basic objective was to bring up the Rajbangshis who were considered to be in the lower strata of the Hindu caste hierarchy by institutionalising the use of sacred thread for them. Later, for retaining their separate cultural identity mainly through the 'Kamtapuri' language - the colloquial language of the Rajbangshis in the region - came the All Kamtapur Students Union (AKSU). The operation of the AKSU is, however, limited to specific pockets and among the younger generation of the folk. The Kamtapur Peoples Party which emerged in late 1980s is somewhat radical and organizing the people for a separate state of Kamtapur, comprising the districts of Coochbehar, Jalpaiguri, Uttar Dinajpur, Dakshin Dinajpur and parts of Malda. As such, they are gaining some strength in some pockets of the districts.

CASTES :

One of the important features of backward caste movements in India is the opposition, conflict and protest that marks the relationship of the lower castes with the upper castes. The backward caste generally occupy a lower status position in

society, characterised by social and ritual disadvantages, discriminations and disabilities of several kinds, and of different degrees which go under the general term of relative deprivation.

However, all the backward castes do not enjoy a uniform socio-economic status. In his study on caste movements, M.S.A. Rao divides non-upper castes into three categories. The upper most category of the backward castes consists mostly of landowners. There are several such castes in different parts of the country, such as the Jat, the Ahir, the Gujjar in Panjab, the Maratha in Maharashtra, the Vellata in Tamil nadu, the Kamma, the Kapu and the Reddi in Andhra Pradesh, the Vokkaliga and the Bant and Lingayats in Karnataka. Ranking below them are tenant cultivators, artisans and other service castes. They include the Ahir and kahar in Bihar, the Koli in Gujrat and the Vaddar in South India. They are considered caste Hindus, above the pollution line. At the bottom are the untouchable castes who are designated scheduled castes under the constitution of India.⁵⁰

Backward caste movements in India may be classified into four broad types on the basis of structural cleavages and manifest conflicts.⁵¹ The first type is that of the movements led by upper non-Brahman castes such as the Vellata, the Reddi, and the Kammah of Tamil Nadu, the Vokkaliga and the Lingayat in Karnataka, and the Maratha of Maharashtra. Ramaswamy Naikar of Tamil Nadu launched the 'Self-Respect' movement in Madras in the late 1920s to perform marriage ceremonies without Brahmin priests. The non-Brahmin movements in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu raised cultural issues. The leaders of non-Brahmin movements attacked caste and condemned it as a tool of Brahmin oppression.⁵² The second type of the backward caste movement hinges on the cleavages within the non-Brahmin castes, mainly led by the intermediate and low castes such as the Ahir and the Kurmi in Bihar the Nania in Panjab, the Koli in Gujarat, and the Mali in Maharashtra. The movement by the depressed classes or untouchables against and other backward castes are the third type of backward caste movements. The fourth type is that of the tribal movements.

The non-Brahmin movement in Maharashtra included both an elite based conservative trend and more genuine mass-based radicalism. It attained conservative goals but radical goals have not been attained. "The Maharashtrian Brahman intelligentsia", observes Gail Omvedt "though still dominant in educational and cultural institutions, has been swept from political power by a rich peasant non-brahman elite, with strong roots in villages and with an institutional basis in rural cooperatives and educational societies."⁵³ Rudolph and Rudolph consider the backward castes of Northern, Western, and upper Southern States "bullock Capitalists". The mobilisation of bullock capitalists in the 60s and 70s as an economic class has been reinforced by the simultaneous mobilization as a status order of the other backward classes, a euphemism for castes who by their own and states' reckoning are socially "depressed" or "backward". This layering of status and class interest enhances the political significance of both.⁵⁴

As a first step to fulfill their aspiration to rise in the caste hierarchy and resist oppression, the backward castes followed the path of Sanskritization, adopting the rituals and the life style of the upper castes. They invented legends about their ancestors and as such, demanded higher social status. However, the backward castes rarely resorted to large scale direct action for asserting their demands till very recently as is found in Bihar where the backward castes under the umbrella of Marxist - Leninist - Maoist extremism often resort to violence and direct action against the 'Ranabir Sena', an upper caste private army, constituted by the upper castes to counter and oppress the backward castes. Thus, many of them undertook social reform which generally did not involve confrontation with the higher castes, though in few cases, social reform did lead to clashes with the higher castes. They asserted their demands for higher social status by submitting memoranda and petitions to the Census Commissioners. The non-Brahmins of South India formed a political party to capture political power as did B.R.Ambedkar in Maharashtra. The Bahujan Samaj Party of Kansiram is also an example of this sort of assertion. Many others took part in election campaigns on a massive scale in order to get candidates of their castes elected. In this sense, their mobilization has rarely led to struggle.

WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS :

Women's resistance to male domination is the product of Western education. British Women took the initiative in forming organizations and defining their objectives. However, few scholars and activists have begun to raise issues relevant to the Indian context. Liddle and Joshi feel that the nature of male dominance is different in India from that in Western Society, therefore the demands and resistance of women against males are also different.⁵⁵ They argue, ideologically, cultural imperialism has introduced the notion of female inferiority which had no part in Indian culture, where female power and its containment was stressed. Although females were segregated in the upper castes into the domestic sphere, this separation did not imply an inferior evaluation of the domestic, since that area was crucial to the maintenance of caste purity.⁵⁶

However, Women's movements are generally classified into two types : a) Women's equality movements; and b) Women's liberation movements.⁵⁷ The former may not directly challenge the existing economic or political or family structure, but rather aim at attaining an equal place for women in it, and at abolishing the most open remnants of feudal patriarchy, whereas the women's liberation movements directly challenge the sexual division of labour itself. Jana Everett classifies Women's movements on the basis of two different ideologies of feminism. They are 'Corporate Feminism' claiming a larger role in politics for women on the ground that they have a special contribution to make as women, and 'Liberal Feminism' claiming that the rights of men should be extended to women on the grounds that women are equal to men and thus should have the same rights.⁵⁸

It is believed that women's movements began in India as a part of the social reform movement in the 19th century. Social reformers like Rammohan Roy, Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar, Mahadev Govind Ranade, Behramji Malbari, raised their voices against the prevailing religious and social customs subjugating women. Their influence encouraged the British government to enact certain laws against the Sati system, permitting women to remarry, abolishing the custom of child marriage etc.

Efforts were also made to spread education among girls. Mahatma Gandhi made efforts to bring women out of their kitchens. However, the role of Gandhi in raising the Status of women has been interpreted differently by scholars. Vina Majumdar⁵⁹ and Devaki Jain⁶⁰ see Gandhi as a great liberator who adopted a revolutionary approach in raising the status of women while Madhu Kishwar,⁶¹ Kalpana Shah⁶² and Sujata patel⁶³ are the critics.

Women's organizations such as the Women's Indian Association and the All India Women's Conference (AIWC) came into existence in the 1920s to spread education among women. However, Kalpana Shah argues that the role of the AIWC in the struggle for the liberation of women is negative. In fact, through its programmes the Conference strengthened the traditional role of a woman as a wife, housekeeper and mother. Such women organizations have become instruments in spreading an ideology which assigns inferior role to women. They strengthen revivalist values which are oppressive to women.⁶⁴ Jana Everett identifies five factors which have shaped such reformist Indian Women's movements. These are : i) the hierarchical caste system; ii) the Hindu religion; iii) the joint family system; iv) Islamic rule; and v) British colonialism.⁶⁵ Besides, the 'Purdah' System kept women secluded from men and discouraged them from public participation. It, therefore, gave women a certain sense of solidarity. This ideological implication of purdah "would tend to shape the goals of early women's movement leaders toward corporate ideals (improving women's performance of traditional female roles) and away from liberal ideals (achieving identical rights for men and women)."⁶⁶

Histories of various movements, such as, the freedom movement, the peasant movement, the tribal movement, the student movement, discuss the role and the participation of women in these struggles. But most of the studies do not examine the women's role in the movements specifically. It is the assumption that these movements are led and dominated by males and in which women have either no role or an insignificant one. This is a blatant misrecognition of the role of women in these movements. Govind Kelkar argues that "Women have had a distinctive active role in the area of social and political movement that has not been fully described and explained."⁶⁷

However, such conclusions are arrived at on the basis of stray instances rather than being based on adequate evidence. Kelkar herself observes that women were mobilised in the freedom movement because they were suited to carry out the non-violent struggle. She asserts that women's role in the freedom movement was that of the "helpers" rather than that of comrades.⁶⁸ Rajani Alexander observes that "Women's participation in the Independence movement took diverse forms and was not always organized and orchestrated political protests....."⁶⁹

Some scholars⁷⁰ show that women were an integral part of the various tribal movements in the 19th century in Bihar and Maharashtra. They used weapons skilfully. Some of them were arrested, beaten, molested and imprisoned by the police. Manoshi Mitra observes that all the contemporary accounts help to demonstrate the role played by women in the struggle, both in militant attacks and confrontations with the authorities when they were not behind others in wielding the traditional weapons with skill and courage, as well as in maintaining lines of supplies to the rebels in their hidden fortresses.⁷¹ Women also participated actively in large numbers in the Telengana, Tebhaga, Naxalite land grab and such other movements. Sunil Sen focusses his study on women's active participation in various peasant movements from the twenties to the seventies in West Bengal.⁷² Peter Custers focusses his study on women's role in the Tebhaga movement and shows how the women from the labouring and poor peasant classes provided effective leadership.⁷³ Shetkari Sangathana had also mobilized women in farmers agitations.⁷⁴ Similarly, women also played a leading militant role in the Chipko movement resisting the forest contractors' cutting of trees.⁷⁴ In fact, women never had any contact with government officials or other outsiders and had no model of interaction with them. They only understood that felling of trees is harmful for their well being and they simply acted according to their convictions.⁷⁵ In the course of the Bodha Gaya struggle of the tenants and labourers against absentee landlords, women asserted their rights on the land. They insisted that land should be given in women's names and in some villages they succeeded in realizing their demands.⁷⁶

Women in India also played significant role and participated in the communist led movement and they are still an organized force to be reckoned with. In Kerala,

women participated on a large scale in the 1938 strikes and formed the base of a crucial communication network.⁷⁷ Later on, the women workers launched struggles on issues such as maternity benefit and retrenchment of women workers and participated in the armed struggle led by the Communist Party in the late 1940s.⁷⁸ Thus, the role of the Kisan Sabha and the Communist Party in mobilizing women in various peasant struggles is worth mentioning. Renu Chakravarty, a communist leader who herself participated in several struggles highlights the role played by the communists in mobilizing women in various movements. According to her, the communist women identified with the toiling masses of women and gave a new turn and outlook to entire women's movement.⁷⁹ However, other scholars, though accepting that the Communist Party did play an important role in women's mobilization, are critical in that it did not play the role that was expected of it. Indra Munshi Saldanha argues that "women were not involved by the Kisan Sabha in the struggle in the same way or to the same extent as their male counterparts even in the most intensive phase of the struggle. The militancy, commitment and ingenuity of women, of which there was ample proof, were neither fully absorbed nor developed, and women were, by and large, assigned a mere "supportive role".⁸⁰ Taking Kerala as the reference state, Kannan observes, "In varying degrees, the absence of any real participation by women at all levels of leadership has continued to this day. While their "help" was actively sought and secured during the early stages of mobilization and organization, they were not incorporated into the important levels of leadership and decision-making."⁸¹

Women's organizations also raise issues affecting them as women. They fight around issues such as atrocities against women in the form of rape, sati, alcoholism and wife-beating, harrassment on the streets and public transports, dowry harrassment, murder, violence in the family, common civil rode, problems of working women, trafficking on women, oppression and exploitation of women belonging to 'dalit' and minority communities, problems of women in slums, communalism, obscene posters, problems of maid servants, the system of temple prostitution, superstition and witchcraft, deforestation etc. The Mahila Samity in West Bengal - the frontal organization of the CPI(M) , - is doing significantly influential work in organizing and mobilizing women along the common issues confronted by the women.

POLITICAL PROTESTS :

In the mid 1970s, there was an unprecedented turmoil in the history of post-Independence India. The deepening economic crises combined with weakening legitimacy of political institutions produced a situation in which disturbances, and even sporadic rioting, in several parts of the country became not uncommon. This had its culmination in Gujarat and Bihar. The Gujarat agitation of January-March 1974 ended in the dissolution of the State Assembly - the specific goal of the agitation. In Bihar, the agitation began in March 1974 and spilled over to 1975. Unlike the Gujarat agitation, Bihar agitation had an organization, with a central guiding authority of Bihar Chhatra Sangharsh Samity, planned programmes, a cadre and the leadership of Jayaprakash Narayan. These two agitations had far reaching consequences for Indian politics. They had raised certain basic questions regarding the political system and the type of future Indian society.

The protest movement and the consequent political upheaval that shook Gujarat for full two months in 1974 was an unprecedented phenomenon in the history of India after Independence. The intensity of the movement was so widespread that no town in the state remained untouched by the upsurge and tensions even prevailed in some parts of the countryside. Spiralling prices and scarcity of essential commodities and inadequacy of basic amenities in urban areas provided the breeding ground for the unprecedented upsurge in Gujarat. Discontent against the government was deep and widespread. This had its roots in the developments in early seventies. Since the beginning of the seventies, hopes among the urban and rural poor in Gujarat had been aroused. On the other hand, big businessmen and rich peasants became alarmed by the 'Garibi Hatao' slogan of the Congress. They organized themselves and pressurized the government to look after their interests.⁸² The party in power, dominated by the rich, succumbed to their pressures, both at the policy and implementation levels. Artificial scarcity, black-marketing and rising prices were the results. Given this state of affairs, people in general, and the middle class in particular, had increasingly felt that they were powerless and were being alienated from the political system.

Under the circumstances, students, one of the more organized sections of the middle class, spearheaded the agitation. In Ahmedabad, it had begun with the formation of the Yuvak Lagni Samiti, which was later transformed into the Navanirman Yuvak Samiti (NYS). As the agitation gained momentum particularly after Chiman Bhai Patel's resignation as the Chief Minister, such Samitis proliferated throughout the state. Several other organizations such as the Gujarat Students Circle in Ahmedabad, Study and Struggle Alliance in Boroda, Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad, and Tarun Shanti Sena of Sarvodaya Mandal also took an active part in the agitation. However, each Samiti and organization was independent of the city level NYS or Yuvak Sangram Samiti, and there was no coordination among them.

Observation of the Gujarat agitation shows that the agitation began on the issues of price rise and scarcity, but succeeded under the shrewd guidance of organized interest groups and parties in ousting Chiman Patel and dissolving the State Assembly. However, it also shows that though the Students had a sense of purpose and direction, they lacked organization and cadre. They were also confused about their immediate and future programmes. Under the influence of the radical leaders, the Navniram and other Samities tried in the beginning to link up their problems with those of the larger society. But because of their ad hoc approach, lack of organization and direction they merely became the instruments of organized groups; they lost track of their own objectives. Thus, the Student agitation in Gujarat suggests that "Students can overthrow a government and yet be unable to become an independent force for political change."⁸³

The Bihar movement began after March 18, 1974, but it was only a culmination of certain developments in different parts of rural and urban Bihar. Agrarian tensions had been mounting since the late sixties. In the year 1970, there were 649 agrarian agitations, seven times more than in the previous year.⁸⁴ The Naxalites and other Left political parties were mobilizing poor peasants and landless labourers against the landlords; and clashes between them were frequent. In the towns, teachers, government employees, and other sections of the vocal urban middle class raised their voice against sky-touched prices and increasing hardships. The imposition of professional tax in 1973 added fuel to the fire. The opposition parties and trade

unions formed an organization known as 'Bihar Rajya Mahgai Abhab Peshakar Virodhi Mazdur wa Karmachari Sangharsh Samity (the Bihar State Struggle Committee of labourers and Employees to oppose price rise and professional tax) to launch a struggle under the dominant influence of the CPI and other Left parties. Simultaneously student agitation relating to amenities on campuses, reduction in fees, concession in Cinema tickets etc. erupted in Patna and other towns. Meanwhile, the leaders of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) of Bihar were planning to launch a state-wide agitation that would exclude the communists. For the purpose, they considered Jayaprakash Narayan to be best suited to guide the non-communist agitation. He took the opportunity and appealed to the students to give their studies for a year to "save democracy." During the period, the leftist students formed the Bihar Chhatra Naujawan Sangharsh Morcha (BCNSM). On March 16, the BCNSM organized processions at Patna, Muzaffarpur, Begusarai, Sahebganj, Motihari and many other places to protest against price rise. Besides other demands, they asked for the closure of universities and colleges for one year, implementation of land reform measures and state take over of the universities. The student leaders felt that there was no way out for them to organize a 'militant struggle' for the removal of the "present anti-people government."⁸⁵ On March 18, several hundred students assembled near Raj Bhavan and the State Assembly to prevent the Governor from attending the Assembly. A direct confrontation between the police and students took place near the Assembly. The disturbances on 18th March set the ball of agitation rolling. To maintain the tempo of the agitation, the Bihar Chhatra Sangharsh Samiti (BCSS) gave a call for Bihar Bandh on March 23. Political demands i.e., the resignation of Abdul Gofoor as Chief Minister and the dissolution of the State Assembly came to be raised on the same day.

The movement continued on the lines of Gujarat agitation. Different sections of the urban middle class joined the agitation. In April, J.P.Narayan assumed the leadership of the movement. The leaders of the movement claimed that it was a revolutionary movement aimed at bringing about total revolution in the society. After June 5, 1975, Jayaprakash Narayan himself announced "total revolution" as the ultimate objective of the movement, an "all round Revolution".⁸⁶ It was declared that "the crux of the matter is that the movement is basically one against the existing system."⁸⁷

However, like the Gujarat agitation the Bihar movement had its limitations in terms of ideology, leadership, participation and the like. The ideology which guided the Bihar movement was the Sarvodaya ideology. But the ideology has produced the results exactly the opposite of those expected by the Sarvodayaists themselves and it is primarily because of the deficiencies of the ideology itself.⁸⁸ Moreover, most of the constituent partners of the Bihar movement did not share the ideology of the Sarvodaya. Rather they were primarily interested in dethroning the Congress government and seizing political power for themselves. The movement had side-tracked economic issues and despite all denials, the dissolution of the State Assembly had become an end in itself. It is argued that "the beginning and end of every revolution is characteristically political, in the sense that it begins with a political crisis and ends with political settlement."⁸⁹ This is true. But the question is : what kind of political settlement and in whose favour ? It appears that the political settlement that the Bihar movement leading to was the settlement for status quo in favour of the haves.⁹⁰ Thus, the Bihar movement was a protest movement, protesting against the failure of the Congress rule in delivering the goods to the society.

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CHAPTER - IV

PROTEST MOVEMENTS IN INDIA : ISSUES, TYPE, LEADERSHIP AND IDEOLOGY

Issues :

One of the important legacies that India inherited from the past was the existing social order, the social structure and social conflicts which surrounded and influenced socio-political movements, ideas, and practices. In fact, India's linguistic, religious, ethnic, and cultural diversities are proverbial. So are the socio-political mobilizations, protests, violent conflicts and antagonisms which have arisen from time to time among and between persons from its distinctive cultural groups. But it is equally important to note that neither socio-political mobilizations and protests nor social, cultural and ethnic antagonisms flow naturally of India's diversities.¹

The 1971 Census of India enumerated thirty-three languages with speakers of more than one million, but only ~~three~~^{eighteen} of them have achieved any form of significant political recognition. Similarly, the 1981 Census enumerates a tribal population of more than fifty million people divided into hundreds of distinct groups. Many socio-political mobilizations have occurred among several of the tribal groups from the 19th century upto the present, of which a few have developed into bitter, violent, and secessionist movements directed against non-tribals, against particular state governments, or against the Government of India itself. On the other hand, many tribal groups have not mobilized and have not rebelled. Similarly, tribal mobilization have taken diverse forms. Some have focussed on economic grievances, have appeared to be class-based, and have drawn support from Marxist political organizations while others have focussed on political demands and have been organised and led by tribal leaders and exclusively tribal political organizations.

