

Contentious Politics and Gorkhaland Movement

A dissertation submitted to the University of Hyderabad in partial

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By

ATISHA SUNAR

Registration no. 17SPHL05



Department of Political Science

School of Social Sciences

University of Hyderabad

Gachibowli, Hyderabad- 500046

Telangana, India

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled “Contentious Politics and Gorkhaland Movement” submitted by Atisha Sunar bearing Registration no.17SPHL05 in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy in Political Science is a bonafide work carried out by her under my supervision and guidance. It is a Plagiarism free dissertation.

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Prof. Kham Khan Suan Hausing

Supervisor

HEAD

Department of Political Science

DEAN

School of Social Science

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To
The people of Darjeeling

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

POS-	Political Opportunity Structure
NEBULA-	Nepali Bhutia Lepcha
AIGL-	All India Gorkha League
GNLFF-	Gorkha National Liberation Front
GJMM-	Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha
DGHC-	Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council
GTA-	Gorkhaland Territorial Administration
SMS-	Short Message Service
NSS-	Nepali Sahitya Sammelan
GDNS-	Gorkha Dukha Niwarak Sammelan
AINBS-	All India Nepali Bhasa Samiti
PNSP-	Pragatisil Nepali Sahitya Parishad
INFA-	Indian News and the Feature Alliance
HUGLA-	Himalayan Union of Gorkha Liberation Army
GLO-	Gorkha Liberation Army
GNLRF-	Gorkha National Liberation Revolutionary Front
AGSU-	All Gorkha Students' Union
DGFI-	Democratic Youth Federation of India
GRA-	Gorkhaland Regional Authority
GAA-	Gorkhaland Autonomous Authority
GLP-	Gorkhaland Personnel
BRO-	Border Road Organization

ABAVP- AkhilBharatiya Adivasi VikasParishad

SC- Scheduled Caste

ST- Scheduled Tribe

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

From the early years of 1970s, the stability and security of India has crumbled, due to numerous considerations such as estrangement of oneself from our social values and culture, inequality in our society in terms of status, rights, opportunities, work, etc which has installed a sense of insecurity and loss in the community (Golay, 2006). People want corrective measures for recognition of their individual rights and entitlements that has led to public outbursts of dissent against denial of rights and campaigns against inequity, destitution or lack of personal or social entity.

A significant rise in literary texts and writings in context of such crusades have been published, in concurrence with the augmentation of such protests in India (McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2001, pp. 92-94). All of the literary works have an academically, elementary and conjectural approach to discern public demonstrations in the society. The significance of a strong leadership and its followers have been shrugged off, with no regard for the pivotal contribution made by institutional and individualistic elements towards making an effort while interacting with other elements for achieving certain objectives and determining limitations to pave way for elimination of problems in the societal structure through mutual agreement. Presence of a strong leader is valuable in any dissent campaign to bring forth the causes and conditions of poverty, inequality and depravity in the society of which the society itself may be unaware of (Golay, 2006).

A thorough knowledge of the gravity of the three factors in the context of dissent campaign is essential for better grasp and understanding of the subject. Against the backdrop of the Gorkhaland Movement in Darjeeling hills of West Bengal, an effort has been made to comprehend the dynamics of the three elements of leadership, organization and mobilization under such volatile circumstances.

Leaders have a very important part to play towards initiating public welfare and changes in the society, as well as creating conducive environment for encouraging participation of other constituents. The Gorkhaland Movement has been ignored by the elite scholars of protest campaigns. It is evidently and eventually a consequence of recurrent outburst

of a society impregnated with unrest and dissatisfaction, suffering in the hands of disparate leadership. (McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2001, pp. 92-94) (Subba, 1992).

The primary objective of this study is to explain the strategies and programmes of the movement leaders in the two episodes of Gorkhaland movement, starting from 1980s to 2007. The idea of “episodic contentious politics” is used in this study in order to explain irregular claim of the participants of the movement. The episodic contention of the movement also creates uncertainty, rethinking and the search for new working identities and change in the repertoires of contention. With mass involvement change in commitments and variance in leadership strategies the episodic contention aims at future generation claims. Therefore, Gorkhaland Movement can be identified with the episodic, public and collective interaction among the makers of the claims and their objects.

