

## DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled “**CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY: A STUDY OF TERAJ AND DOOARS REGION IN WEST BENGAL**” has been prepared by me under the guidance of Dr. Maya Ghosh, Professor, Department of Political Science, North Bengal University. No part of this thesis has formed the basis for the award of any degree or fellowship previously.

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### CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that Sri Saikat Roy has submitted his thesis entitled, "CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY: A STUDY OF TERAJ AND DOOARS REGION IN WEST BENGAL", under my supervision for the award of PhD degree. He has carried out the work in the Department of Political Science, University of North Bengal. To the best of my knowledge, the work is original in nature.

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## P R E F A C E

In India, the democratic social structure has taken a root amidst diverse religious, linguistic and ethnic diversity. In an ethnically heterogeneous society, political and social interests and interactions among the diverse groups are thus best understood by the governmental strategies, the design of political institutions and the role of diverse social groups or in short, the interaction of the individuals, and groups, society and the state. India's democracy has been strengthened by crafting a federal structure that devolved political power to all citizens. Power has further distributed between various institutions for the accommodation of interests of several groups like caste, class, religion, linguistics, ethnicity, and interest of the specific region and ensures the rights of all the major and minor groups in the society. Today, citizens or groups of citizens not only cast votes to ensure their democratic rights but desire their words and interests to be heard in the process of social interaction and working of the government.

In everyday life, different groups and communities raise movements to ensure their rights and social position and sometimes got involved in conflicts and clashes with other groups on the grounds of preservation of interests. These conflicts sometimes change the entire social structure and territorial adjustments and sometimes fail to put any impact. Indian multicultural social structure has witnessed numerous conflicts of that kind on the ground of language, religion, ethnicity and territorial rearrangements. Some of these conflicts got mitigated on the very basic level by the initiatives of ground-level political and administrative institutions and civil society. But conflicts in some cases require proper involvement of central government and state government, and sometimes new institutional arrangements.

In the theoretical background of Indian multicultural society and various conflict management mechanisms, this research has tried to analyse the management of *adivasi* conflict in the multicultural society of Terai and Dooars region in West Bengal. An empirical study has been initiated in six blocks of Phansidewa, Naxalbari, Malbazar, Nagrakata, Kalchini and Birpara respectively from Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar districts of the Terai and Dooars region. For the study 300 *adivasi* and non-*adivasi* people and 5 leaders have been interviewed.

At first, an effort has been made to study the *adivasi* movement in the Terai and Dooars region in the backdrop of their migration history by locating the reasons and demands which has been raised under the guidance of Akhil Bharatiya Adivasi Vikas Parish (ABAVP). A content analysis of different memorandums and official letters submitted by ABAVP has been done to understand the role of ABAVP in the course of the movement as a non-state actor. By conducting interviews among respondents, the researcher further tries to understand the changing pattern of the movement which resulted in a conflict with another ethnic group of the region led by Gorkha Janamukti Morcha. Similarly, attempts have been made to assess the fate of the movement.

By conducting empirical research and collection of both qualitative and quantitative data regarding the initiatives of the government the researcher then tries to understand the role of governmental institutions in the management of the conflict in the region. The variables like the response of central government, state government and local government to the conflict are chosen by the researcher to study the involvement and role of various state institutions at different levels of the government in the process of conflict management. Hence, the proposed study is a modest attempt to empirically explore the role of different institutions in the process of management of *adivasi* conflict in the Terai and Dooars region to theorise the data obtained from the empirical findings from the respondents in the field.

There are numerous mistakes in the study that has possibly missed the human eye. The researcher personally apologises for such avoidable or unavoidable mistakes. The opinion expressed in the study is entirely of the researcher and if any way it helps to understand the conflict management process in a diverse multicultural social structure, the endeavour for going ahead with such study will be achieved.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

ABAVP	Akhil Bharatiya Adivasi Vikas Parishad
AITUC	All India Trade Union Congress
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
BPL	Below Poverty Line
CITU	Centre of Indian Trade Union
CM	Chief Minister
CPIM	Communist Party of India Marxist
CTUOs	Central Trade Union Organisations
DGHC	Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council
DWO	District Welfare Office
GJM	Gorkha Janamukti Morcha
GJMM	Gorkha Jana Mukti Morcha
GNLF	Gorkha National Liberation Front
GTA	Gorkhaland Territorial Administration
HIDCO	Housing Infrastructure Development Corporation
HMS	Hindustan Mazdoor Sangh
ILO	International Labour Organisation
LPG	Liquefied Petroleum Gas
INC	Indian National Congress
INTUC	Indian National Trade Union Congress
ITDP	Integrated Tribal Development Programme
JMM	Jharkhand Mukti Morcha
NBDD	North Bengal Development Department
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NGO	Non- Governmental Organisation
NIC	National Informatics Centre
NOC	No- Objection Certificate
NREGA	National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
PF	Provident Fund
PHED	Public Health Engineering Department
POA	Prevention of Atrocities

PO-cum-DWO	Project Officer- cum- District Welfare Office
PTWU	Progressive Tea Worker's Union
PvTGs	Particularly vulnerable Tribal Groups
RSP	Revolutionary Socialist Party
SC	Supreme Court
SC	Scheduled Caste
SCA	Special Central Assistance
ST	Scheduled Tribe
TAC	Tribal Advisory Council
TDDC	Terai Dooars Development Council
TMC	Trinamool Congress
TSP	Tribal Sub-Plan
TUCC	Trade Union Coordination Centre
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNO	United Nations Organisation
UTUC	United Trade Union Congress
UTUC(LS)	United Trade Union Congress (Lenin
VDA	Variable Dearness Allowance