Again, the whole modern history of India has been deeply affected and badly scarred by conflict between separatist Muslim organizations and the Indian National Congress and by continuing Hindu-Muslim riots in some cities and towns. Even with respect to these conflicts, protests and associated violence, however, they must be

contrasted against periods of Hindu-Muslim cooperation. It should also be noted that such protests and resultant conflicts have occurred more intensely in some parts of the country and have been less intense or non-existent in others where Hindus and Muslims also live side by side.

In the 1980s and 1990s India has faced an extremely violent protest movement among militant Sikhs, some of whom have become secessionist. Punjab where most Sikhs live, has become an embattled ground in which a violent guerrilla war is being waged between Sikh militants and the Indian police. Yet Sikhs and Hindus have cooperated socially and politically in the past and were never before considered to be hostile communal groups.

India has also been generally characterized as a society divided by caste and caste antagonisms and thus, protest movements emanating from these caste considerations and caste antagonisms. Various Indian Census before the 1930s enumerated thousands of local castes and dozens of local caste clusters within each linguistic region. Caste mobilization and inter-caste conflict have occurred in India since the late nineteenth century among many such groups. Moreover, in the 70s and 80s, inter-caste conflicts between so-called backward and upper caste groups became intense in several states. One again, however, it needs to be stressed that such mobilizations and conflicts have occurred among specific groups in specific regions at particular times and not others.

Migration of persons from one linguistic region to another, particularly to the relatively less densely populated tribal regions of the country and to the north-eastern state of Assam and to the major metropolitan centres of Bombay, Calcutta and Delhi have also produced situations which have, sometimes, but not always, led to migrant nativist political conflicts. Similarly, women in India mobilize themselves and resort to protest movements against male chauvinism and other issues concerning them directly and some others relating to the politics, society and the environment. But these mobilizations too are not a regular pattern and the consequent protests, not frequent. The students community also mobilize them and protest against issues ranging from their direct concern to those relating to social, economic and political

change. But here also the mobilization and protests are not permanent and frequent.

It follows therefore that mobilizations, protests and conflicts in India are not natural flowing naturally. If it would have been natural it would have occurred frequently with regular pattern of its own. But there is no such regular pattern in the mobilizations and protest movements in India. However, the sources of the major linguistic, tribal, religious, caste, and migrant, non-migrant mobilizations, protests and conflicts may be identified and stressed.

In both the pre- and post-Independence periods, state recognition itself has been a critical factor in causing the rise of some ethnic and cultural movements rather than others.² The British extended official preference to the Bengali language in the east rather than to Assamese and Oriya and to Urdu in the North rather than Hindi. They provided separate electorates and other political concessions to Muslims and sikhs. They allowed migration of plains people into tribal areas in central India but forbade it in some parts of the north east. They patronized the non-Brahmin movement in South India when Brahmans were leading the Indian National congress there.

In the post-Independence period, the government of India and the state governments sought to change the balance of recognition among some groups. Hindi was adopted as the official language of the country and of the north Indian States, definitively displacing Urdu from its remaining bastions in Panjab and U.P. Assamese was adopted as the sole official language of Assam against the wishes of the large Bengali-speaking minority and many tribal groups. Separate electorates for Muslims and sikhs were done away with, but reservations of legislative seats and administrative and educational places for scheduled castes and Tribes were retained or introduced.

State - recognition sometime worked in contrary ways. On the one hand, it strengthened some of the groups so recognized and weakened others. On the other hand, in some cases, it contributed to the development of counter-movements by non-recognized groups. The best examples of this type are the numerous movements among unrecognized "backward castes" who have sought systems of reservations

non-recognized groups. The best examples of this type are the numerous movements among unrecognized "backward castes" who have sought systems of reservations equivalent to those granted to Scheduled Castes and Tribes.³

Another factor concerns the specific policies and political strategies pursued by the Central and State governments in relation to regional and sub-regional cultural entities. It is argued that Indian state policy towards minorities has differed in the Nehru and post-Nehru periods. Under Nehru, the Central government pursued pluralist policies in relation to major language and ethno-cultural movements, recognizing especially most of the large language groups among whom major mobilizations developed for the creation of separate linguistic states. At the same time, the Centre sought to avoid direct involvement in regional conflicts among different ethnic and linguistic groups.⁴

But in the post-Nehru period, the Central government has played a more interventionist role in regional conflicts between opposed ethnic, communal, and caste groups. The Central government tolerated the disruptive and allegedly murderous and terrorist activities of Bhindrawale in Punjab in order to embarrass its main political rival in the state, the Akali Dal. Similarly, it followed inconsistent policies in Kashmir, Assam, and other north-eastern States. Moreover, during the succession struggles after 1965 between Mrs. Indira Gandhi and her rivals, the Central Congress leadership in several states moved to displace upper caste leaders from state-congress organizations and replace them with backward caste persons and to mobilize the votes of the latter castes to defeat its rivals in the state Congress and in the opposition. The consequences of these interventions, some of which may justly be perceived as socially progressive, have often had the consequences of intensifying inter-ethnic regional conflicts.⁵

Thirdly, the unevenness in rates of social change among different social groups leading in turn to imbalances in their relative access to jobs, educational advantages, and political power has influenced the mobilization of some groups and not others. Each region of India has a dominant language group and particular castes who have long held disproportionate shares of public employment, educational and political opportunities. Challenges to the preponderant shares of dominant groups in various

processes of social change have begun such as to make elites among them acutely conscious of the disparities between the life chances of persons from their own group and persons from the dominant groups.⁶

Fourthly, the extent to which persons from different ethnic and cultural groups actually find themselves in competition for the same riches in the division of labour in the society is another related factor responsible for different mobilizations and protests. It is often the case that educated persons from different religions, language, caste, and other categories compete for the most prestigious and secure jobs in public service and for the educational opportunities to gain access to them. Therefore, conflict between competing educated classes in search of scarce jobs has been among the most prevalent sources of ethnic conflict in India.⁷

Finally, another factor influencing the types of mobilization, conflict and protest which occur in India concerns levels of political action and levels of ethnic loyalties. Indian society contains both multiple levels of political arenas and hierarchies of loyalties to cultural categories. At the level of the village and its surroundings, "Jati", the local aspect of caste, may provide a basis for economic action, political organization, and social conflict. In a unit as large as a district, correspondingly larger units of political action or political coalitions across 'Jati' boundaries become necessary for effective political action. The unit of loyalty and political action may then become the caste category or caste cluster or a coalition of related castes. At the state level, only the largest caste categories with wide representation throughout large parts of a state may be able to act in solidary and politically effective ways. In many cases, such actions at the state level become impossible and other kinds of loyalties to faction and parts become predominant. At the national level, castes becomes virtually ineffective as a basis for sustained political mobilization for the available caste categories at this level lack appropriate social or economic content. Alternatives to caste as an organizing principle for political conflict also exist at every level in Indian politics, particularly from the district upwards. At those levels, categories such as Hindu and Muslim become more prominent, language loyalties become critical, one's status as a migrant or a "Son of the Soil" may be decisive, or factional, party, and ideological bases for political division may prevail.⁸

Types :

Given the social, economic, political religious, ethnic and cultural contradictions of the Indian society and the factors being contributory to the mobilizations, protests and conflicts as outlined above, protest movements in India assume different type, content, leadership and ideology. Therefore, some protest movements take the form merely seeking to reform the existing arrangements - religious, social, cultural, political and economic - while others go to the extent of threatening the system itself. In fine, an analyses of protest movements in India shows that they may take any form - from a slow and gradual reform movement to a radical and revolutionary one.

Protest movements may be classified on the basis of one or the other criterion.⁹ M.S. A Rao¹⁰ suggests the possibility of classifying movements on the basis of their consequences. Movements can be aimed at reform in one or another aspect of social life, or oriented at bringing about changes in superordinate and subordinate relationships, and finally, those oriented towards bringing about revolutionary change in every sphere of life and in basic values. These movements are referred to as reformatory, transformative and revolutionary. Emphasizing on the means adopted by change oriented movements, reform movements are described as those movements that utilise legitimate means. In these movements, changes are sought to be brought about within the given framework of a society and the means adopted are consistent with the social norms and values of the society. Radical or revolutionary movements are characterized by the rejection of existing legitimate means and by the adoption of means that are considered improper by the establishment in their attempt to achieve change in all spheres of life, including basic values. These movements also vary in terms of conflicts embedded in them. Conflict is least in reform movements; it acquires a sharper focus in transformative movements, and in the case of revolutionary movements conflict is based on the Marxist ideology of class struggle.

However, there are a number of ambiguities in Rao's classification of social movements. Reform and revolutionary movements are distinguished in terms of the quantum of change - partial and total. Similarly, reform or transformative movements are distinguished in terms of where the change occurs; in the case of the former, change occurs in the value system and in the case of the latter, it takes place at the

middle level of the structure. The twin basic principles of any classification are exclusiveness and exhaustiveness and Rao violates the principle of exclusiveness by shifting the criteria of classification used in three types of movements.¹¹ This shift in criteria brings in several questions. For instance, which type of social movement persuades either partial middle-level structural change or total middle-level structural change? How do we classify a movement which aims at partial as against total change in the value system? What of a movement which pursues revolutionary changes through non-violent means? How do we account for frequent intensely violent conflicts which occur in the course of movements that have primordial collectivities rather than class as their locus? These and several other equally important issues cannot be classified within the classificatory scheme proposed by Rao.

Partha Mukherjee¹² classifies movements based on the quality of change - accumulative, alternative and transformative. While accumulative changes are intra-systemic, the latter two are systemic changes. Alternative change is geared to create new structures and by implication, to destroy the existing ones; transformative change aims at replacing the existing structure and substituting it by another. This characterization is also problematic in that unless one creates new structures one cannot replace and substitute the existing ones and, hence, the distinction between alternative and transformative change becomes pointless. Again, Mukherjee's analysis implies that revolutionary means suit only movements which pursue systemic change, and revolutionary movements should not only aim at far-reaching systemic changes but should necessarily pursue them through revolutionary means. Such a position is untenable because it cannot explain the lack of fit between means and ends in the case of several movements. For example, which type of movement it will be which has intra-systemic change as its goal but adopts revolutionary means to achieve it. Again, if a movement pursues systemic changes through institutionalized and even non-violent means how we will characterize it.

T.K.Oommen¹³ has suggested that a situation of strain in a society may be met through one or another of the following response patterns depending upon the system characteristics; (a) emergence of a charismatic leader who promises to mitigate the evils at hand and lead the people to a future utopia; (b) crystallization of a new

ideology which champions the cause of the deprived, and (c) establishment of a new organization to deal with the problem at hand. Each of these developments may give rise to the emergence of three distinct types of movements - charismatic, ideological and Organizational. The main focus of this typology is on the process of movement crystallization, the life-cycle and phases of the movements. Unlike other typologies it does not insist that movements are necessarily oriented to change; they may not only lead to system stability but may pursue it as a goal. However, one of the important limitations of this typology is that it is based on a componential analysis of movements, in that it gives primacy to one or another component of the movement - leadership, ideology, organization. This tends to blur the relevance of other components which are equally important for the sustenance of movements.

Thus, it is important to note that the characteristics of a society shape the ethos and styles of its movements. Further, every social structure creates its own style of protests and modes of expressing these protests.¹⁴ Therefore, an adequate framework for the study of social movements should take into account the historicity, the elements of social structure and the future vision of the society in which they originate and operate, and it is the dialectics between these which provides the focal points for the analysis of social movements in general, and protest movements in particular.¹⁵ Thus, what needs to be investigated is the nature and types of movements in a particular society and the characteristics they partake.

An inadequate perception of the importance of the historical context in shaping protest movements has also given birth to misconceptions about the nature of movements.¹⁶ The predominant orientation of protests, and social movements in ancient and even in medieval India was religious and this was for two reasons: the absence of a centralised political authority, and the nature of the authority challenged was invariably legitimized by religion.¹⁷ However, this does not suggest that the non-religious, that is, political or economic context was absent in these movements. Often religious symbols and styles of protest were invoked to achieve non-religious goals. However, K.P.Gupta¹⁸ is of the opinion that religious movements in India are essentially independent of political involvements and did not pursue any structural reforms or political changes, invoking the case of the Ramkrishna Mission. But the motivation involved in preventing conversion from Hinduism to other religions or the

political activities of the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh do not support this position. Again, there are those, who proceed exclusively along 'class-conflicts' characterize all these mobilizations as predominantly economic in orientation.¹⁸

During the period of the national liberation movement in India most of the mobilizations were directly against the forces of imperialism and colonialism, irrespective of their categories, namely, students, peasants, tribes etc. or underlying motivations involved. But after independence, the absence of an over-arching enemy, and the differing perceptions about the 'enemy' to be attacked necessarily led to a) divergence in the targets of attack, that is, political authority, economic exploitation, cultural domination, and b) varying perceptions about the immediate targets of attack. This led to the diversification in the nature and proliferation of protest movements in India.¹⁹

Again, the change in the historical context also leads to changes in perspectives of analysing protest movements. What were earlier perceived to be religious or reform movements²⁰ later came to be viewed as socio-political in orientation.²¹ That is, the changing historical context shapes the attitude of the people towards protest movements. Movements are also labelled on the basis of a particular identity of participants even when the goals pursued are innate to the interests of the specific identity. The movements are named after primordial collectivities such as religions, caste, or linguistic groups, and civil collectivities such as peasants and students. Similarly, labelling of the movements is also done on the basis of the nature of collectivities against whom they are led - the anti-Brahmin movement, anti-leftist movement etc. This manner of labelling movements can be highly misleading for two reasons. First, the individuals and groups involved in these movements have several identities and the specific identity invoked may not have any relevance for the movement concerned. Moreover, a particular identity may be invoked by the enemies of the movement to discredit it. Second, several social categories may be participating simultaneously in a protest, and to designate it after one of the categories would be misleading even if that category constitutes the bulk of the participants who have initiated it.

Another frequent tendency is to name movements based on their territorial coverage, particularly the locality in which they originate and operate. Examples of these are the Bihar, Telengana, Assam, Vidharbha, Jharkhand, Naxalbari movements and the like. Such designation of movements does not reveal the nature of these movements at all - the background of the participants, the goals pursued, the means employed, the ideology followed etc. Further, if the movements subsequently spreads to a wider territorial area, the initial labelling becomes obsolete, as illustrated by the case of the Naxalbari movement. Movements are also named after the issues they pursue. Examples of these are the Tebhaga movement, and the anti-Hindi movement. The limitations of this designation is that since protest movements are likely to undergo goal transformations, the initial focuss of the movement may change, making the name redundant, and secondly, these issues may be too narrow in their orientation and may be but one of the several issues pursued by the movement - hence there is the possibility of mistaking the part for the whole. Movements are also named after their initial or top leadership. The Ramkrishna Mission movement, the Gandhian movement, the J.P.movement are examples of this. Given the possibility of movements transcending the biological life-span of specific individuals, this mode of naming movements is inappropriate. Secondly, the mode of labelling movements smacks of the personality - centeredness of movements as against the systemic orientation; it relegates the role of the collectivity, which is so critical in any movement, to the background.

Given the above discussion, it can be said that none of the attempts made so far to classify protest movements is comprehensive enough to encapsulate all varieties of movements found in India.²² For convenience, however, protest movements in India are classified on the basis of the socio-economic characteristics of the participants and the issues involved, such as, the peasant protests, tribal protests, backward caste and dalit protests, Women's protests, students' protests, middle class protests, industrial working class protests and the like.²³ It is true that there are limitations in viewing protest movements along this typology as outlined in the preceding pages but they are, nevertheless, useful as analytical tools to measure and evaluate their impact on the society, economy and the polity.

Leadership :

Leadership occupies an important place in the protest movements as the leaders are responsible for translating objective causes into subjective consciousness and mobilizing the participants. Hardly there can be any situation where the participants' by themselves can organize and lead a movement. However, the leadership pattern in different protest movements in India has been different.

As far as the peasant protests are concerned, peasant struggles can never assume a genuinely political character unless they are taken over by leaders belonging to social layers politically more advanced than the peasants themselves. The educated intelligentsia provided leadership to most of the peasant movements during the nationalist period. The 'Babas', 'Fakirs' and 'Sadhus' played the role of militant rural intelligentsia in peasant movements. They organised peasants against the British rulers. They were not revolutionaries of any accepted description belonging to any defined revolutionary social class; nor did they conform to the behaviour pattern or articulation style of the recognized leadership. They had mobility, were full-timers and unlike the urban leaders they did not indulge in sophisticated category or complicated double-faced political propaganda for the purpose of mobilization. Their exercise rested on a precise understanding of the situation and a detailed diagnosis of contemporary social ills.²⁴ Some of these movements have thus been called 'Sanyasi' rebellion.²⁵

The middle-class intelligentsia which had lost its ties of material interest with the land, provided the organized cadres of the new parties of mass mobilization. Their intervention provided a radical edge to the anti-landlord demands of the mass of the tenancy, but it has continued to display an ambivalent attitude towards the progressive historical potentiality of the new contradiction.²⁶ It has also been found that urban leadership really exploited peasant discontent to further its own political and party ends. The leadership of the Naxalite movement rested with the youths who belonged to the urban-educated middle class. In the land grab movement, the leadership came from the urban better-off section of the society.²⁷ It is also held that on the one hand was the urban-based leadership which cloaked in a more sophisticated ideology, claimed superior knowledge and status with regard to the

manner in which the movement should be conducted. They would insist that the others follow the direction they gave and assured that the predicted outcome would ensue.²⁸ Even the protest movements organized by the Kisan Sabha, the frontal organization of the Communist Party of India were dominated by the urban based middle class leadership. The lone exception to this contention is Mahendra Singh Tikayet, but he too comes from a rich upper class peasant. However, of late, with the revitalization of the Panchayati Raj in West Bengal after the Left Front came to power in 1977, the leadership in the peasant front has been decentralised and descended to the grassroot level.

So far as the tribal protests are concerned, the leadership of the Santhal, the kol, and the Munda rebellions came from religious leaders, or leaders who proclaimed themselves the incarnation of God. Birsu Munda is an example in this case.²⁹ A similar case is that of Sido and Kanhu, the leaders of the Santhal rebellion who claimed that they received messages from supernatural powers. These leaders had powerful command and influence over their followers. Their leadership capability gained further strength by taking resort to their being representatives of God. Given this background, "all leaders of the messianic movements in India have demanded great and often heroic sacrifices from their followers not only for admission into their movements but also as a condition for staying on in them."³⁰ On the socio-economic background of the tribal leadership, it has been observed that while the leadership of the first phase (1795-1860) emerged from the upper crust of tribal society, that of the second phase rose from the lowest rung of it. Sido and Kanu were the landless, Birsu Munda was a rayiat or a praja (Sharecropper) and Gobind Giri who led the Bhil movement in the Rajasthan-Gujarat border, was a 'hali' (bounded labour).³¹

The leadership of the tribal movements in the post-Independence era is found to come, in most cases, from the educated elite tribals. The tribal solidarity movements of the recent periods are primarily the product of the initiative and interest of a limited coterie of the educated tribal elite, and there is considerable communication gap between the interests and ideas of the elite leaders and the tribal masses.³² The leadership of some of the tribal peasant movements such as those of the Telengana, the Warli, the Sahada, the Bhumi Sena and the Naxalbari, was provided by non-tribals coming from different political groups.³³ At the same time, local leadership

among the common tribals has also emerged, Amarsingh in Dhuliya and Kalu Ram in Thana being the examples.³⁴

In the case of other ethno-cultural movements it is noticed that in most cases the leadership come from the educated upper and upper-middle class of the society. In the Assam movement, the Bodo movement, the Akali movement, the Gorkhaland movement, the movements in the North-East, the Jharkhand movement and the emerging Kamtapur movement in the northern part of West Bengal, the leadership is provided by the educated elite section of the society which perceives of deprivation from the share of power and privileges in the mainstream of the society.