General Definitions

Contentious Politics: “Contentious politics” is a term coined by Charles Tilly in 1970s. The concept encompasses social movements and extends to a wide range of conflictual phenomena like strikes, wars and revolutions. Collective claims of individuals in the form of protest, strikes, revolutions and riots all are contentious politics. Collective action, social movement, ethnic mobilization all constitute contentious politics. Words such as demands, resistance, opposition, support, condemnation and reward are used to explain contentious politics. Collective action occurs outside the government involvement or contention, it enters the realm of politics when it interacts with the government. Three major elements of contentious politics are –mobilization, leadership and organization. These three linked together forms of contentious politics (McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2001).

Sixth Schedule: The four Indian states of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura have been attributed tribal status by Article 244 under Sixth Schedule of the Indian constitution and their governance is outlined through explicit guidelines.

Autonomy: Autonomy is a broad concept and comprises of different interpretations depending on context. The term autonomy has been derived from the two Greek words:

“autonomos” meaning “self” and nomos meaning “law” or “rule”. Therefore, the term implies self-rule. Ruth Lapidot states that autonomy stands for the right to decide or act at one’s own discretion in certain matters (Dasgupta, 1999, p. 52). Autonomy in simple words stands for self-rule and self –government. Autonomy means the ability to make one’s own decision without any forceful imposition.

Episodic Contentious Politics: “Episodic contentious politics” means collective claims which are not continuous but have time intervals in the making of the claim (McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2001).

Literature Review

Gorkhaland movement has been studied through different perspectives and views. According to Miriam Wenner and Anjan Ghosh the Gorkhaland Movement is a spontaneous movement that is the natural outcome of the discrimination endured by the Indian Nepalis, fueled by their inherent anger and silent intolerance since a long time. They argue that the people are not only demanding a separate state but also questioning the representation of the entire Nepali population in the country (Wenner, 2013. Ghosh, 2009).

Demand for separate statehood is not a new phenomenon in India. Since 1956 the States Reorganization Commission (SRC) recognizes rearrangement of administrative boundaries of states to accommodate various linguistically homogeneous states (Wenner 2013: 201). Miriam Wenner in her article challenges the dualistic approach of regional and national, central and regional, micro and macro concepts. She considers them as mutually dependent and not oppositional dynamics. Ethno-regional movement is not opposed to Indian ideals but rather a part of production and reproduction in different levels of society, to understand the challenges Gorkhaland movement has been the study of ethno regional dichotomy. She focuses on the creation of space by the national exclusion which becomes ethno regionalism, and used the example of Gorkhaland movement to show how regions claim for autonomy.

Jayati Sarkar and Sumon Bhaumik neither focuses on the movement nor the roles of

leaders instead they focus on the development of the movement. They made a historical overview of Darjeeling hills and its struggle for a separate administrative setup in 1907 (Subba, 1992).

Sangay Tamang and Hoineilhing Sitlhou examines the two phases of Gorkhaland movement starting from 1980s to 2008 (Tamang and Sitlhou, 2018). They describe the similarity of the Gorkhaland movement and the formation of two major District Councils under two different leadership both of which ultimately fail in their functioning (Tamang & Sitlhou, 2018).

Swatahsiddha Sarkar tries to give a touch of constructivist theory to the process of ethnic mobilization of the Gorkhas. In the process of creating her own knowledge of Gorkhas ethnic identity, she has completely disregarded the function of leadership in the given context (Sarkar, 2013).

McHenry Jr. has analyzed that Gorkhaland Movement is not the consequence of economic disparity, as this factor alone is incapable of giving rise to mass movements. According to him Gorkhaland movement is one where economic factor alone does not constitute the reason for protest movement (Sarkar, 2013).

Rajat Ganguly in his study of Gorkhaland Movement looks into the rise of the Gorkhaland movement, given birth by perpetual poverty, underdevelopment and dismal governance, its ramification and resolution of the situation (Ganguly, 2005).

In terms of leadership and localized autocracy Bethany Lacina has described how central government has wiped out the models of democracy and turned a blind eye to the disintegration of the laws of the land by deliberate disbursement of financial assistance and other resources, to secure the support of local leaders by feeding their flaws and weaknesses and dissolve the ongoing crisis of mass protest (Lacina, 2009).

The book *Where Nation States Come From* which is originally written by Roeder, does not support resolution of ethnic conflicts through autonomous independence as it is viewed as a quicker way of tearing the country into pieces. Bethany Lacina questions

the argument of the book and examines the history of Gorkhaland Movement as a “subnational movement” that has progressively won “local autonomy”. She examines the local autonomous institution as the outcome of the movement. She criticizes the theory of WNSCF as it overstates regional elites and neglects the role of political competition and sentiments of the participants. She states that “weakened hegemon makes political space available, challengers immediately demand greater autonomy to Darjeeling” (Lacina, 2014, p. 24).