In the Dalit protests, one finds the undisputed and the most important leader in Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. By his inherent foresight, he integrated modernity with tradition in mobilizing the Dalits. Ambedkar planned his programme to bring the untouchables from a state of 'dehumanization' and 'slavery' into one of equality through the use of modern methods based on education and the exercise of legal and political rights. At the same time, Ambedkar's modernizing ideology was tempered in practice by a clear perception of the tenacity of caste and tradition. Thus, he advocated for a separatist policy accentuating caste distinctions as an initial stage in creating a society in which identities would be unimportant.³⁵ Besides Ambedkar, the dalits found a leader in Mangoo Ram who "was something of a broker, making religious symbols and ideas accessible to ordinary people."³⁶ But here too, the leadership of the political protests of the dalits has come from those 'jatis' of the 'dalit' who had improved their economic conditions.

Besides the dalit protests, there were a number of backward caste and/or class movements in India, like Ambedkar in the dalit movement, Jotirao Phule was the ideologue of the non-Brahmin movement in Maharashtra, phule rejected the Hindu scriptures and the caste system and believed that the Hindu religion, as interpreted by the Brahmins, was both the ideological means of suppression and the cause of poverty of the low castes.³⁷ However, Phule's theory of exploitation was focussed on cultural and ethnic factors rather than on economic and political ones.³⁸ Shahu Chhatrapati, the Maharaja of Kothapur, was an important leader of the non-Brahmin movement in Maharashtra. Ramaswami Naikar founded the Dravidian movement to

fight Aryan 'domination' which, to him, was synonymous with Brahmin domination and Brahminism.³⁹

In other secular political protest movements too, it is found that the leadership comes from the upper caste middle class section of the society. So far as Gujarats' Nav Nirman movement and Bihar's movement for total revolution are concerned, one will notice that at the initial stage the leadership came from the students and the students leaders belonged to the middle class section of the society. It has been observed that students who are protected by the wealth or influence of their families participate in agitation.⁴⁰ However, exception to this assertion is Laloo Prasad Yadav, the ex-Chief Minister of Bihar, who provided the leadership in the Bihar Movement for total revolution in 1974 as the President of the Students' Association of Patna University and he belonged to the backward caste and lower class. But these types of exceptions are bound to be exceptions only. Given the level of socio-economic development of the Indian society, leadership will continue to be poured in from the upper caste middle class and upper class of the society.

Ideology :

Ideology is considered to be a crucial aspect of any protest movement. It is ideology that legitimizes the goal of the protest and the means to be adopted to reach the goal so defined. Marx located ideology within the frame of class structure⁴¹ and Mannheim considered it a means of discrediting an adversary.⁴² Clifford Geertz, emphasizing its symbolic aspects, observes that ideology is not merely an occurrence in the head but an interworking of images to grasp reality in the actual behaviour and activities of people and thus ideology names the structure of situations in such a way that the attitude contained towards them is one of commitment. Its style is ornate, vivid, deliberately suggestive and it seeks to motivate action.⁴³ In this sense, ideology interprets the environment and projects self-images. It codifies and organizes beliefs, myths, outlook and values, defines aspirations and interests and directs responses to specific social situations. Thus, it is not only a 'framework of consciousness' but also a source of legitimizing action.⁴⁴

Hence, ideology has been an important component of all protest movements either in tacit or manifest form. Protest movements of all forms develop a protest ideology based on their conditions and perceptions of relative deprivation. However, there are variations in the themes of protest ideology that are formulated by the leaders of the protest movements to gain prestige, honour, self-respect and worth. To legitimize their acclaimed status and to work out a programme of action for collective mobilization, they use both religious and secular elements in building up the symbolic belief system. Protest ideology, based on relative deprivation, helps establish the identity and draw boundaries between the protesting and dominant groups. This means that the members of the concerned groups want to challenge and wrest away the monopoly of the dominant groups in the use of religious, economic, educational and political goods and services.

The tribal, ethno-cultural, backward caste, women's protests and the like centre around the ideology that is characterised by protest against the participants' conditions of relative deprivation. The assertion of rights of equality of opportunities in the sphere of education, employment and politics formed part of the ideology of the protest movements. However, in these protest movements, ideology was not merely the rationalization of material interests only. Rather, the ideology of these movements included religious, economic, educational and political interests. In fact, the religious and secular interests are seen as parts of the protest ideology, to equalize, by attacking the monopoly of the dominant sections of the society.⁴⁵ Further, the ideology of these movements, far from being fixed, tends to be a flexible one, for it is amenable to diverse interpretations responding to the issues and interests that crop up from time to time. Thus, ideology is seen as a force that is continuously shaped and reshaped by the emerging interests, which are manifested in situational contexts. Ideology and interests thus interact with one another.

The primordial elements form an essential part of protest ideology except, of course, the peasant and industrial protests. This is so because the primordial components provide the chief mechanism to improve self-image and self-respect, and helps to establish an identity. Thus, the primordial aspect is as important as the economic, educational and political one. All these aspects form parts of the syndrome of protest ideology guiding most of the protest movements in India. It is this form of

ideology that provides the motive force in most of the protest movements in India and is transformed into actuality by collective mobilization through an organizational framework and leadership.

In all the ethno-sectarian protest movements in India like that of Panjab, Kashmir, Assam and other parts of North-East, Gorkhaland, Jharkhand, Kamtapur, as the preceding sections show, the ideological source is perceived to be rooted in the relative deprivation of the protesting group against the dominant group and/or the State machinery thought to be the protector and guarantor of the interests of the dominant group. However, it is also found that in many such protest movements, the leaders who are, for one reason or other, out of the helms of power but wants to be around the power centre articulate such deprivations which might have been under surface, and mobilize the innocent passive masses. The motive here is basically to come near to power. The Assam movement and the Assam Gana Parishad's coming to power, the Gorkhaland movement and the Gorkha National Liberation Front leadership's changing postures, the Jharkhand movement and the proliferation of organizations within the movement, and the recent episode of the leadership of Jharkhand Mukti Morchas'(Soren) involvement in bribery scandals explain this mode of looking at the ideological theoretical aspects of the protest movements in India. Even the politico-secular movements of 1974 in Gujarat and Bihar were finally grabbed by the frustrated leaders for their own parochial interests.

Besides, there are two other themes based on relative deprivation. They are the Marxian ideology of the class struggle, without an ethnic component and the Millenarian ideology. Many peasant protests such as the Tebhaga, Telangana, and Naxalite had class struggle as their ideology. However, within this, one can identify several variations ranging from radicalism to the extreme left position. Peasant movements, like trade union movements, tend to be affiliated to or involved in sharply defined political movements or parties, in most cases, left political parties. Similarly, the Millenarian ideology has been the dominant manifestation of relative deprivation among many tribal movements in India. Here the future state of affairs to come which will be the complete reverse of the present state of deprivation, acts as the motivating force to act in the present to prepare for the millenium. It is characteristic of colonial-like situations where the concerned sections or the deprived groups feel helpless

with regard to their perceived capabilities in altering the existing situation.⁴⁶

It is also to be noted in this connection that ideology which motivates action is, in most of the protest movements in India, formulated, shaped, and reshaped in accordance with the desires, and interests of the dominant leaders of the concerned protest movements. For the purpose, ideology is often adjusted and readjusted to the requirements of the leaders' interest. The ideology that was the foundation for the Assam movement launched by All Assam Students Union and the Assam Gana Parishad remained no longer the ideology once Assom Gana Parishad came to power even though the goal legitimized by the ideology has no longer been fulfilled.

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CHAPTER - V

PROTEST MOVEMENTS IN INDIA : IMPACT ON THE POLITICAL PROCESS

The preceding chapters of the present study have shown the various dimensions of protest movements in India since Independence - major theories of movements and protests and their relevance to the understanding of protest movements in India ; social, economic, political ethnic, cultural, religious contradictions of the Indian society that act as the breeding grounds for the eruption of different types of protests and agitations; historical and analytical aspects of different types, nature, ideology, leadership and issues of protest movements in India. But any study on protest movements remains incomplete unless it is followed by the analyses of the impact of those movements on the various segments of political life of the society. This is one of the basic objectives of the present study and the present chapter addresses to this aspect of the study of protest movements in India.

Any movement originates to bring about change or resist change. By that logic, a movement may either be progressive, status-quo- oriented or conservative. Whatever may be the nature of the direction of the movement it leaves some impact on various segments of societal life. The impact may be positive ,contributing to the social cohesion, economic growth and political maturity and development, or negative, pulling the overall societal progress backward. The impact is also dependent on the perceptions of those who view movements and protests from different perspectives. Thus, a movement may be of positive impact and hence, progressive to the adherents of the movement while it may be of negative impact and hence, reactionary to those against whom the movement is directed. Under the circumstances, an objective assessment of the impact of a protest movements becomes difficult. Given this, it becomes pertinent to make a brief analysis of the concept of 'impact' itself.

There has been growing volume of writings on 'impact'. Social impact assessment is understood as a broad range of impacts or effects or consequences that are likely to be experienced by an equally broad range of social groups as a result of some course of action.¹ Therefore, it implies that impact studies are 'prospective' unlike evaluation studies which are 'retrospective'. Such studies began in the early 70s after the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 was passed in the United States. Initially, social impact assessment studies were essentially environmental impact statements.² It came to social sciences in 1973 after the council of the American Sociological Association formed a Committee "to develop guidelines for sociological contribution to environmental impact assessments".³ The Chairman of this Committee, C.P.Wolf, is credited to be the founder of this sub-discipline. His work in collaboration with Kurt Finsterbusch is an influential text on impact assessment in the United States.⁴

Most of the empirical studies in the United States and Canada on social impact studies have dealt with one or the other of the following things : forests, recreations, policy considerations, specific construction projects, urban renewal and urban highway construction, and large-scale energy development. But the accuracy of such studies has been strongly challenged.⁵ However, by now, the practitioners of the impact assessments have largely agreed to the following propositions'.⁶

- a) Socio-cultural variables need to be examined as well as economic or demographic ones;
- b) Impact assessments should not be limited to whatever may appear to be available.
- c) Impact assessments should not be limited to variables that are easily quantified and or politically salient,

d) Quality of life is a key dependent variable to be looked into, and

e) Impact assessment should focus more on the tendency of projects to redistribute resources at all levels.

In fine, it appears from the above discussion that a distinction is made between "impact" and "evaluation". While impact denotes to prospective effects or consequences, evaluation aims at retrospective effects or consequences. In this sense, evaluation should have been the appropriate term for the purpose of the present study as it seeks to measure the effects of the protest movements in India which have already taken place - a retrospective study by definition. This is the convention that is followed in the West.⁷ However, there are a number of limitations of the prospective studies and for those limitations prospective impact studies on protest movements have not been carried on a massive scale. Given this, the present study use the terms 'evaluation' and 'impact' interchangeably substituting 'impact' for 'evaluation' of the convention of the West.

In Chapter II of the present study it has been found that due to the social, cultural, ethnic, religious, economic and political contradictions that are found deep rooted in the Indian system, protests of different forms and scales emanate. These protests sometimes recede within absorbable time without much challenge to the unity, integrity and existence of the system. But some protests, in course of time, assume much higher scale and operational area posing substantial threat to the existence and functioning of the political system. Similarly, some protest movements are found to lead the system to a better direction thus contributing to the inculcation of positive change in the system while others turn to be disruptive force questioning the very legitimacy of the political system. Thus, protest movements in India are viewed from two distinct perspectives. First, protest movements are viewed as instruments for bringing about desired change in the system. It is assumed that protests reflect the unfulfilled aspirations of the protesting groups and thus act as pressure groups to direct action on the part of the government. Second, protest movements are thought to be negative means to

pressurize the politico-social system. These emanate from irrational primordial considerations and also are made to crop up by the vested interests on those irrational considerations for irrational parochial interests. Thus, protest movements are assumed to be disruptive threat to the existence and persistence of the political system. Given this background, the present section ventures to identify the impacts of protest movements on the political process of India.

In the pre-Independence period in India there was a wide range of protests, extending from courteous application to the authorities on the one hand to violent insurrection or non-violent civil disobedience on the other. And although the political parameters changed substantially after 1947, protests in one form or the other remained essentially the same. The fact is that the gaining of Independence has marked very little change in the use of the more direct and agitational modes of public suasion⁸. The movements of public protests not merely continue even after the establishment of a Parliamentary democracy in India but as some observers like Bayley, Kothari, Harrison, Weiner, Oommen, Rao, Mukherjee, Shah and others have indicated, these movements have been increasing in number and have been gathering momentum, threatening even the very existence of the Parliamentary federal form of Government and the pluralist socio-cultural structure.

India is the largest democracy in the world. Its record in the defence of political freedom and in the translation of democratic theory into practical reality is remarkable not only among the developing countries but among the countries of the Western world as well. Public protest and even violence in the politics of a nation do indicate that all is not well with the nature of that system. Great Britain and the United States have both been the scenes of violence and protest in recent years. Just as it would be wrong in these instances to argue from protest and violence to the extinction of democratic attributes, so too in the Indian case a discussion of public protest should not be read as an implicit denial of the vitality of its democratic process.⁹ But it should be added here that the Indian government is faced with a pervasive and continued threat to the maintenance of law and

order and law and order are jeopardized to an extent known only infrequently in either the United States or Great Britain and then never for prolonged periods of time.¹⁰

Under the circumstances, the questions that crop up are as to what interests and concerns are affected by the manifestations of these protests and why a government concerned with the strengthening of democracy, should feel impelled to undertake constraining action toward public protests of this magnitude. At least six closely connected reasons may be given for governmental anxiety and action.¹¹

First, public protests impose an economic burden upon the nation. This cost is a consequence of the physical destruction visited upon public and private property, the loss of life and health to individuals, the diversion of resources, time and energy from constructive economic programmes to the essentially neutral task of maintaining law and order. In an economy already straining to the utmost for rapid economic development the cost may be unacceptable, spelling the difference between plan success and plan failure. Protests in any form, but more particularly in its illegal forms, cause some reallocation of resources that established industrial countries may be able to afford it, India perhaps cannot.

Second, one of the fundamental duties of any government is the preservation of minimal conditions of law and order. No government, whatever its political form, can outlive a successful challenge to its ability to meet this end. If the government is unable to contain violent public protest and enforce its rules and regulations, it may lose its justification for existence, its claim to legitimacy.

Third, coercive public protest which succeeds in its object of affecting the decisions of government represents a derogation from majority rule. It is possible, of course, that demonstrators sometimes present a truer picture of majority sentiments than elected representatives

sample. Rather special circumstances must exist to support this proposition, circumstances which in the Indian case are most uncommon. Usually, coercive public protest has been the tool of an aggrieved minority. As such, it strikes at the basic premise of democratic government, namely, that the will of the majority as expressed in free elections and through elected representatives is sovereign. If coercive public protest is seen to succeed, the representative integrity and efficacy of the erstwhile democratic government will be lost.

Fourth, coercive public protest represents not only the introduction of a supplementary means for the suasion of government, but a fundamental threat to the rule of law. If laws can be disregarded, sloughed aside arbitrarily, the prospect of equality and impartiality before the law is destroyed, and the efficacy of constituted means of representation and adjudication is impaired.

Fifth, as a result of the destruction of the rule of law and of the rule of the majority, a sort of Gresham's law begins to affect the nature of political responses. Direct action and social violence - either threatened or actual - begin to drive out the orderly, constitutional responses demanded in a democratic state. Every success for direct action sets of precedent for its utilization by other groups and individuals. Coercive protest movements, if allowed to go unrestrained, will be more widely imitated and become an ever greater rival to the processes of peaceful change through democratic government.

Sixth, democracy demands a considerable measure of social discipline in order to work successfully. Coercive protest movements involving forms which are illegal or violent represents a breakdown of discipline. It is based upon the destructive principle that certain ends justify recourse to undemocratic means of resolution. If government fails to apply its sanctions, it allows new linkages to become established between ends and means. Due to the default of government, people

are permitted to protest in the belief that certain deeply felt needs, desires, or interests are beyond compromise and that extreme solutions are appropriate to satisfy them. Social accommodation based on compromise tends to give way to a series of internecine wars. The failure of government to restrain coercive protest movements represents a failure to secure acceptance of legitimate rules established to govern the relation between articulated wants and the procedure for their fulfilment.

As has already been discussed, protest movements in India assume many forms. For example, there are legal and illegal forms of protest. The illegal forms come in two varieties : violent and non-violent. Satyagraha or non-violent civil disobedience, is a non-violent but often illegal form of protest. Violent illegal protests refer primarily to riots, although it may include assassinations, coups d'etat, rebellions, insurrections, terrorism etc.

In India, people compel official attention and constrain decision-making by deliberately engaging in activities that threaten public order. Violence or the threat of violence have become important instruments in Indian politics. Group violence, like the wider category of protest, comes in many varieties. It is possible, however, to distinguish three general kinds, one of which has an explicitly political motivation and purpose. These three forms of violence may be termed the "violence of Remonstrance", the "Violence of Confrontation", and the "violence of Frustration".¹² These three forms are differentiated according to the target of the violence, the precipitating or catalyzing agency, the amount of prior organization, the length of time required for the generation of violence, the visibility of the growth process, the nature of the participants, and the location of the event.

Violence of Remonstrance refers to riots and public clashes growing out of agitational activities which have as their target governmental authority in some form. Violence here is a product of interaction between protestors and the representatives of the authority or public order in general - most commonly, the police. Violence of Remonstrance may not be organized but the activities

preceding it certainly are. The process by which the violence is generated is visible and usually prolonged. The participants in the violence of Remonstrance are, by and large, members of modern social groups, such as labour unions, universities, political parties, and professional societies. Violence of Remonstrance is more common in urban than in rural areas. Examples of this kind of violence are the anti-Hindi agitations in Madras in 1965 and 1966, the martyr's memorial agitation in Ahmedabad, 1958, students riots against higher fees, and foodprice compaigns in 1958, and again in 1966, Nava Nirman Andolan in Gujarat in 1974, movement for total Revolution in Bihar in 1974-75, and the anti-reservation agitation following the acceptance of the Mandal Commission Report by the V.P. Singh government.¹³

Violence of the confrontation refers to riots that grow out of the antagonism of private groups. In this kind of violence, public agencies are not directly involved; they are not the immediate target of violence. The prime examples of violence of confrontation are communal, ethnic riots and faction fights. In the Violence of Confrontation there is very little organization either in conduct or in the activities leading up to it. It is generated by a process which is invisible, involving feelings and attitudes that have matured over years, sometimes over generations. The violence of confrontation does not generally escalate through clearly defined stages as does the Violence of Remonstrance. Participants in this kind of violence tend to be members of traditional groups.¹⁴

Violence of frustration encompasses commuter riots in large cities when trains are delayed, or attacks by mobs upon food shops that refuse to open, or when unemployed persons besiege an employment office. The violence of frustration does not have a definable target - unless it be society as a whole. It is not an attack upon government or upon specific private group. It is frenzied lasting out at a state of affairs, galling largely because of its impersonality. The pretext for this kind of violence is impersonal too. There is no specific organization to the violence of Frustration; it is abrupt and spontaneous. Participants in this kind of violence may be anyone, not modern or traditional people particularly. It is more common in urban areas.¹⁵

The point to be noted here is that one common variety of social violence in modern India has an explicitly political motivation, and it stems from a desire to shape government policy. It also follows that political protest and the deliberate use of violence are a tactic of people in the modern sector of Indian life; traditional people do not utilize these means as a matter of course but only to further particular issues about which they feel very deeply - they use protests in proportion to their attachment to particular issues. For example, whenever students resort to protests there is always the danger that violence may ensue. Peasants, on the other hand, grow violent more selectively. However, as the traditional people become more politicised and more conscious of their rights, they will learn to use the systems^{of} agitational modes as well as its formal and institutional ones. It suggests, therefore, that Panchayati Raj, to the extent that it is a successful instrument for political socialization, may unleash, as it does particularly in West Bengal, forces that cannot be contained in its institutional framework.

There is no evidence that patterns of participation in protests have changed over the years, nor do the issues serving as pretexts for protests today differ much from those in the past. On the question of the amount of prevalence of public protest which, by threatening law and order, coerces governmental decision-making, it has been observed that the growth of violence in the country which has taken a turn for the worse since the death of Lal Bahadur Shastri.¹⁷ The evidence indicates that the amount of public protest as well as of the violence has increased during the last four decades. The expectation of Indian political life, which have been stable for so long, have been upset. Where once there was acceptance of Congress predominance, which bred apathy and cynicism, there is now ferment. In the past, the government could absorb a considerable amount of disruption and the political system seemed immune from the effects of violence. Now the possibilities to be achieved through protests have been enhanced because a decline in the capacity of the system to govern properly appears to have taken place.¹⁸ This being so, recourse to public protest appears much more tempting as well as more significant.

It is a fundamental premise that the ruling elite in all societies grab resources, power and status to themselves and leaves large sections of the society unsatisfied. This obviously creates conditions of conflict in all political settings. During the liberation struggle, the Congress Party as an umbrella organization had politicised the masses to gain their support for ending the colonial rule which was held responsible for poverty, misery, hunger, and exploitation of the people of India. After the attainment of Independence, those laud promises and lofty ideals were overlooked and the ruling Congress party came to be controlled by a new elite class which started manipulating politics of India to their own interests. The capitalist path of development enabled the elite class comprising the upper castes and big industrial bourgeoisie to corner fruits of economic development to themselves. Not much was done for ameliorating the economic conditions of the rural landless poor, the depressed sections of the society including the tribals, the adivasis, and the dalits. This path of modernization and development, as Myron Weiner¹⁹ and Rajni Kothari²⁰ observe, has given birth to the phenomenon of two Indias - one very modern on the path of progress having access to resources, information and technology and the other very much left behind in fact bearing the brunt of exploitations, depressions and oppressions. The spectacle of the poor becoming poorer and the rich becoming richer - an ever widening gap between the rich few and poor many alienates them from the system, unleashes in them a lava of desperate energy.²¹ Hence, it becomes easier to turn them into a mob, sometimes riotous. Again, when men live close to economic margins it is easy to capitalize on them for political ends. Thus, economic frustration is an important catalyst agent of protest movements in India including direct action.

Under the circumstances, regional imbalances become more visible. Numerous ethnic identities based on race, language, religion, culture and region feel alienated from the political system as they have failed to get equitable share in fruits of economic development and proper share in the decision-making process of the country. Nehru's accommodative model was bypassed by Mrs. Gandhi and evolved her own system of authoritarianism which was built up through a systematic approach of populist politics.²² During her regime, all these identities

were designated as fissiparous and secessionist posing threat to integrity and unity of India. The ethnic identities naturally reacted sharply to it. Some of the ethnic identities launched movements for demanding more autonomy to the states and also demanded the creation of some new states. One may mention in this connection that the whole of the North-East India had to be linguistically reorganized to pacify these identities. It, therefore, suggests that ethnic aspirations coupled with economic, social and political factors are responsible for giving birth to many protest movements in India.

Now the question that needs to be addressed is whether protest movements or direct actions are compatible with democratic form of government like that of India. The place of protest movements in Indian political context has been discussed by a galaxy of scholars, notable among them are Y.B.Chavan, David Bayley and Rajni Kothari.

Chavan distinguishes "Public Protests" into two categories : "Peaceful demonstrations or any peaceful movement for ventilating certain grievances" and "Direct Action" which is organised defiance of law on a large or mass scale. According to him, large -scale demonstration of grievances and expression of feelings in a peaceful way is permissible in a parliamentary democracy, but direct action, that is, "organized defiance of law on a mass scale has no place in parliamentary democracy because it means the end of it."²³

To him, there are four types of Direct Actions taking place in India : 1) Wherein a group of persons take law into their hands and administer direct punishment to the supposed wrong-doer without going through the due processes of law; 2) wherein a particular group of people (particular religious, economic or caste group) feels wronged and takes vengeance against the other group by methods not permitted by law; 3) when a group of persons feeling aggrieved on occasions by the policy of the government or party in power launches organised defiance of law as a technique of solving the problems; 4) actions launched by groups which are impatient to realize those "natural agro-cultural urges which make (them) aspire for better form of economic society for better social ideologies.

and political ideologies (they) are impatient to have it earlier in their own way in accordance with their time table."²⁴ Organized defiance of law of the above mentioned categories according to Chavan, is not permissible in parliamentary democracy.

However, he permits Direct Action in three exceptional circumstances : 1) Organized defiance of law by individuals who like Mahatma Gandhi, though having fundamental respect for law, "by reason of conscience are faced with situations where Satyagraha is necessary" and like Mahatma Gandhi" are fit to undertake such individual action". 2) "..... even in the functioning of a democratic government, there is one very important exception in resort to direct action. Any government that is itself out to destroy the values of parliamentary democracy needs to be replaced by direct action even under parliamentary democracy". 3) Direct Action carried out by men with moral stature and who, though few, are individuals representing a large section of humanity in a particular situation where humanity's future hangs in danger, for example, the use of nuclear power.²⁵

Chavan's argument that Direct Action, except under three exceptional circumstances, is incompatible with parliamentary democracy, is founded on his perception of the principles underlying parliamentary democracy. To him, parliamentary democracy is a rule of law and a type of democracy in which there are periodical election based on adult franchise. Again, there are fundamental liberties of freedom of expression and freedom of association and the most vital thing is the existence of an independent judiciary to enforce these fundamental rights. In this type a government is not irremovable and after a specific period, the government itself offers to be replaced.²⁶

But it should be noted that Chavan discusses the main tenets of parliamentary democracy at a 19th century Liberal democratic level of logic. He does not take into consideration even the observations of eminent students of parliamentary democracy from Mosca to Mills, from Bryce, Finer, Laski to a large number of social democrats, or the philosophical basis, institutional

weaknesses, nor the limitations seen in the actual experiences of the functioning of parliamentary forms of governments during the 19th and 20th centuries. He does not even refer to the crucial fact, observed by almost all sensitive observers of parliamentary form of governments, viz, the growing concentration of power in the hands of a few, and the reduction of the mass of people to insignificance and their transformation into voting hands manipulated by powerful groups possessing economic power and monopolizing instruments of mass communication. He also eschews reference to the fact that why the parliamentary democratic governments, in the name of democracy, rule of law, and the preservation of law and order or bringing about national integration, are inaugurating increasing authoritarian, undemocratic curbs on even the limited rights given to citizens, within the frame of a capitalist democratic constitution.²⁷

Again, as far as the functioning of parliamentary democracy in India is concerned, Chavan did not take into consideration the crucial feature pointed out by the All India Civil Liberties Council that India is "the only democratic country in the world whose fundamental law sanctions detention without trial in time of peace and in a situation which is not in the nature of an emergency."²⁸ Nor does he examine the potential antidemocratic limitations which have been attached to every clause of fundamental rights. Nor has he examined how far fundamental rights remain fundamental if they are subordinated to law and order requirements of the government. It therefore, suggests that for Chavan, struggle against unemployment, against the economic measures which increasingly lower the conditions of living of the masses, the struggle to eradicate a social order which is founded on exploitation of man by man and buttressed, protected and defended by the coercive apparatus of the state should not take the form of Direct Action.²⁹

Chavan's discussion of Direct Action and the need to suppress it by the democratic government, leaves out of account the analysis of the fundamental causes that lead to Direct Action. It also completely leaves out of account the possibility of transforming the anti-democratic measures adopted by the governments to preserve law and order and suppress public protests. Nor does

Chavan examine how far the so called philosophical, institutional premises underlying the specific form of government have stood the test of experience and life. David Bayley takes up the problems of the first type and Rajni Kothari examines the second aspects of the problems left undiscussed by Chavan.

Bayley attempts to examine the problem of relation of Direct Action and parliamentary form of government from a totally different angle. He wants to consider whether the parliamentary form of government in the process of suppressing Direct Action as well as in the anxiety to preserve law and order, or speed up economic advance in the country, will itself not violate some of the basic canons of democracy and thereby endanger the very democratic foundations of its existence. He presumes that in the context of Indian historical development "coercive public protests" have become characteristic of the political life in India and these protests have increased in number and intensity. He is therefore more anxious to find out not merely the limits which should be put on public protests but also a certain amount of permissibility to such actions by the democratic government if it wants to strengthen the democratic government democratically. Bayley believes that the Government of India is aware of the need to curb the coercive public protests in India, but less attention ... has been given to the ... other problem namely, to an examination of the possible consequences of successfully restraining coercive public protest" on the democratic government itself.³⁰

Bayley assumes that the Indian government is faced with a pervasive and continued threat to the maintenance of law and order and law and order are jeopardized to an extent known extremely infrequently in the United States or United Kingdom. He also takes into account the possible arguments which may be put forth by the Government to control 'coercive public protests' namely, that such protests impose an economic burden upon the nation; will prevent the government from performing its most fundamental duties, namely the preservation of minimal conditions of law and order; will destroy the basis of majority rule; not merely introduce a supplementary means for suasion of government, but a

fundamental threat to the rule of law; will encourage replacing orderly, constitutional responses demanded in a democratic state; become an even greater rival to the process of peaceful change through democratic government; and destroy the assumption of natural harmony, and social accommodation based on compromise by all groups and generate a belief that certain deeply felt needs, desires or interests are beyond compromise and that extreme solutions are appropriate to satisfy them.³¹

All these arguments, according to Bayley, attain great efficacy in an underdeveloped country like India where the democratic spirit does not prevail in the society. However, the Indian government while being aware of these consequences of permitting direct action, does not take into account the effect of measures adopted by the government to suppress 'coercive public protest' on its own self. He points out a number of dangers which may arise if the government adopts a stringent policy of suppression of all forms of public protests including illegal and violent forms. These may be : (1) The stopping of a socially useful or functional response; 2) the weakening of the consensus between rulers and the ruled; 3) the intensification of the Gandhian Martyrdom Syndrome; 4) the creation of situations tactically advantageous for the non-democratic political opposition; 5) the alienation of people from the police and court system; 6) danger of suppression of all unwanted opinion by the government in the process of disciplining the popular opinion as expressed through 'coercive public protests'; 7) the danger of the task of regulating coercive public protest degenerating into authoritarian suppression of all protests. This danger is more real because of the fact that in India an elite group composed of officials and policy makers is already separated from the masses by a chasm of education, training and experience, and are likely to easily extend a policy of tutelage in the rules of democratic interaction; 8) In the absence of institutional countervailing forces operating in Indian society, the after-effect of controlling tightly the various forms of political protests so popular in contemporary India may be that the agents of governmental authority may acquire a habit of using more and more of power for solving problems and thus slowly slide down to an authoritarian regime.³² Bayley thus points out

how the process of curbing public protests in the Indian setting has grave consequences for the very democratic parliamentary form itself.

Bayley's analysis of coercive public protests and parliamentary government, while an interesting as well as thought provoking piece of formal analysis, neither examines the socio-economic causes which generate mounting coercive protests, nor provides any clue to find out whether the parliamentary form of government will be able to eradicate the underlying socio-economic causes generating coercive public protests and threatening the very fabric of the rule of law created under parliamentary democracy. He does not even pose the problem of alienation of individuals which has taken place in capitalist profit oriented competitive industrial societies, nor does he examine why people develop fear of freedom or want to escape from freedom. The findings of thinkers like Tonnies, Weber, Reisman, Tawney, Laski, Erich Fromm, Michels and a host of socialologists, psychologists, political thinkers and others show that the phrase "freedom of individual" has become a cliché in the new mass-societies emerging in the capitalist world, with its large-sized bureaucratic organisations, wherein the individual is transformed into commodity, into a robot manipulated by the powerful monopolists controlling economic resources and state power and manipulating gigantic mass communication media, for conditioning his views and preparing him to work as a guinea pig to be exploited in the drive for profits of the monopolies or to be slaughtered in the gigantic wars, launched by them in their drive for markets.³³ Thus, Bayley offers only a verbal fetish of freedom' plus a dose of advice to the leaders of the government to be pragmatic in their approach, and suggest a policy of an opportunistic handling of the situation. He has nothing to offer to the majority of the population, as to how they should develop movements which would help them destroy restraints imposed by parliamentary government, on their concrete economic, political, social and cultural democratic rights.

Rajni Kothari takes up the problem of protest and direct action and parliamentary democracy at a deeper level. He observes how the parliamentary

form of democracy has failed to embody the idea of democracy as understood in its essential sense and this failure principally stems from the fact that under it there is little scope for popular participation in political processes. This lack of participation leads to a sense of insignificance in the people, especially in those sections which are more politically conscious. Faced with a situation in which power is concentrated they grow under a sense of powerlessness, a feeling which is in sharp contradiction to the ideology of democracy.³⁴ What we find in reality is that power tends to get concentrated under parliamentary government. The participation of the people in the process of the government is kept to a minimum. Effectively, parliamentary democracy becomes a rule of minority. Decisions taken at the seat of the power and enforced by its agents come as a fait accompli to the people. Thus, grievances accumulate. The normal channels provided for removing the accumulated grievances prove to be impotent. The stage is set for direct action.³⁵

Kothari thus comes to the conclusion that direct action is inevitable under parliamentary democracy. He points out, "it is easy to dismiss direct action as unpermissible under parliamentary democracy; it is difficult to obtain conditions under which the need for direct action is wholly removed."³⁶ After establishing the inevitability of protest movements in parliamentary democracy he tries to dispose of the formal arguments which are usually put forth to oppose protest movements, namely, 1) it would result in anarchy and chaos, 2) that could be justified against foreign government but highly inappropriate under a government which is "our own government", 3) that the electorate ought to give a fair chance to the government in power, because the electorate is free to change it in the next election, 4) that it would make a mockery of the sovereignty of parliament.

According to Kothari, fear of anarchy and chaos in the body politic is itself a symptom of a deep-seated malady prevailing in society, which reveals that some drastic steps are required to settle the issue. The argument of the irrelevance of protest movements in self government is founded on a hollow reasoning. Because parliamentary democracy, by permitting only the single act of choosing a representative, and denying every other mode of participating in political action

never permits the people to feel even the representative government as 'self government.' The argument that the elected government should be given a fair chance by the electorate is also very feeble according to Kothari because elections in parliamentary democracy, are no more than a rubber stamp on one party's manifesto or another's which may be drawn up deceptively leaving out measures which are likely to be unpalatable to the public. Finally, Kothari refutes the fourth argument against protest and direct action, namely, that it will make a mockery of the sovereignty of the parliament by pointing out that the parliamentary sovereignty in effect turns out to be the sovereignty of an organized minority, with majority having little participation in the political powers, and he argues that the curious fact, indeed is that the only real participation possible for a majority of people under such a form of government is the participation in direct action.³⁷

Kothari's discussion of parliamentary democracy and protest movements, though stimulating, carries on the discussion at a formal level, and thus offers no basic clues to the understanding of the problem. After a brilliant exposure of the limitations of parliamentary democracy as a fetter on conscious, purposive and free participation of people in the political processes, he does not deepen his discussion. While recognizing that parliamentary government has failed, and therefore compels people to take to direct action, Kothari still glorifies freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, and freedom of press, which he feels are its essential features. He does not point out the truth that these freedoms in the context of a capitalist framework are accessible only to a small group of capitalists, landlords, exploiters and profiteers. He does not examine why the parliamentary democratic constitution in India has categorically laid down restrictions on fundamental rights, and has declared certain categories of rights as fundamental. He further remains completely silent over the fact that the Preventive Detention Act, and a number of other undemocratic clauses have armed the government with such powers that it can rule by suppressing all democratic liberties cherished by him. In fact, in the end Kothari ends curiously as a defender of the status quo - permitting only those direct action which would only fertilise parliamentary form of government and he is opposed to other direct actions.³⁸

In fine, it may thus be noted that parliamentary democracy as we experience in India is not completely satisfactory and hence inadequate to meet the grievances. Thus, protest in any form is inevitable. The protests and movements will continue till adequate institutional forms and mechanisms for the rationalisation and exercise of concrete democratic rights and social and economic environment conducive to the expression of the best selves of the individual is found and attained.

On the impact of the protest movements in India, T.K.Oommen³⁹ views it from a different angle. He first classifies the protest movements on their type of collectivity, nature of the goal, type of movements and their macro and micro consequences. These different types of protest movements thus vary in terms of their consequences for the system. To Oomen, collectivities may broadly be classified into three : biological, primordial and civil. These three different types of collectivities pursue goals that are symbolic, instrumental and both symbolic and instrumental simultaneously. Each category of the collectivities may thus take three different but overlapping forms, namely, biological-symbolic, biological-instrumental, and biological-symbolic and instrumental. Similar to these categories are also found in the case of primordial and civil collectivities. When a protest movement takes place for increasing and/or decreasing the age at marriage or for the right of admission to public places by women/black/untouchables, this is an example of biological symbolic movement. A movement by women for equal wages or a youth movement for lowering the age of franchise or for reservation/dereservation falls in the category of biological-instrumental protest movement. A movement of a racial category for establishing a new nation-state comes under the category of biological with both symbolic and instrumental goals. So far as the primordial collectivities are concerned, caste mobility movements, conversion or reform movements of religious collectivities; linguistic collectivities fighting for cultural autonomy fall in the category of primordial-symbolic movements. When the movement of religious, linguistic, caste or tribal groups is organised for political purposes like political representation or for economic opportunities it comes under primordial instrumental category. Seccessionist movements by religious, linguistic or tribal collectivities are regarded as primordial movements with symbolic and

instrumental goal. Finally, civil collectivities may resort to movements such as Workers' movement to get May day declared as a holiday, students' mobilization to abolish the compulsory attendance system and these movements are civil-symbolic movements. Students' movement for participation in University decisional processes, farmers' mobilization for agricultural subsidies, workers' demand for sharing of profits with owners fall in the category of civil-instrumental type. Finally, most of the movements by the civil collectivities combine both symbolic and instrumental goals but when the instrumental goal provides the thrust these movements are of civil with symbolic and instrumental type.

Movements which pursue exclusively symbolic goals rarely question the basic values and principles involved in the prevalent distribution of goods and services, they only strive towards a change in the system. Similarly, movements which pursue exclusively instrumental goals are capable of bringing about change within the system alone. But some of these movements may cause structural transformation, that is, change of the system, through an accretive process. For example, lowering of age of franchise has brought about substantial change in the distribution of political power in favour of the youth as they constitute a substantial proportion of the population. Similarly, workers' movements for sharing of profits, if successful, can gradually undermine capitalism as a system. The case of movements which combine both symbolic and instrumental goals is quite different. As for civil collectivities, such protests exist in large numbers but are rarely a threat to the nation-state, although the governing elite may be replaced through such movements. As for the biological collectivities only race provides a basis for the emergence of a nation-state. The possibility of the emergence of movements threatening the nation-state is the greatest when the collective actors are constituted by primordial collectivities such as religious, linguistic or tribal groups. In so far as these collectivities pursue both symbolic and instrumental goals simultaneously, secessionism is almost the inescapable demand.⁴⁰

Given the different collectivities with their different goals and consequences on the nation and the state, we get a variety of protest movements in India all of

which pose a threat, albeit in varying degrees, to the nation-state. The threat emanates from two sources; the nature of responses from the deprived, and that of the collectivity. On the one hand of the continuum is the eagerness on the part of the dominant collectivity to absorb all other collectivities into its fold, leading to the crystallization of assimilationist movements. If secessionism cannot be supported from the nationalist point of view, assimilationism cannot be defended from the humanist perspective. In between these polar opposites separatist, insularist and welfarist movements may be identified with their corresponding impact on the system as a whole and the parts of the system.⁴¹

The bases of secessionist movements in independent India are basically three : language, e.g., the Dravidian movement at the initial stage; tribe, e.g., Naga National Movement, Mizo National Front, Gorkha National Liberation Front; and religion, e.g., the movement for independent Kashmir, the movement for a separate sikh state, Khalistan. Whatever may be the bases of group formation, to the extent that the tendency towards extra- territorial loyalty persists or the 'aspiration' for disengagement from the nation-state continues, it is an indicator of inadequate welding of the constituents into the nation-state. Secessionist movements, if successful, will lead to the disintegration of the state and thus redrawing of boundaries. This, in turn, brings about independence, autonomy to the collectivities pursuing secessionist protests. Religion provides the most salient basis of secessionism in India. All secessionist movements in independent India have had a religious content. Dravidian Tamil nationalism was not only against Hindi but also against Aryan Hinduism. The majority of Mizos and Nagas look upon themselves not only as tribes but also as Christians. But the persistent secessionist movements for independent Kashmir and Khalistan - are clearly based on religious ideologies, those of Islam and Sikhism.

The tendency towards proliferation of states within the nation-state is a manifestation of separatist movements. Once language has been accepted as the basis of state formation it is inevitable that endemic demands for separate states based on language should crystallize in a country like India with a multiplicity

of languages. Accepting language as the sole or even the dominant criterion of state formation foments recurrent demands. Further, once language is accepted as the basis of state formation, those cases where language and other factors coexist pose severe problems. The identification, though perhaps wrongly, of the Punjabi language with Sikhism and Urdu with Islam are cases in point. Again, if the people speaking a language are not concentrated in a definite territory, in all probability, the development of their language and culture, for want of political patronage and administrative nurture, would be adversely affected. The case of Sindhi and to a certain extent, that of Urdu are examples. This would provide for the grounds for the emergence of separatist movements.

Once language is accepted as the dominant basis of state formation, other primordial bases would be used for mobilization - region, dialect and tribe. The persisting demand for a separate Jharkhand state - bringing together the tribal groups belonging to the border districts of Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal is simultaneously a demand to recognize Jharkhand as a specific cultural region and for tribal autonomy. The tendency in such contexts would often be to rediscover traditional identities which frozen or even to invent new myths of identity. Finally, the total neglect of administrative viability, ecological variations and developmental imbalances and the sole reliance on language for state reorganization gave birth to a series of regional movements such as the Telengana separatist movement between 1969-71, and the resurrection of the erstwhile Vidharbha movement. In fine, the separatist movements cause erosion of state authority at the centre and the emergence of federal polity. For the constituent units, separatist movements lead to limited autonomy within the framework of nation - state.

The logical extension of establishing states based on language is the emergence of animosity towards outsiders, that is, towards those linguistic groups outside the region, giving birth to insulationist movements. The widespread tendency to emphasise the rights of sons of the soil and the proliferation of 'senas' are too well known. This type of movement usually emerges either in advanced urban industrial towns or in backward rural areas. While the archetype of this variety of movement is the Shiv Sena of Bombay, the emergence of 'Lachit Sena',

Kannada Chaluvalligars only indicate the widespread tendency in this direction. An extension of this tendency may also be discerned in the emergence of regional political parties such as the Bangla Congress, Kerala Congress and Dravidian parties. Similarly, the proverbial hatred and suspicion that the tribals have towards the outsiders or "dikus" is well known. Generally, the contentions in this context anchor around employment, admission to educational institutions, licences for new economic ventures, etc. The mobilizations in Assam against Bengalis labelling them as 'foreigners', adds a new dimension to the already vexing problem.⁴² The consequences of insularist movement thus becomes weakening of the concept of unitary citizenship and hence of the overarching nature of the nation-state. As far as the micro structures of the nation state is concerned, insularist movements result in confrontations between two or more local structures and hence, hostility among constituent units within the nation-state.⁴³

While a culturally plural situation gives birth to the crystallization of identities and movements based on language, region and religion, a socially plural situation is likely to facilitate the emergence of identities based on social rank and prestige, giving birth to welfarist movements. These movements are geared to the welfare of their clientele in the broadest sense of the term. Given the fact that inequality was institutionalized in traditional Indian society through the caste system and the values and norms that were associated with it, it is not surprising that a large number of movements led by those who experienced deprivation under the rigidity of the caste system rebelled, particularly when the new democratic framework assured them equality, fraternity and freedom. Under the welfarist movement there is the possibility of traditional vested interests getting disenchanted and hence fomenting unrest. Thus, welfarist movement causes social development of the traditionally under-privileged primordial collectivities and hence there is the likelihood of animosity from entrenched collectivities. The virulent anti-Brahmin movement in Tamil Nadu,⁴⁴ the Mahar and Mali movements in Maharashtra,⁴⁵ the Ezhava movement in Kerala⁴⁶, the Chamar movement in parts of Uttar Pradesh⁴⁷, are some of the well-known movements of this variety.

Finally, the 'assimilationist' movement has been a part of the Indian ethos for centuries. Thus, through the Hindu mode of absorption⁴⁸, the tribal people, particularly in South-Central India, had been gradually assimilated into the Hindu fold. Similarly, through the process of 'Sanskritization'⁴⁹, the lower castes have been attempting to move up in the caste hierarchy. Under the assimilationist movement, the nation-state is consolidated but at a very high social cost because it leads to the eclipse of local identities and what Oommen calls 'culturocide'.⁵⁰ Among the religions of Indian origin, the Jains follow, by and large, a policy of socio-cultural assimilation with the dominant religious collectivity, the Hindus. As for the neo Buddhists, the recent converts from Dalits, who constitute the bulk of Indian Buddhists today, the tendency is to assert their status in caste rather than in religious terms. Among the religions of alien origin the tendency to undergo a process of enculturation or Indianization of their life style is clearly discernible.⁵¹ In the context of language too, the twin process of assertion and assimilation are at work.⁵² Most Hindus and some Muslims prefer the amalgamation of Hindi and Urdu and the resultant Hindustani.

Given these general pattern of protest movements and their tacit and manifest impacts on the nation-state of India and its constituent units exploration and identification of concrete and perceived impacts of the protest movements on the Indian political process may be ventured. These may not be all inclusive and exhaustive but will indicate the major pattern that is being shaped along which more comprehensive and pinpointed investigation could be made.

Since the late sixties, many things have changed - stability of leadership, party, government and the system as a whole. These changes have been, to a great extent, due to mobilizations and protests on the part of various groups and collectivities. Two themes have marked India's political history most in these later years - political awakening and political decay.⁵³

Political awakening is a process by which individuals and social groups develop a fuller understanding of the workings and implications of open representative politics, and become more active in seeking to participate in it. They increasingly

understand that elected politicians are supposed to represent and respond to felt needs, that problems are often shared by many other in their caste, class, occupational group, region, locality etc. and this fact places their social group in conflict with others. These groups have grown more assertive, so that conflicts quicken, as do the political rivalries that naturally follow from this. This awakening has been taking place among all sections of Indian society. It started earlier and has gone further among more prosperous and literate groups becoming conscious of their identity, status and position and the rights due to them. It has occurred among the poor and illiterate many as well. As these disadvantaged groups crystallize into active elements in the political process through their mobilization, they ^ebecome less willing to tolerate. This awakening is reflected in all areas of life which concern them - from the immediate cause of deprivation to ecological subject - and people assert by mobilization and protest. In other words, people are no longer passive receiver as they had been. The awakening has thus made India more genuine democracy as well as more difficult country to govern - a characteristic that is designated as political decay.

Political decay may be described as a decline in the capacity of political institutions to respond creatively or even adequately to discontent and the aspirations of social groups. Since the late sixties, both the formal institutions of the state in India such as legislatures, the Judiciary, and the bureaucracy, and informal institutions especially political parties have undergone decay. Broadly speaking, this has occurred for the loss, or decline of legitimacy of these institutions in the ^{of}face protest movements in India. Thus, the simultaneous occurrence of both awakening and decay resulting mostly from mobilisation and protest has led to serious social disorder and something close to political crisis.

This phenomenon has resulted in a divergence of the state and society giving birth to two trends - 'statism' among those near the apex of the political system that followed from the increasing isolation of the state from the society, and 'anti-politics' that follows from the increasing isolation of the society from the state.⁵⁴ Statists seek a strong state, some wanting a state whose strength resides mainly in its capacity for brisk, assertive leadership while others stress the importance of

the state's coercive powers. These views are arrived at as a consequence of recent political decay and of the loss of confidence in the state as an agency for creative change in society. Since the state cannot play much of a mediating role in this increasingly conflictual society, it must either provide clear, compelling leadership or must arm itself to meet social turbulence with force, or both.

The growth of statism at the apex of the system is paralleled by a reaction at and near the base of the system. At times, it is merely anti-statist, seeking a decent realization of power within the political system, but it also contains more uncompromising elements voicing sentiments that are fully anti-political - that is, they oppose involvement of any kind with the state. Instead, faith is placed in voluntary self-help associations, initiatives, protests and movements at the grass roots all across India. Thus, it is to be noted that the protests and movements in India flow from the different contradictions of the society including the dysfunctional role of the state that have their impact felt in the state making the latter centralised, authoritarian and interventionist.

India, like most of the developing countries, emerged as an independent state but it is yet to mature as a nation. Maturity to a nation implies an emotional - affective attachment of an average citizen to one's own country, transcending those based on his primordial attachments of religion, language, caste, race etc.⁵⁵ This passage from a "nation-in-the-becoming" to a "nation-in-the-being" is the period of "nation-building". The coming into being of the nation-state implies a national consensus on the institutions and mechanisms of the state, through which social conflicts keep getting articulated and resolved. But before such a consensus is reached, more often than not, this period is likely to be characterized by internal strifes and conflicts over clashing values and interests, over issues of exploitation, discrimination, and oppression. Hence, conflicts of scale taking place within a state need not be interpreted necessarily as destabilising, anti-national forces bent upon destroying the country. On the contrary, these should be considered as constituting very stuff out of which a nation-state will get galvanized.⁵⁶

Viewed thus, protest movements in India do not pose threat to the nation-state of India. Rather these movements contribute to the process of nation-building by helping to reach the consensus on which the 'nation-in-the - being' will be founded. However, this may be one side of the coin. Protest movements do indeed contribute but the negative aspect of the impact of these movements should not be lost sight of. Movements based on irrational grounds⁵⁷ of parochial vested interests with a veil of a broad rational goal only pull the state to fragmentations thus destroying the process of building the nation. The emergence of a number of protests and movements in India such as those of the Gorkhaland movement, Assam movement, Bodoland movement, movements for Khalistan and Kashmir has more negative impacts on the nation than their positive impacts. In other words, it may be said that some of the protests and movements in India have virtually weakened the nation of India thus weakening also the state.

Under the circumstances, in the face of numerous protest movements the government began to lose its command over the country. There was found the erosion in the legitimacy of the regime. This crisis of legitimacy and hence governability led the government, particularly during Indira Gandhi's tenure, to be more authoritarian and interventionist to counter those movement by the coercive power of the state. This was a clear departure from the earlier regimes where the accommodative norm was followed to meet the agitations and protests. But the interventionist and authoritarian policies and actions could not meet the grievances of the agitating and protesting groups. On the other hand, authoritarianism only fuelled to the fire of the grievances.

Given the volatile situation, we witness a new era in Indian political process - an era of political accords. In order to pacify the protesting groups in the name of protecting India's sovereignty and integrity a number of accords has been signed by the government with the protesting groups. Mention may be made of the Punjab Accord, 1985, Assam Accord, 1985, Bodo Accord 1993, Accord on Darjeeling, 1988, Mizo Accord 1986, Shilong Accord 1975, and Peace Accords in Tripura. Besides these there have been some agreements with the protesting groups and

concessions in the form of autonomy have been conceded. Various autonomous councils within the boundary of provinces are the examples of this sort.

- o In line with the Anandpur Sahib Resolution of 1977 the Memorandum of Settlement was signed by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Sant Harchand Singh Longowal, President, Shiromani Akali Dal on July 24, 1985 which is commonly known as Rajiv Longowal Accord. The Accord comprises eleven clauses with a number of sub-clauses. It intended to settle some long standing problems of Punjab along with settling some immediate problems that came with the assassination of Indira Gandhi and the subsequent riots and revolts. In the Accord, a number of concessions were granted including the territorial claims that Punjab had been having for long - the transfer of Chandigarh and other areas of Punjabi speaking people to Punjab.⁵⁸

The memorandum of settlement signed by the Union Government and the Government of Assam with All Assam Students Union (AASU) and All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad (AAGSP) which had spearheaded movement on the issue of foreign nationals in Assam, brought to an end the prolonged agitation. The settlement sought to resolve the foreigners issue by fixing a base year (1966), assured constitutional, legislative, and administrative safeguards for the protection, preservation and promotion of cultural, social, linguistic identity and heritage of the Assamese people.⁵⁹ The Bodo Accord was signed on February 20, 1993 after a long dialogue between the Government of India, the All Bodo Students Union (ABSU) and the Bodo Peoples' Action Committee (BPAC), and the State Government of Assam. As a result a scheme was finalised under which it was considered necessary to provide maximum autonomy within the framework of the Constitution of India to the Bodos for social, economic, educational, ethnic and cultural advancement. The scheme provided detailed provisions for the autonomy, powers and functions of the designated Bodo Autonomous Council.⁶⁰

The demands of the agitating Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF) having been considered by the Government of India and the Government of West Bengal

and consequent upon the tripartite meeting between Buta Singh, Union Home Minister, Jyoti Basu, Chief Minister of West Bengal and Subhas Ghising, President, GNLF at New Delhi on August 25, 1988, the agreement for the establishment of the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council was signed. The GNLF dropped the demand for a separate state of Gorkhaland and for the social, economic, educational and cultural advancement of the people residing in the hill areas of Darjeeling district came the autonomous hill council, the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill council by an Act of the Government of West Bengal. The council was allotted as many as nineteen subjects of basic nature to be dealt with.⁶¹

In order to satisfy the protesting and agitating people of Mizoram the process of negotiation and settlement started in 1971 with the twenty seventh Constitutional Amendment Act and reached its climax with the fifty third Amendment Act, 1986 via the Mizo Accord of 1986. With a view to satisfying the desires and aspirations of all sections of the people of Mizoram, the Government of India, in the memorandum of Settlement, 1986, considered it necessary to grant statehood to Mizoram and also conceded some special rights to be enjoyed by the people of Mizoram. All these were, however, conditional to the cooperation of the Mizo National Front to be acceded in the form of giving up arms and entering into the mainstream within the constitutional framework of India.

The process of negotiation with the agitating Nagas started as early as in 1947 with the Naga-Akbar Hydari Accord. Under the Accord, the right of the Nagas to develop themselves according to their freely expressed wishes was recognized. This was followed by the Sixteen Point Agreement of 1960 which sought to extend another set of concessions to the Nagas including the status of a full fledged statehood. The Thirteenth Amendment Act of the Constitution of India, 1962 inserted a special provision of Article 371A in the constitution guaranteeing some special privileges to the Nagas. Finally came the Shillong Accord of 1975 and the Supplementary Agreement to the Shillong Accord of January 1976 under which the underground Nagas agreed to accept the Constitution of India and in turn, their proper rehabilitation was assured.⁶³

The forty-ninth Amendment Act, 1984 and the Fiftieth Amendment Act, 1984 in the Constitution of India were adopted to satisfy the aspirations of the agitating people in Tripura. These Acts were followed by the ultimate Memorandum of Settlement, 1988. The Accord was the outcome of a changed position adopted by the Tripura National Volunteers (TNV) under the leadership of Bijay Kumar Hranugkhawl to abjure violence, give up secessionist demand and to hold negotiations for a peaceful solution of all the problems of Tripura within the Constitution of India. In exchange, the Government of India and the Government of Tripura declared some special privileges and concessions to the TNV including provisions for resettlement and rehabilitation of the TNV undergrounds.⁶⁴

Besides these peace accords some other agreements were also signed to pacify the agitating groups and concessions in the form of autonomy were extended. The Jharkhand Autonomous Area Council (JAAC) is the example of this type of concessions.

However, an analysis of these accords and agreements show that most of these accords had been signed under the initiative of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi who lacked the quality of his mother Indira Gandhi to resort to authoritarian moves. Instead, he started the process of appeasement to the protesting groups. Thus, a review of these Accords show that these were more for gaining political mileage than to solve the problems of these areas. Again, it also shows that the Accords could not redress the deprivation and powerlessness of the agitating people. This implies that the agitations and protests did not cover the genuine deprivation and the resultant powerlessness of the common men for whom those agitations and protests were said to have launched. Similarly, these organized protests and the resultant accords have exposed the governability crisis of the system having its bearing on the entire political process thereby reflecting the message of a weak regime scared of its legitimacy thus resorting to the politics of appeasement.

It is also argued from some quarters that the constitutional scheme of federalism in India is one of the breeding grounds of deprivation of the regions thus leading to protests and movements for redressing the perceived deprivation. Viewed thus, the protest movements in India work as a contributory force to redefine the federal framework of India. But, in practice, one witnesses in India a number of movements that have been launched on sheer parochial grounds to satisfy some narrow vested interests. These movements, though under the shadow of perceived deprivation by the centre of the region or group, are in no way contributory to the Indian federal system and the process. The demand for a separate state of Kamtapur within the West Bengal on the grounds of separate culture, language and identity is a case in point. The fragmentation of the existing states to create new states as the protests intensify will open the flood gate and new protests for new states will get articulated, organized and intensified thereby posing question to the very federal identity of India. Thus, the regime requires to convey the message that the grievances of the protesting region or group may be redressed without creating new states. However, the present BJP led government could have avoided the decision to create the new states of 'Banarhal', 'Uttaranchal', 'Chhattisgarh' for the sake of the future of the Indian federal structure. The decision seems to be more politically motivated than pragmatically needbased.

Under the circumstances, however, the broad Indian political context is characterized by weakening political institutions and increasing power struggles. This results in the simultaneous tendencies in India toward increases in centralization and in powerlessness. Decision-making under successive governments continue to be highly centralised but that did little to enhance the governments ability to define and pursue clear policy goals. Personalization of power is closely connected with the issues of institutional weakness, which in turn necessitates a populist orientation in order to earn legitimacy and sustain popular support. Thus, the institutional weakness and the power struggles threaten the prospect for establishing legitimate and coherent authority.⁶⁵

Given all these, the following concluding observations may be drawn keeping in mind the broad research questions formulated for the purpose of exploration of the problem of the overall impact of the protest movements on the political process in India. In general, protest movements originate from the perceived deprivation, injustice, conditions of powerlessness or loss of identity of a section of the people. The broad general theory of Relative Deprivation concerning the social movements and also the Strain theory revolve around this assumption. If a protest movement is articulated and organized on these lines the movement becomes rational and justified. A protest movement of this type is certainly capable of expressing the legitimized conditions of powerlessness, injustice, deprivation of the different section of the people and hence, essentially remedial in nature. But often it is found that protest movements originate on relative deprivation, not of the section of the people, but of the leadership who, for some reason or the other has been out of the helms of power and wants to be around the power centre. Protest movements of this type are not capable of expressing the aspiration of the people in whose name the movements are launched. Rather, the movements under the garb of peoples' movements seek to redress the deprivation of the leadership - deprivation of his share in the power centre. In India too, not all the protest movements are of the first category. The protest movements launched by the Assam Gana Parishad and the All Assam Students Union, the Gorkhaland movement launched by the Gorkha National Liberation Front and the Kamtapur movement launched by the Kamtapur Peoples' Party are more of leader oriented in their objectives than people oriented. In all these movements even though the cause of peoples powerlessness, injustice and deprivation was highlighted, the real motive behind the movements have been the desire of the leaders to enjoy power who could not enjoy it through the accepted legitimate means. This becomes evident when one notices the compromise made by the Assam Chief Minister, Prafulla Kumar Mohanto, one of the important leaders of the Assam movement on issues of foreigners over which the entire Assam movement was founded. Logically, it follows that he wants to be around power and for power he can compromise the cause of the people that was showed to be the root cause of the movement. Similarly, whenever the legitimacy of the rule of GNLF chief,

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Appendix-I

PEACE ACCORDS IN ASSAM

PROBLEM OF FOREIGNERS IN ASSAM MEMORANDUM OF SETTLEMENT

Chief Minister Assam
August, 16, 1985.

The issue of foreign nationals in Assam, which had agitated the popular mind, has been resolved to the satisfaction of all sections of the people of the State. The Memorandum of Settlement, signed by the Union Government and the Government of Assam with the AASU and AAGSP which had spearheaded a movement on the issue, brought to an end the prolonged agitation and has opened up new possibilities of social and economic development in the State. The Memorandum, which accommodates all shades of opinion and satisfies all concerned sections apart from taking into full consideration the national commitments and international and humanitarian obligations, will go down in the country's history as a shining example of popular wisdom so brilliantly symbolised by the country's Prime Minister.

We present in the following pages the full text of the historic Memorandum of Settlement with the hope that the people in general will fully comprehend the spirit of the historic settlement and will extend full cooperation to the Government in implementing it.

Janata Bhavan,
Dispur, Guwahati.

HITESHWAR SAIKIA

MEMORANDUM OF SETTLEMENT

Sd/- (Biraj Sharma)
Government have all along been most anxious to find a satisfactory solution to the problem of foreigners in Assam. The All Assam Students Union (AASU) and the All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad (AAGSP) have also expressed their keenness to find such a solution.

Sd/- (P.K. Mahanta)
2. The AASU through their Memorandum dated 2nd February, 1980 presented to the late Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi, conveyed their profound sense of apprehensions regarding the continuing influx of foreign nationals into Assam and the fear about adverse effects upon the political, social, cultural and economic life of the State.

Sd/- (B.K. Phukan)
3. Being fully alive to the genuine apprehensions of the people of Assam, the then Prime Minister initiated the dialogue with the AASU/AAGSP. Subsequently, talks were held at the Prime Minister and Home Minister's levels during the period 1980-83. Several round of informal talks were held during 1984. Formal discussions were resumed in March 1985.

4. Keeping all aspects of the problem including consitutional and legal provosions, Internatioinal agreements, national commitments and humanitarian considerations, it has been decided to proceed as follows:

Foreigners Issue

5.1 For purpose of detectioin and deletion of foreigners, 1.1.1966 shall be the base date and year.

5.2 All persons who came to Assam prior to 1.1.1966, including those amongst them whose names appeared on the electoral rolls used in 1967 elections, shall be regularised.

5.3 Foreigners who came to Assam after 1.1.1966 (inclusive) and upto 24th March, 1971 shall be detected in accordance with the provisions of the Foreigners Act, 1946 and the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order 1964.

Sd/-
(Biraj Sharma)

5.4 Names of foreigners so detected will be deleted from the electoral rolls in force. Such persons will be required to register themselves before the Registration Officers of the respective districts in accordance with the provisions of the Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939 and the Registration of Foreigners Rules, 1939.

Sd/-
(P.K.Mahanta)

5.5 For the purpose, Government of India will undertake suitable strengthening of the governmental machinery.

5.6 On the expiry of a period of ten years following the date of detection, the names of all such persons which have been deleted from the electoral rolls shall be restored.

5.7 All persons who were expelled earlier, but have since re-entered illegally into Assam ; shall be expelled .

5.8 Foreigners who came to Assam on or after March 25, 1971 shall continue to be detected, detected and expelled in accordance with law. Immediate and practical steps shall be taken to expel such foreigners.

5.9 The Government will give due consideration to certain difficulties expressed by the AASU/AAGSP regarding the implementation of the Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunals) Act, 1983.

Safeguards and Economic Development :

6. Constitutional, legislative and administrative safeguards, as may be appropriate, shall be provided to protect , preserve and promote the cultural, social, linguistic identity and heritage of the Assemese people.

7. The Government take this opportunity to renew their commitment for the speedy all round economic development of Assam, so as to improve the standard of living of the people. Special emphasis will be placed on education and science & technology through establishment of national institutions.

Other Issues :

8.1 The Government will arrange for the issue of citizenship certificates in future only by the authorities of the Central Government.

Sd/-
(P.K.Mahanta)

8.2 Specific complaints that may be made by the AASU/AAGSP about irregular issuance of Indian Citizenship Certificate (ICC) will be looked into.

Sd/-
(Biraj Sharma)

9. The international border shall be made secure against future infiltration by erection of physical barriers like walls, barbed wire fencing and other obstacles at appropriate places. Patrolling by security forces on land and riverine routes all along the international border shall be adequately intensified. In order to further strengthen the security arrangements, to prevent effectively future filtration, an adequate number of check posts shall be set up.

9.2 Besides the arrangements mentioned above and keeping in view security consideration, a road all along the international border shall be constructed so as to facilitate patrolling by security forces. Land between border and the road would be kept free on human habitation, wherever possible. Riverine patrolling along the international border would be intensified. All effective measures would be adopted to prevent infiltrators crossing or attempting to cross the international border.

10. It will be ensured that relevant laws for prevention of encroachment of government lands and lands in tribal belts and blocks are strictly

enforced and unauthorised encroachers evicted as laid down under such laws.

11. It will be ensured that the relevant law restricting acquisition of immovable property by foreigners by in Assam is strictly enforced.

12. It will be ensured that Birth and Death Registers are duly maintained.

Restoration of normalcy :

Sd/- (P.K.Mahanta) 13. The All Assam Students Union (AASU) and the All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad (AAGSP) call off the agitation, assure all cooperation and dedicate themselves towards the development of the country.

14. The Central and the State Government have agreed to :

Sd/- (Biraj Sharma) (a) review with sympathy and withdraw cases of disciplinary action taken against employees in the context of the agitation and to ensure that there is not victimization;

(b) frame a scheme for ex-gratia payment to next of kin of those who were killed in the course of the agitation;

(c) give sympathetic consideration to proposal for relaxation of upper age limit for employment in public services in Assam, having regard to exceptional situation that prevailed in holding of academic and competitive examinations, etc. in the context of agitation in Assam ;

(d) undertake review of detention cases, if any, as well as cases against persons charged with criminal offences in connection with the agitation, except those charged with commission of heinous offences ;

(e) consider withdrawal of the prohibitory orders/notification in force, if any.

15. The Ministry of Home Affairs will be the nodal Ministry/ for the implementation of the above.

Sd/-
(P. K. Mahanta)
President
All Assam Students Union

Sd/-
(B.K. Phukan)
General Secretary
All Assam Students Union

Sd/-
(R. D. Pradhan)
Home Secretary
Govt. of India

Sd/-
(Biraj Sharma)
Convenor
All Assam Gana Sangram
Parishad

Sd/-
(Smt. P. P. Trivedi)
Chief Secretary
Govt. of Assam

In the presence of

Sd/-
(Rajiv Gandhi)
Prime Minister of India

Date : 15th August, 1985

Place : New Delhi.

1. Election Commission will be requested to ensure preparation of fair electoral rolls.
2. Time for submission of claims and objections will be extended by 30 days, subject to this being consistent with the Election Rules.
3. The Election Commission will be requested to send Central Observers.

Sd/-

Home Secretary

1. Oil refinery will be established in Assam
2. Central Government will render full assistance to the State Government in their efforts to re-open :
 - (i) Ashok Paper Mill
 - (ii) Jute Mills
3. I.I.T. will be set up in Assam.

**MEMORANDUM OF SETTLEMENT
(BODO ACCORD)**

February 20, 1993, Guwahati

1. Preamble

(i) Both the Government of India and the Government of Assam have been making earnest efforts to bring about an amicable solution to the problems of the Bodos and Other Plains Tribals living in the north bank of river Brahmaputra within Assam.

(ii) Towards this end, the Government of India held a series of meeting with the State Government as well as with leaders of All Bodo Students Union (ABSU) and Bodo People's Action Committee (BPAC). The State Government has also separately held discussion with the Bodo leaders. As a result, it has been considered necessary to set-up an administrative authority within the State of Assam under a scheme, the details of which are outlined in the succeeding paragraphs:

2. Objective

The objective of this scheme is to provide maximum autonomy within the framework of the Constitution to the Bodos for social, economic, educational, ethnic and cultural advancement.

3(a) Name : Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC)

There shall be formed, by an Act of Assam Legislative Assembly, a Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC) within the State of Assam comprising continuous geographical areas between river Sankosh and Mazat/river Pasnoi. The land records authority of the State will scrutinize the list of villages furnished by ABSU/ BPAC having 50% and more of tribal population which shall be included in the

BAC. For the purpose of providing a contiguous areas, ever the villages having than 50% tribal population shall be included, BAC will also include Reserve Forests as per the guidelines laid by Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Environment and Forests, Govt. of India, not otherwise required by the Government for manning the international border and tea gardens located completely within the BAC contiguous area.

(b) Powers

The BAC will comprise of a General Council comprising 40 members, 35 elected on the basis of adult suffrage and having a life of five years. The Government will have powers to nominate 5 members to the Council, particularly from groups which could not otherwise be represented. This Council will have powers to make bye-laws, rules and orders for application within the BAC area on the subjects enumerated in Schedule 'A'.

(c) The Executive Authority of the BAC would be exercised in its Executive Body to be known as Bodoland Executive council (BEC) . The BEC will be responsible for implementation within the BAC area of the laws on subjects enumerated in Schedule 'A'.

(d) The General Council and the BEC will hold office during the pleasure of the Governor of Assam. Consultation with the State Law Department of Government of Assam would be necessary if the Governor proposed to dissolve either the General Council or the BEC before the expiry of its term in accordance with the provisions of law. The executive authority of the BEC will be exercised by the party enjoying a simple majority in the General Council. On completion of elections, the Governor would invite the leader of the majority party to constitute the BEC.

4. Finances

(i) (a) The finances for the BAC will be earmarked under a separate subhead within the State budget, in keeping with the guidelines laid down by the Government of India from time to time. The government of Assam would have no powers to divert this earmarked allocation to other heads/areas except in exigencies when there is unavoidable overall Budget cut.

(b) The provisions made in 4(i) (a) regarding allocation of funds should be in the line with the spirit of the Constitution (seventy second) and (seventy third) amendment.

(ii) The BAC would also receive grant-in-aid from time to time within the principles and policies enunciated by the Government of India.

(iii) The General Council will have powers to raise finances from levies/fees/taxes etc. on subjects mentioned in Schedule 'A' subject to Constitutional amendment mentioned above.

(iv) The finances for the BAC will be managed exclusively by its General Council and the statement of its annual audited accounts will be laid on the table of the State Assembly.

5. Powers of Appointment

The Bodoland Executive Committee would have powers to appoint Class III and Class IV Staff within its jurisdiction for implementation of schemes connected with the subjects enumerated in Schedule 'A'.

6. Reservation of Seats

The Election Commission of India will be requested by the BAC to consider seat reservation and delimitation of constituencies both Lok Sabha and State Assembly, within the BAC area to the extent permitted by the Constitution and the law.

7. Special Provisions for the BAC Area

The General Council shall be consulted and its views shall be given due regard before any law made on the following subjects is implemented in the BAC area:

- i) the religious or social practice of the Bodos;
- ii) the Bodo customary laws and procedures; and
- iii) the ownership and transfer of land within and BAC area.

8. Special status for the Bodoland and Autonomous Council

The BAC shall, within the laws of the land, take steps to protect the demographic complexion of the areas falling within its jurisdiction.

9. Special Courts

Action will be taken in consultation with the Guwahati High Court to set up within BAC Special Courts as specified below to try suits and cases between parties all of whom belong to Scheduled Tribe or Tribes in accordance with the tribal customary law and procedure, if any

a) Village Courts ; (b) subordinate District Customary Law Courts within a civil Sub-Divisional Territory, and (c) District Customary Law Court.

10. Appointment in the Central Bodies

The claims of the Bodos shall be considered for appointment to the North-Eastern Council.

11. Official Language

The General Council can lay down policy with regard to use of Bodo languages as medium of official correspondence within the BAC area. However, while corresponding with offices outside the BAC area, correspondence will have to be

in bilingual form in accordance with the Article 345 of the Constitution and the provision of law in this behalf.

12. Changes in Geographical Boundary

The geographical areas of the Bodoland Autonomous Council as agreed upon can be changed with the mutual consent of the BAC and the Government of Assam.

13. Revision of List of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

The scheduling and de-scheduling of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes residing within the Bodo areas will be down as per the Commission appointed by the Government of India under the Constitution.

14. Trade and Commerce

The General Council will have powers to regulate trade and commerce within its jurisdiction in accordance with the existing law. For this purpose, it can issue permits and licences to individuals within the BAC areas. The Government of Assam and the Union Government while considering allotment of permits to people residing within the BAC areas will give preference to the Bodos.

15. Employment Opportunities

The BAC will have power to reserve jobs for Scheduled Tribes within its jurisdiction. However, exercise of such powers shall be in accordance with the existing constitutional and legal provisions.

16. Civil and Police Services

i) The Government of Assam may from time to time post officers of the rank of Class II and above to posts within the BAC in accordance with the exigencies. While making these postings due regard will be given the views of BAC about officers being so posted.

ii) The officers posted to the BAC areas will be accountable to the BAC for the performance and the assessment of their work recorded by the BEC authorities, will be incorporated to their ACRs by the State Government.

iii) The Central Government while making recruitment from the State of Assam to the Army, para-military forces and police units, will hold special recruitment drives within the BAC area.

17. Appointment of Interim Bodoland Executive Council

The Government of Assam will take steps for the formation of an Interim Bodoland Executive Council for the BAC from amongst the leaders of the present Bodoland movement who are signatories to this settlement, during the transition period, i.e. prior to the holding of elections. Such Interim council would be formed before a prescribed date mutually agreed between the Central and State Governments.

18. Relief and Rehabilitation

i) ABSU-BPAC leaders will take immediate steps to bring overground and deposit with the District authorities all arms, ammunition and explosives in the possession of their own supporters and will cooperate with the administration in bringing overground all Bodo militants along with their arms and ammunition etc. within one month of the formation of the Interim BEC. In order to ensure the smooth return to civil life of the cadre and to assist in the quick restoration of peace and normalcy, such surrenders made voluntarily, will not attract prosecution.

ii) The Government of Assam will consider sympathetically the withdrawal of all cases against persons connected with the Bodoland Movements excluding those relating to heinous crimes.

iii) The Government of India will initiate steps for review of action against the Bodo employees of Government of India and subordinate offices as well as in respect of Central Government Undertakings. Similar action would be taken by the Government of Assam.

iv) The Government of Assam will initiate immediate steps for suitable rehabilitation of the Bodo militants coming overground as a result of this settlement. Similarly, the Government will organise ex-gratia payments as per rules to next of the kins killed during the Bodo agitation.

19. Share in collection of excise duty on tea

The Government of Assam will deposit in the BAC Fund revenue collected from the tea gardens falling within the BAC area.

20. Protection of right of non-tribals

The Government of Assam and the BAC will jointly ensure that all rights and interests of the non-tribals as on date living in BAC area in matters pertaining to land as well as their language protected.

21. Ad-hoc Central grant for launching the BAC

After the signing of this settlement, an ad-hoc Budget on reasonable basis will be prepared by Interim BEC and discussed with the State and Central Government for necessary financial support.

Sd/- S.K.Bwiswamutary
President, ABSU

Sd/- K.S.Rao
Addl. Chief Secretary to the
Government of Assam.

Sd/- Rabi Ram Brahma
General Secretary, ABSU.

Sd/- Subhash Basumatari
Chairman, BPAC.

In the presence of

Sd/- Rajesh Pilot
Minister of State (Internal Security)
Ministry of Home Affairs
Government of India.

Sd/- Hiteswar Saikia
Chief Minister of Assam
State Govt. of Assam.

PEACE ACCORD IN THE SUB-HIMALAYA
Accord on Darjeeling

Text of The Accord on Darjeeling :

The demands of the GNLF having been considered by the Government of India and the Government of West Bengal and consequent upon the tripartite meeting between Shri Buta Singh, Union Home Minister, Shri Jyoti Basu, Chief Minister of West Bengal and Shri Subhas Ghising, President GNLF at New Delhi on 25.7.88, it is hereby agreed between Government of India, Government of West Bengal and GNLF as below :

1. Separate State of Gorkhaland

In the overall national interest and in response to Prime Minister's call, the GNLF agree to drop the demand for a separate State of Gorkhaland. For the social, economic, education and cultural advancement of the people residing in the hill areas of darjeeling district, it is agreed to have an autonomous hill council to be set up under a State Act. The salient features of the hill council would be as follows :

(i) The name of the Council will be Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council.

(ii) The Council will cover the three hill subdivisions of Darjeeling district namely, Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong, plus the Mouzas of Lohagarh T.G., Lohagarh Forest, Eangmohan, Barachenga, Panighata Chota Adalpur, Poharu, Sukna forest, Sukna Part I, Pantapati Forest I, Mahanadi forest and Salbari Chhat Part II within Siliguri Subdivision.

(iii) The state government agrees to lease to the Council, after it is formed, or acquire for it the use of such land as may be required and necessary for

administrative and developmental purposes, anywhere in the State and in particular in or around 'Darjeeling more' in Siliguri subdivision.

(iv) The executive powers of the Council will cover the following subjects to the provision of the Central and State laws.

1. The allotment, occupation, use or setting apart of land other than any land which is reserved forest, for the purpose of agriculture or grazing or for residential or other non-agricultural purposes or for any other purpose likely to promote the interest of the inhabitants of any village, locality or town;

2. The management of any forest, not being a reserved forest.

3. The use of any canal or water-course for the purpose of agriculture.

4. Agriculture

5. Public health and sanitation, hospitals and dispensaries.

6. Tourism

7. Vocational training

8. Public Works-Development

9. Construction and maintenance of all roads except national highways and state highways.

10. Transport and development of transport

11. Management of burials and burial grounds, cremation and cremation-grounds.

12. Preservation, protection and improvement of livestock and prevention of animal diseases, veterinary training and practice.

13. Pounds and the prevention of cattle trespass.
14. Water, that is to say water supplies, irrigation and canals, drainage and embankment, water storage.
15. Fisheries
16. Management of markets and fairs not being already managed by municipal authorities, panchayat samiti or gram panchayats.
17. Education-primary, secondary and higher secondary
18. Works, lands and buildings vested in or in the lawful possession of the council and
19. Small scale and cottage industries

V. The council shall exercise general powers of supervision over Panchayat Samitis, Gram Panchayats and Municipalities falling within the area of the Council's jurisdiction.

VI. The general council will have a total of 42 members out of which 28 will be elected and the rest nominated by the State government.

VII. There will be an executive Council and the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of the general Council will be ex-official members of the executive council with the Chairman the general council functioning as the Chief executive councillor. The Chief executive councillor will nominate five members to the executive council from out of the elected members of the council and the state government will nominate two members to the executive council from out of the non-official nominated members of the General Council.

VIII. The Chairman of the general Council cum Chief executive councillor will have the ex-official status and privileges of a minister in the council of minister in the state.

IX. The bill for setting up the hill council will be introduced and passed in a special session of the state legislature which has been summoned, the election to the hill council will be held by the 10 December, 1988.

2. Restoration of Normalcy :

(i) Review of criminal cases :

It is agreed that a review will be done by the State government of all the cases registered under various laws against persons involved in the GNLF agitation. Action will be taken, in the light of the review, not to proceed with prosecution in all cases except those charged with murder. Release of persons in custody will follow the withdrawal of cases. This review will be completed within 15 days of signing of this agreement.

(ii) Action against Government servants :

The State government agrees to withdraw all cases of disciplinary action taken against employees in the context of the agitation. There will be no victimisation of government servants.

(iii) The GNLF agrees to issue a call to its cadre for the surrender of all unauthorized arms to the district administration. It will be made clear in the call that such surrenders made voluntarily within the prescribed date will not attract any prosecution.

(iv) The GNLF hereby agrees to withdraw all agitational activities and to extend full cooperation to the administration for the maintenance of peace and normalisation of the political process in the hill areas of Darjeeling.

(Subhash Ghising)

President, GNLF

(R. N. Sen gupta)

Chief Secretary on behalf of the
Government of West Bengal

(C. G. Somiah)

Union Home Secretary
on behalf of the Union Govt.

In the presence of Union Home
Minister, Chief Minister, Govt. of West
Union Home Minister Chief Minister
Govt. of West Bengal.

Peace Accords in Mizoram

Memorandum of Settlement, 1986 (The Mizo Accord)

Preamble

1. Government of India have all along been making earnest efforts to bring about an end to the disturbed conditions in Mizoram and to restore peace and harmony.
2. Towards this end, initiative was taken by the Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandji, On the acceptance by Shri Laldenga on behalf of the Mizo National Front (MNF) of the two conditions namely cessation of violence by MNF and holding of talks within the framework of the Constitution of India, a series of discussions were held with Shri Laldenga. Settlement on various issues reached during the course of the talks is incorporated in the following paragraph.

RESTORATION OF NORMALCY :

- 3.1 With a view to restoring peace and normalcy in Mizoram the MNF party, on their part, undertakes within the agreed timeframe, to take all necessary steps to end all underground activities to bring out all underground personnel of the MNF with their arms, ammunition and equipment to ensure their return to civil life, to abjure violence and generally to help in the process of restoration of normalcy. The modalities of bringing out all underground personnel and the deposit of arms, ammunition and equipment will be as worked out. The implementation of the foregoing will be under the supervision of the Central Government.
- 3.2 The MNF Party will take immediate steps to amend its Articles of Association so as to make them conform to the provision of law.
- 3.3 The Central Government will take steps for the resettlement and rehabilitation of underground MNF personnel coming overground after considering the schemes proposed in this regard by the Government of Mizoram.
- 3.4 The MNF undertakes not to extend any support to Tripura/Tribal National Volunteers(TNV) , People's Liberation Army of Manipur (PLA) and any other such groups, by way of training, supply of arms or providing protection or in any other manner.

proposed in this regard by the Government of Mizoram.

3.4 The MNF undertakes not to extend any support to Tripura/Tribal National Volunteers(TNV) , People's Liberation Army of Manipur (PLA) and any other such groups, by way of training, supply of arms or providing protection or in any other manner.

LEGAL ADMINISTRATIVE AND OTHER STEPS

4.1 With a view to satisfying the desires and aspirations of all sections of the people of Mizoram, the Government will initiate measure to confer Statehood on the Union Territory of Mizoram, subject to the other stipulations contained in this Memorandum of Settlement.

4.2 To give effect to the above, the necessary legislative and administrative measures will be undertaken, including those for the enactment of Bills for the amendment of the Constitution and other laws for the conferment of Statehood as aforesaid, to come into effect on a date to be notified by the Central Government.

4.3 The amendments aforesaid shall provide, among other things, for the following

(I) The territory of Mizoram shall consist of the territory specified in Section 6 of the North Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1971.

(II) Notwithstanding anything contained in the Constitution, no Act of Parliament in respect of

- (a) religious or social practices of the Mizos,
- (b) Mizo customary law or procedure
- (c) administration of Civil and Criminal justice involving decisions according to Mizo customary law,
- (d) ownership and transfer of land.

shall apply to the State of Mizoram unless the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram by a resolution so decides :

Provided that nothing in this clause shall apply to any Central Act in force in Mizoram immediately before that appointed day.

(III) Article 170, Clause (1) shall, in relation to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram, have effect as if for the word 'sixty', the word 'forty' has been substituted.

5. Soon after the Bill for conferment of Statehood becomes law, and when the President is satisfied that normalcy has returned and that conditions conducive to the holding of free and fair elections exist, the process of holding elections to the Legislative Assembly will be initiated.

6. (a) The Centre will transfer resources to the new Government keeping in view the change in status from a Union Territory to a State and this will include resources to cover the revenue gap for the year.

(b) Central assistance for Plan will be fixed taking note of any residuary gap in resources so as to sustain the approved Plan outlay and the pattern of assistance will be in the case of special category States.

7. Border trade in locally produced or grown agricultural commodities could be allowed under the scheme to be formulated by the Central Government, subject to international arrangements with neighbouring countries.

8. The inner Line Regulations, as now in force in Mizoram, will not be amended or repeated without consulting the State Government.

OTHER MATTERS

9. The rights and privileges of the minorities in Mizoram as envisaged in the Constitution, shall continue to be preserved and protected and their social and economic advancement shall be ensured.

10. Steps will be taken by the Government of Mizoram at the earliest to review and codify the existing customs, practices, laws or other usages relating to the matters specified in clauses (a) to (d) of para 4.3 (II) of the Memorandum keeping in view that any individual Mizo may prefer to be governed by Acts of Parliament dealing with such matters and which are of general application.

11. The questions of the unification of Mizo inhabited areas of other States to form one administrative unit was raised by the MNF delegation. It was pointed out to them on behalf of the Government of India, that Article 3 of the Constitution of India prescribes the procedure in this regard but that the Government cannot make any commitment in this respect.

12. It was also pointed out on behalf of the Government that as soon as Mizoram becomes a state :

(i) the provisions of Part XVII of the Constitution will apply and the State will be at liberty to adopt any one or more of the languages in use in the State as the language to be used for all or any of the official purposes of the State:

(ii) it is open to the State to move for the establishment of a separate University in the State in accordance with the prescribed procedure: in the light of the Prime Minister's statement at the Joint Conferences of the Chief Justices Chief Ministers and Law Ministers held at New Delhi on 31st August, 1985. Mizoram will be entitled to have a High Court of its own if it so wishes

(a) It was noted that there is already a scheme in force for payment of ex-gratia amount to heirs dependents of persons who were killed during disturbances in 1966 and thereafter in the Union Territory of Mizoram. Arrangements will be made to expeditiously disburse payment to those eligible persons who had not been made over payment of the same.

(b) It was noted that consequent on verification done by a joint team of officers, the Government of India had already made arrangements for payment of compensation in respect of damage to crops; buildings destroyed/damaged during the action in Mizoram; and rental charges of buildings and lands occupied by the Security

Forces. There may, however be some claims which were preferred and verified by the above team but have not yet been settled. These pending claims will be settled expeditiously. Arrangement will also be made for payment of pending claims of rental charges for lands/buildings occupied by the Security Forces.

LALDENGA

On behalf of

Mizo National Front

Dated: 30th June, 1986

Place : New Delhi.

R. D. PRADHAN

Home Secretary

Govt. of India

LALKHAMA

Chief Secretary

Govt. of Mizoram.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

The Memorandum of Settlement contemplates the following sequence of event :

1. Coming overground of MNF personnel and depositing of arms, ammunition and equipment by them in accordance with the time bound programme as already agreed upon between the Ministry of Home Affairs and the MNF delegation.
2. The MNF Party should take immediate steps to amend its Articles of Association to make them conform to the provisions of law.
3. Government will initiate steps for rehabilitation of MNF personnel coming overground.
4. After completion of action under paragraphs(1) and (2) above, a Constitution Amemdment Bill will be introduced in Parliament for the grant of Statehood and other consequential legislative measures to be taken up.

5. After the Bill becomes law, preparations for delimitation of constituencies and holding election to the State Legislature will be taken on hand when the President is satisfied that normalcy has been restored.

LALDENGA

On behalf of

Mizo National Front

Dated: 30th June, 1986

Place : New Delhi.

R. D. PRADHAN

Home Secretary

Govt. of India

LALKHAMA

Chief Secretary

Govt. of Mizoram.

5 POINT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVT. OF MIZORAM AND THE HMAR PEOPLE'S CONVENTION, 1993

1. To bring out an amicable solution to the problems arising out of the demands of the Hmar People's Convention.
2. To give adequate autonomy to the Council for social, economic, cultural and educational advancement of the people under the jurisdiction of the Council.
3. To initiate measures for use of Hmar language as a medium of instruction upto Primary level and recognition of the Hmar language as one of the major language of the State of Mizoram.
4. The name of the Council shall be 'Sirlung Hills Development Council'.
5. To take immediate measures for inclusion of an area to be specified within the H.P.C. Demand Area of Mizoram and the other non-scheduled

areas of Mizoram in the Scheduled (Tribal) Area of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India so that the above mentioned area are safeguarded under the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India.

Final bilateral settlement shall be made after working out the details of the Council within the framework of the above agreed points.

Sd/-

Upa Thansung
Vice President
Hmar People's
Convention

Sd/-

(Vaivenga)
Minister
Health & Family
Welfare etc.
Mizoram.

September 29, 1993

PEACE ACCORDS IN NAGALAND

The Naga-Akbar Hydari Accord, 1947

Tribes represented at discussions on the 26th and 28th June, 1947, at Kohima.

Western Angamis

Eastern Angamis

Kukis

Kacha Nagas (Mzemi)

Rengmas

Semas

Lothas

Aos

Sangtams

Changs

Heads of Proposed Understanding

That the right of the Nagas to develop themselves according to their freely expressed wishes is recognized.

I, Judicial - All cases whether civil or criminal arising between Nagas in the Naga Hills will be disposed of by duly constituted Naga Courts according to Naga Customary law or such law as may be introduced with the consent of duly recognized Naga representative organizations : save that where a sentence of transportation or death has been passed there will be a right of appeal to the Governor.

In cases arising between Nagas and non-Nagas in (a) Kohima and Mokokchung town areas, and (b) in the neighbouring plains districts the judge if not a Naga will be assisted by a Naga assessor.

2. Executive : The general principle is accepted that what the Naga Council is prepared to pay for the Naga Council should control. This principle will apply equally to the work done as well as the staff employed.

While the District Officer will be appointed at the discretion of the Governor Subdivisions of the Naga Hills should be administered by a Subdivisional Council with a full time executive President paid by Naga Council who would be responsible to the District Officer for all matters falling within the latter's responsibility, and to the Naga Council for all matters falling within their responsibility.

In regard to : (a) Agriculture - the Naga council will exercise all the powers now vested in the District Officer.

(b) C.W.D. the Naga Council would take over full control.

(c) Education and Forest Department - The Naga Council is prepared to pay for all the services and staff.

3. Legislative - That no laws passed by the Provincial or Central Legislature which would materially affect the terms of this agreement or the religious practices of the Nagas shall have legal force in the Naga Hills without the consent of the Naga Council. In cases of dispute as to whether any law did so affect this agreement the matter would be referred by the Naga Council to the Governor who would then direct that the law in question should not have legal force in the Naga Hills pending the decision of the Central Government.

4. Land - That land with all its resources in the Naga Hills should not be alienated to a non-Naga without the consent of the Naga Council.

5. Taxation - That the Naga Council will be responsible for the imposition, collection, and expenditure of land revenue and house tax and of such other taxes as may be imposed by the Naga Council.

6. Boundaries - That present administrative divisions should be modified so as

- (i) to bring back into the Naga Hills District at the forests transferred to the Sibsagar and Nowgong Districts in the past, and
- (ii) to bring under one unified administrative unit as far as possible all Nagas. All the areas so included would be within the scope of the present proposed agreement. No areas should be transferred out of the Naga Hills without the consent of the Naga Council.

7. Arms Act - The Deputy Commissioner will act on the advice of the Naga Council in accordance with the provisions of the Arms Act.

8. Regulations - The Chin Hills regulations and the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulations will remain in force.

9. Period of Agreement : The Governor of Assam as the Agent of the Government of the Indian Union will have a special responsibility for period of 10 years to ensure the due observance of this agreement ; at the end of this period the Naga Council will be asked whether they require the above agreement to be extended for a further period or a new agreement regarding the future of Naga people arrived at.

THE SIXTEEN POINT AGREEMENT, 1960

THE SIXTEEN POINT AGREEMENT ARRIVED AT BETWEEN THE NAGA PEOPLE'S CONVENTION AND THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA IN JULY, 1960.

The points placed by the delegates of the Naga People's Convention before the Prime Minister on 26 July 1960, as finally recast by the Delegation in the light of discussions on 27 and 28th July 1960 with the Foreign Secretary.

1. The Name

The territories that were heretofore known as the Naga Hills- Tuensang Area under the Naga Hills-Tunesang Area Act 1957, shall form a State within the Indian Union and be hereafter known as Nagaland.

2. The Ministry Incharge

The Nagaland shall be under the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India.

3. The Governor of Nagaland

(1) The President of India shall appoint a Governor for Nagaland and he will be vested with the executive powers of the government of nagaland. He will have his headquarters in Nagaland.

2. The Ministry Incharge

The Nagaland shall be under the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India.

3. The Governor of Nagaland

(1) The President of India shall appoint a Governor for Nagaland and he will be vested with the executive powers of the government of Nagaland. He will have his headquarters in Nagaland.

(2) His administrative secretariat will be headed by a Chief Secretary stationed at the Headquarters with other Secretarial Staff as necessary.

(3) The Governor shall have special responsibility with regard to law and order during the transitional period and for so long as the law and order situation continues to remain disturbed on account of hostile activities. In exercising this special responsibility, the Governor, shall, after consultation with the Ministry, act in his individual judgement. This special responsibility of the Governor will cease when normalcy returns.

4. Council of Ministers

(1) There shall be a council of Ministers with a Chief Minister at the head to assist and advise the Governor in the exercise of his functions.

(2) The Council of Ministers shall be responsible to the naga Legislative Assembly.

5. The Legislature

There shall be constituted a legislative Assembly consisting of elected and nominated members as may be deemed necessary representing different tribes. (Further a duly constituted body of Experts may be formed to examine and determine the principles of representation on democratic basis).

6. Representation in Parliament

Two elected members shall represent Nagaland in the Union Parliament, that is to say one for the Lok Sabha and the other for the Rajya Sabha.

7. Acts of Parliament

No act or law passed by the Union Parliament affecting the following provisions shall have legal force in the Nagaland unless specifically applied to it by a majority vote of the Nagaland Legislative Assembly.

(1) The Religious or Social Practices of the Nagas.

(2) Naga Customary Laws and Procedure

(3) Civil and Criminal Justice so far as these concern decisions according to Naga Customary Law.

The existing laws relating to administration of civil and criminal justice as provided in the Rules for the Administration of Justice and Police in the Naga Hills District shall continue to be in force.

(4) The ownership and transfer of land and its resources.

8. Local Self Government

Each tribe shall have the following units of rule-making and administrative local bodies to deal with matters concerning the respective tribes and area :

(1) The Village Council

(2) The Range Council and

(3) The Tribal Council.

These Councils will also deal with disputes and cases involving breaches of customary laws and usages.

9. Administration of Justice:

(a) The existing system of administration of civil and criminal justice shall continue.

(b) appellate Courts;

(i) The District Court -cum-Sessions Court (for each district), High Court and Supreme Court of India.

(2) The Naga Tribunal (for the whole of the Nagaland) in respect of cases decided according to Customary Law.

10. Administration of Tuensang District

(1) The Governor shall carry on the administration of the Tuensang District for a period of 10(ten) years until such time when the tribes in the Tuensang District are capable of shouldering more responsibility of the advanced system of administration. The commencement of the ten-year period of administration will start simultaneously with the enforcement of detailed workings of the constitution in other parts of the Nagaland.

(2) Provided further that Regional Council shall be formed for Tuensang District by elected representatives from all the tribes in Tuensang District, and the Governor may nominate representatives to the Regional Council as well. The Deputy Commissioner will be the Ex-Officio Chairman of the Council. The Regional Council will elect members to the Naga Legislative to represent Tuensang District.

(3) Provided further that on the advice of the Regional Council, steps will be taken to start various Councils and Courts, in those areas where the people feel themselves capable of establishing such institutions.

(4) Provided further that no Act or Law passed by the Naga Legislative Assembly shall be applicable to Tuensang District unless specifically recommended by the Regional Council.

(5) Provided further that the Regional Council shall supervise and guide the working of the various Councils and Tribal Courts within Tuensang District and wherever necessary depute the local officers to act as Chairman thereof.

(6) Provided further the Councils of such areas inhabited by a mixed population or which have not as yet decided to which specific Tribal Council to be affiliated to shall be directly under the Regional Council for the time being. And at the end of ten years the situation will be reviewed and if the people so desire the period will be further extended.

11. Financial Assistance from the Government of India

To supplement the revenues of the Nagaland, there will be need for the Government of India to pay out of the Consolidated Fund of India.

(1) A lump sum each year for the development programme in the Nagaland and (2) A grant-in-aid towards meeting the cost of administration.

Proposals for the above grants shall be prepared and submitted by the Government of Nagaland to the Government of India for their approval. The Governor will have general responsibility for ensuring that the funds made available by the Government of India are expended for purposes for which they have been approved.

12. Consolidation of Forest Areas

The delegation wished the following to be placed on record:

The Naga delegation discussed the question of the inclusion of the Reserve Forests and of contiguous areas inhabited by the Nagas. They were referred to the provisions in Articles 3 and 4 of the Constitution, prescribing the procedure for the transfer of areas from one State to another.

13. Consolidation of Contiguous Naga Areas

The delegation wished the following to be placed on record :

The Naga leaders expressed the wish for the contiguous areas to join the new State. It was pointed out to them on behalf of the Government of India that Articles 3 and 4 of the Constitution provided for increasing the area of any State, but that it was not possible for the Government of India to make any commitment in this regard at this stage.

14. Formation of Separate Naga Regiment

In order that the Naga people can fulfill their desire of playing a full role in the defence forces of India the question of raising a separate Naga Regiment should be duly examined for action.

15. Transitional Period

(a) On reaching the political settlement with the Government of India, the Government of India will prepare a Bill for such amendment of the Constitution, as may be necessary, in order to implement the decision. The Draft Bill, before presentation to parliament, will be shown to the delegate of the NPC.

(b) There shall be constituted an Interim Body with elected representatives from every tribe, to assist and advise the Governor in the administration of the Nagaland during the transitional period. The tenure of office of the Interim Body will be 3 (three) years subject to re election.

16. Inner Line Regulation

Rules embodied in the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873.

SHILLONG ACCORD, 1975

THE SHILLONG ACCORD OF 11 NOVEMBER 1975 BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND THE UNDERGROUND NAGAS.

1. The following representatives of the underground organizations met the Governor of Nagaland Shri L P Singh, representing the Government of India, at Shillong on 10 and 11 November 1975.

1. Shri I Temjenba
2. Shri S. Dahru
3. Shri Z Ramyo
5. Shri M Assa
6. Shri Kevi Yallay

2. There was a series of four discussions. Some of the discussions were held with the Governor alone; at others, the Governor was assisted by the two Advisers for Nagaland, Shri Ramunny And Shri H Zopianga, and Shri M L Kampani, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs. All the five members of the Liaison Committee namely Rev. Longri Ao, Dr. M. Aram, Shri L Lungaland, Shri Kemmeth Kerhuo and Shri Lungshim Shaiza, participated in the discussions.

3. The following were the outcome of the discussions :

(i) The representatives of the underground organisations conveyed their decision, of their own volition, to accept, without condition, the Constitution of India.

(ii) It was agreed that the arms, now underground, would be brought out and deposited at appointed places. Details for giving effect to this agreement will be worked out between them and representatives of the Government, the Security forces, and members of the Liaison committee.

(iii) It was agreed that the representatives of the underground organisations should have reasonable time to formulate other issues for discussions for final settlement.

Dated, Shillong

11 November 1975.

I Temjenba ; S Dehru

Z Ramyo; M Assa; Kevi Yallay

On behalf of the representatives of
underground organisations.

L P Singh

On behalf of the

Government of India

SUPPLEMENTARY AGREEMENT TO THE SHILLONG ACORD ON 5 JANUARY 1976

Implementation of Clause II of the shillong Accord of 11 November 1975.

1. It was decided that the collection of arms initially at collection centres, would commence as early as possible, and will be completed by 25 January 1976. Initial places of collection to be decided through discussion between Commissioner, representatives of underground organisations and the members of the Liaison Committee.

2. Once all arms are collected, these will be handed over to Peace Council team at the respective places of collection.

3. Peace Council team will arrange to transport the arms from collection centres to Chedema Peace Camp and arrange guards, etc. for safe custody of arm.
4. Similar arrangement at agreed place/places will be made in Manipur with concurrence of the Manipur Government.
5. The underground may stay at peace Camps to be established at suitable places, and their maintenance will be arranged only by the Peace Council. Any voluntary contribution from any source will be made to the Peace Council, who will utilise the fund according to necessity.

Biseto Medom Keyho; Pukrove Nakru;
Z Ramyo; I Temjenba

L P Singh
Governor

Dated, Shillong
5 January, 1976.

(PEACE ACCORD IN PUNJAB)

Memorandum of Settlement

signed by

Shri Rajiv Gandhi

Prime Minister

&

Sant Harchand Singh Longowal

President, Shromani Akali Das,

on July 24, 1985.

According to this historic document:

1. Compensation to innocent persons killed

1.1 Along the exgratia payment to those innocent killed in agitation or any action after 1st August, 1982, compensation for properly damaged will also be paid.

2. Army recruitment

2.1 All citizens of the country have the right to enrol in the Army and merit will remain the criterion for selection.

3. Enquiry into November incidents

3.1 The jurisdiction of Shri Justice Ranganath Mishra Commission enquiring into the November riots of Delhi would be extended to cover the disturbances at Bokaro and Kanpour also.

4. Rehabilitation of those discharged from the Army

4.1 For all those discharged efforts will be made to rehabilitate and provide gainful employment.

5. All India Gurudwara Act

5.1 The Government of India agrees to consider the formulation of an All India Gurudwara Bill. Legislation will be brought forward for this purpose in consultation with Shiromani Akali Dal, others concerned and after fulfilling all relevant constitutional requirements.

6. Disposal of Pending Cases

6.1 The notifications applying the Armed Forces Special Powers Act to Punjab will be withdrawn. Existing Special Courts will try only cases relating to the following type of offences:

(a) Waging war

(b) Hijacking

6.2 All other cases will be transferred to ordinary courts and enabling Legislation if needed will be brought forward in this Session of Parliament.

7. Territorial Claims

7.1 The Capital Project Area of Chandigarh will go to Punjab. Some adjoining areas which were previously part of Hindi or the Punjabi regions were included in the Union Territory. With the capital region going to Punjab the areas which were added to the Union Territory from the Punjabi region of the erstwhile State of Punjab will be transferred to Punjab and those from Hindi regions to Haryana. The entire Sukhna lake will be kept as part of the Chandigarh and will thus go to Punjab.

7.2 It had always been maintained by Smt. Indira Gandhi that when Chandigarh is to go to Punjab. Some Hindi speaking territories in Punjab will go to Haryana. A Commission will be constituted to determine the specific Hindi speaking areas of Punjab which should go to Haryana in lieu of Chandigarh.

The principle of contiguity and linguistic affinity with a village as a unit will be the basis of such determination. The Commission will be required to give its findings by 31st December, 1985 and these will be binding on both sides. The work of the Commission will be limited to this aspect and will be distinct from the general boundary claims which the other Commission referred to in para 7.4 will handle.

7.3 The actual transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab and areas in lieu thereof to Haryana will take place simultaneously on 26th January, 1986.

7.4 There are other claims and counterclaims for readjustment of the existing Punjab-Haryana boundaries. The Government will appoint another Commission to consider these matters and give its findings. Such findings will be binding on the concerned States. The terms of reference will be based on a village as a unit, linguistic affinity and congruity.

8. Centre-State Relations

8.1 Shiromani Akali Dal states that the Anandpur Sahib resolution is entirely within the framework of the Indian Constitution: that it attempts to define the concept of Centre-State relations in a manner which may bring out the true federal characteristics of our Unitary Constitution and that the purpose of the Resolution is to provide greater autonomy to the State with a view to strengthening the unity and integrity of the country, since unity in diversity forms the corner-stone of our national unity.

8.2 In view of the above, the Anandpur Sahib Resolution in so far as it deals with Centre-State relations, stands referred to the Sarkaria Commission.

9. Sharing of River Waters

9.1 The farmers of Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan will continue to get water not less than what they are using from the Ravi-Beas system as on 1st July 1985. Water used for consumptive purposes will also remain unaffected. Quantum of usage claimed shall be verified by the Tribunal referred to in para 9.2 below.

9.2 The claims of Punjab and Haryana regarding the shares in their remaining waters will be referred for adjudication to a Tribunal to be presided over by a Supreme Court Judge. The decision of this Tribunal will be rendered within six months and would be binding on both parties. All legal and constitutional steps required in this respect be taken expeditiously.

9.3 The construction of the SYL canal shall continue. The canal shall be completed by 15th August, 1986.

10. Representation of Minorities

10.1 Existing instructions regarding protection of interests of minorities will be recirculated to the State Chief Ministers. (P.M. will write to all Chief Ministers)

11. Promotion of Punjabi Language

11.1 The Central Government may take some steps for the promotion of the Punjabi language.

RAJIV GANDHI
Prime Minister

SANT HARCHAND SINGH LONGOWAL
President, Shiromani Akali Dal.

PEACE ACCORDS IN TRIPURA**MEMORANDUM OF SETTLEMENT, 1988****Preamble :**

Government of India have been making efforts to bring about a satisfactory settlement of the problems of tribals in Tripura by restoring peace and harmony in areas where disturbed conditions prevailed.

2. The Tripura National Volunteer (TNV), through their letter dated the 4th May, 1988, addressed to the Governor of Tripura and signed by Shri Bijoy Kumar Hranugkhaw, stated that keeping in view the Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi's policy of solution of problems through negotiations, TNV have decided to abjure violence, give up secessionist demand and to hold negotiations for a peaceful solution of all the problems of Tripura within the Constitution of India. The TNV also furnished its bye-laws which conform to the laws in force. On the basis a series of discussions were held with representatives of TNV.

3. The following were the outcome of the discussions :

Deposit of Arms and Ammunition and ending of Underground Activities by TNV.

3.1 The TNV undertakes to take all necessary steps to end underground activities and to bring out all undergrounds of the TNV with their arms, ammunition and equipment within one month of signing of this Memorandum. Details for giving effect to this part of Settlement will be worked out and implemented under the Supervision of the Central

Government. The TNV further undertakes to ensure that it does not resort to violence and to help in restoration of amity between different sections of the population.

3.2 The TNV undertakes not to extend any support to any other extremist groups by way of training, supply of arms or providing protection or in any other manner.

Rehabilitation of Undergrounds:

3.3 Suitable steps will be taken for the resettlement and rehabilitation of TNV undergrounds coming over ground in the light of the schemes drawn up for the purpose.

Measures to prevent infiltration:

3.4 Stringent measures will be taken to prevent infiltration from across the border by strengthening arrangement on the border and construction of roads along vulnerable sections for better patrolling and vigil. Vigorous action against such infiltrators would also be taken under the law.

Reservation of Seats in the Tripura Legislative Assembly for Tribals:

3.5 With a view to satisfying the aspirations of tribals of Tripura for a greater share in the governance of the State, legislative measures will be taken including those for the enactment of the Bill for the amendment of the Constitution. The Constitutional amendments shall provide that notwithstanding anything contained in the Constitution, the number of seats in the Legislative Assembly of Tripura reserved for Scheduled Tribes shall be such number of seats as bears to the total number of seats, a proportion not less than the number, as on the date of coming into force of the Constitutional amendment, of members belonging to the Scheduled Tribes in the existing Assembly bears to the total number of seats in the existing Assembly. The Representation of the People Act, 1950 shall also

be amended to provide for reservation of 20 seats for the Scheduled Tribes in the Assembly of Tripura. However, the amendments shall not effect any representation in the existing Assembly of Tripura until its dissolution.

Restoration of alienated lands to tribals :

3.6 It was agreed that following measures will be taken :

- (i) Review of rejected applications for restoration of tribal land under the Tripura Land Revenue and Land Reforms Act, 1960.
- (ii) Effective implementation of the law for restoration.
- (iii) Stringent measures to prevent fresh alienation.
- (iv) Provision of soil conservation measures and irrigation facilities in tribal areas and
- (v) Strengthening of the Agricultural Credit System so as to provide for an appropriate agency with adequate tribal representation to ensure easy facilities for both consumption and operational credit to tribals.

Redrawing of the Boundaries of Autonomous District Council Area :

3.7 Tribal - majority villages which now fall outside the autonomous District Council area and are contiguous to such area will be included in the Autonomous District Council area and are contiguous to such area will be included in the Autonomous District and similarly placed non-tribal majority villages presently in the Autonomous District and on the periphery may be excluded.

Measures for Long Term Economic Development of Tripura :

3.8 Maximum emphasis will be placed on extensive and intensive skill-formation of the tribal youths of Tripura so as to improve their prospects of employment including self employment in various trades such as motor workshops, pharmacies, electronic goods, carpentry, tailoring, stationery weaving, rice and oil mills, general stores, fishery, poultry piggery, horticulture, handloom and handicrafts.

3.9 Special intensive recruitment drives will be organised for police and para military forces in Tripura with a view to enlisting as many tribal youths as possible.

3.10. All India Radio will increase the duration and content of their programmes in tribal languages or dialects of Tripura. Additional transmitting stations will be provided for coverage even of the remoter areas of the State.

3.11 The demands relating to self-employment of tribals, issue of permits for vehicles to tribals for commercial purposes, visits of tribal men and women to such places in the country as may be of value for the viewpoint of inspiration, training and experience in relevant fields will be considered sympathetically by the Government.

3.12 At least 2,500 jhumia families will be rehabilitated in 5 centres or more in accordance with model schemes based on agriculture, horticulture including vegetable growing, animal husbandry, fisheries and plantations, with a view to weaning them away from jhum cultivation. The scheme would also provide for housing assistance.

3.13 In the Autonomous District Council area of Tripura, rice, salt and kerosene oil will be given at subsidised rates during lean months for a period of three years.

3.14 Conscious efforts will be made for effective implementation of the provisions of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution in so far as it relates to Tripura.

1. Sd/- Bijoy Kumar Hrangkhawl

Sd/-
(P.P.Shrivastav)
Additional Secretary to the
Government of India
Ministry of Home Affairs.

Sd/-
Ananta Deb Barma

Sd/-
Kartik Kalai

Sd/-
(I. P. Gupta)
Chief Secretary to the
Government of Tripura

Sd/-
Haripada Hrangkhwal

Sd/-
(Birenjoy Reang)

Sd/-
Binoy Deb barma
On behalf of
Tripura National volunteer

Sd/-
General K.V.Krishna Rao Retd.)
Governor of Tripura

In the presence of
(Sudhir Ranjan Majumdar)
Chief Minister of Tripura

Dated : 12th August, '88

MEMORANDUM OF SETTLEMENT, 1993

This indenture made on this the twenty third day of August one thousand nine hundred and ninety-three BETWEEN the All Tripura Tribal Force (hereinafter referred to as the ATTF) of the ONE PART and the Governor of Tripura (which expression shall unless excluded by or repugnant to the subject or context include his successors in office and assigns of the Other Part.

PREAMBLE

Whereas the Government of Tripura have been making concerted efforts to bring about an effective settlement of the problems of the tribals who are presently minority in Tripura and attempts have been made on a continuing basis to usher in peace and harmony in areas in which disturbed conditions have prevailed for long:

AND

Whereas - All Tripura Tribal Force have given a clear indication that they would like to give up the path of armed struggle and would like to resume a normal life and they have decided to abandon the path of violence and seek solutions to their problems within the framework of the Constitution of India and, therefore, they have responded positively to the appeals made by the Government of Tripura to join the mainstream and to help in the cause of building a prosperous Tripura:

AND

Whereas on a series of discussions between the parties hereto and based on such discussions it has been mutually agreed by and between the parties hereto that the FIRST ATTF shall give up the path of violence and surrender to the Other Party the Government of Tripura along with all their arms and ammunition ending their under ground activities and the Governor of Tripura will provide economic package and financial benefits and other facilities hereinafter provided:

Now it is Hereby Agreed And Decided between the parties hereto as follows:

1. Deposit of Arms and Ammunition and ending of underground activities by ATTF:

The ATTF hereby conveys that -

(a) The ATTF undertakes to end all underground activities and to bring overground all their member with their arms and ammunition and equipment within 15(fifteen) days of the signing of this Memorandum. Details for giving effect to this part of the Settlement will be worked out and implemented under the supervision of the State Government. The ATTF further undertakes to ensure that it will not resort to any manner of violence and will positively help in the restoration of amity and goodwill between different sections of the population of Tripura.

(b) The ATTF undertakes not to extend any support in any manner whatsoever to any other underground or extremist group by way of training, supply of arms, providing protection, providing shelter or in any other manner.

2. The Government of Tripura hereby conveys that -

(a) Rehabilitation of ATTF personnel :

Steps would be taken for the resettlement and rehabilitation of ATTF personnel coming overground on the basis of schemes already decided for the purpose.

(b) Action to be taken against foreign nationals :

Action would be taken in respect of sending back all Bangladesh foreign nationals who have come to Tripura after 25th March, 1971 and are not in possession of valid documents authorising their presence in Tripura.

(c) Restoration of alienated land :

Effective steps would be taken in terms of the Tripura Land Revenue and land Reforms Act, 1960 for restoring land alienated by tribals.

(d) Inclusion of tribal majority villages in ADC areas :

Tribal majority villages which now fall outside the ADC area and are contiguous to the ADC area, would be included in the TTAADC.

(e) Introduction of Inner-Line Permit :

The case for introduction of an Inner-Line permit system would be taken up with the Government of India. The State Government will insist on the Government of India to approve this demand.

(f) Village police force for the ADC :

The constitution of Village Police Force under the administrative control of the TTAADC is acceptable in principle to the State Government and the State Government will take up with the Government of India for Constitutional amendment, if required, to fulfil this demand.

(g) Increase in the number of seats for Scheduled Tribe candidates in the TTAADC :

The demand for more representation of Scheduled Tribe members in the Autonomous District council is acceptable to the State Government in principle and efforts will be made for amendment of the Rules which deals with reservation of seats for Scheduled Tribe in order to increase the number of reserve seats to 25 (twenty five).

(h) Setting up of a Cultural Development Centre :

Upajati Sanskritik Vikas Kendra (Tribal Cultural Development Centre) with arrangements for training would be set up in the TTAADC area.

(i) Improvement of Kok Borak and other Tribal Languages :

A Bhasa Commission would be set up for the improvement of Kok Borak and other Tribal languages. Steps would also be taken for the introduction, in phases, of Kok Borak at progressively higher levels of education.

(j) Preservation of Ujjayanta Palace as a Historical Monument and shifting of Tripura Legislative Assembly :

Respecting the sentiments of all section of the population, especially the tribals of Tripura, steps would be taken to construct a separate building for the Tripura Legislative Assembly and to retain the Ujjayanta Palace as a Historical Monument.

(k) Re-naming of villages, rivers etcetra :

Steps would be initiated to ensure that all villages and rivers which earlier had tribal names and which were subsequently re-named, are given their original tribal names.

(l) Jhumia resettlement :

Area based resettlement of jhumias would continue to be implemented in order to provide for a strong economic base for the Jhumias of Tripura.

(m) Industrial development of the TTAADC area :

All necessary steps would be taken to ensure the promotion of industrial activities in the TTAADC areas :

(n) Secured accommodation and escorts for Office Bearers :

The President, Vice President, Convenor and 4 (four) other members of the Executive Committee of the ATTF will be given secured accommodation subsequent to their surrender and they will also be given personal security guard for such period as may be decided by the Government. They will be provided with police escort during their movement outside Agartala as and when required.

(o) Housing facility :

After surrender, ATTF personnel shall be provided with a house with GCI sheet roofing with a floor area of 220 square feet for their accommodation as early as possible and the ATTF personnel shall take part in constructing such houses, provided that the cost of each house shall not exceed Rs. 20,000/- (Rupees twenty thousand).

(p) Drinking water facilities :

Steps should be taken by the State Government to provide drinking water in the resettlement colonies set up by the Government to resettle the ATTF personnel.

(q) Government employment or economic package :

All ATTF personnel, on their surrender, will be provided with Government employment according to their qualification or economic facilities as provided herein and till such Government employment or economic facilities are given, each surrendered ATTF personnel shall be paid subsistence allowance at the rate of Rs. 500/- (Rupees five hundred) only per month, so, however, that the subsistence allowance shall not be paid beyond a period of 10(ten) months.

In witness, whereof the ATTF being represented by (1) Shri Lalit Debbarma, President, ATTF, (2) Shri Ramendra Reang, Vice President, ATTF, (3) Shri Rabindra Reang, General Secretary, ATTF, (4) Shri Dilip Deb Barma, Treasurer, ATTF and (5) Shri Santaram Reang, Accountant, ATTF, and the Governnor of Tripura being represented by Shri M. Damodaran, Chief Secretary to the Government of Tripura, have hereunto set their hand on the date, month and year as afore-mentioned.

Signed on behalf of First Party
ATTF by

Signed for and on behalf of the
Governor of Tripura

Sd/-

1. (Shri Lalit Deb Barma)

President, ATTF.

2. Sd/-

(Shri Ramendra Reang)

Vice President, ATTF

Sd/-

(Shri M. Damodaran)

Chief Secretary

Government of Tripura

3. Sd/-

(Shri Rabindra Reang)

General Secretary, ATTF.

4. Sd/-

(Shri Dilip Deb Barma)

Treasurer, ATTF.

5.

Sd/-

(Shri Santaram Reang)

Accountant, ATTF.

In the presence of -

Sd/-

(Shri Dasaratha Deb)

Chief Minister, Tripura

Sd/-

(Shri Baidyanath Majumdar)

Minister, PWD etc. Deptts.

Tripura.