Mona Chettri uses dynamics of politics where she argues that identity politics has emerged as a regional norm with active participants and passive participants, active participants are those who engage in active articulations of their ethnicity. Today the people from Darjeeling are dependent on Nepal for their identity because of lack of concrete history. Therefore, history plays an important role in any ethnic mobilization. Kreamer rightly states that “history becomes the most important argument for the shaping up of political ideas and identity of Nepal’s ethnic groups” (cited in Chettri, 2017, p. 04).

“Many scholars have used the term “Nepali” to denote the ethno-linguistic group of Darjeeling. The term Nepali is used for Indian “Nepalis” and “Nepalese” for people living in “Nepal” in order to differentiate their identification. The Gorkhaland movement is not just a movement for fight against economic inequality but it gives greater weightage to political freedom and strives for social equality as well. Recent studies have been conducted which compares sub regional movements like Bodoland Movement, Assam Movement and concludes that Gorkhaland Movement is not viable because of its size. The spatial argument has been rejected on the grounds of any factor lending dynamism to the movement” (Pempahishey, 2013, p. 10).

It is very discernable from the study of literary works on Gorkhaland Movement, that only events were chronicled with emphasis on happenings with no history of work on leadership being available. Previous studies have been conducted on the similarities in the functioning of Hill Councils, the history of Gorkhaland Movement but the formation

of the Councils under different leadership has not been sufficiently mentioned. Economical, geographical, historical dimensions of the movement are covered but the major gap is in the study of organizations and their role in the Gorkhaland Movement. Leadership roles in the mobilizing process, the outcomes of the movement are largely unexplored.

Research Questions

The research questions are as follows-

“Why”, “when” and under “what” circumstances Gorkhaland leaders are likely to adopt specific strategies of political mobilization? How these strategies engender differential outcome?

Statement of Problem

The review on literary works on Gorkhaland Movement clearly suggests that almost no importance has been given to pivotal roles the leaders play in the execution of their plans formulated under the Gorkhaland Movement agendas. This research examines the change in strategies and programmes of the movement leaders in the two episodes of Gorkhaland Movement. The study draws on the idea of contentious politics in order to understand the episodic, collective interactions among the makers of claims and the objects. The study examines specific strategies adopted by the leaders that greatly impact the direction of the movement. They help in identifying the benchmarks to be achieved by formulating appropriate strategies and mobilizing the masses and institutions, organizing their structure and integrating the various elements at different levels.

Research Method and Source

The dissertation is based on qualitative research. The paper adopts an analytical and descriptive method of study. For the collection of primary data both colonial and post-colonial reports and memoranda were used. The secondary sources were derived

from articles, books, documents, newspapers and other relevant materials. Despite living in the community, the research is not based on participant observation. A non-participant observation method is rather adopted in order to avoid biases inching into the study.

The study does not aim to offer a generalizable theory of failure or success of the Gorkhaland movement but tries to explain the causal mechanisms specific to the two subsequent episodes of the Movement. Also the outcome of the movement based on different strategies of political mobilization under different leadership has been examined. Each phase has a different story and a historical detail which enables the study to compare the variations in each of the episode of the movement.

Chapterization Scheme

Chapter I: Introduces the study by highlighting the gap issues, research questions and methodology adopted in the study.

Chapter II is a theoretical and conceptual framework that offers an examination of existing literature on contentious politics and Gorkhaland movement and other social movement literature especially on dynamics of contention and contentious performances.

Chapter III discusses the history of Gorkhaland Movement, the programmes and strategies of the movement used by the leaders. This chapter illustrates the 1986 Gorkhaland agitation, the formation of Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC) and working of the Council.

Chapter IV examines pattern of movement strategies and programmes under the “leadership” of Bimal Gurung and the formation of Gorkha Territorial Administration (GTA).

Chapter V summarizes the findings of the dissertation, outlines the reasons for variant outcomes and spells out contributions that this dissertation make to the study of

Gorkhaland movement in particular and in the study of contentious politics in general.

CHAPTER II

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Contentious Politics

The combined undertaking of three authors, Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly and their analysis and academic work on civil unrest and mass campaigns has had an enormous impact on the vast amount of written publications and literary texts related to the subject. Their aim was to build a theoretical division from earlier social movement studies to construct a common set of concepts and principles to study movements, revolutions, nationalisms, ethnic conflicts and other forms of non-routine politics under the framework of “contentious politics”. Common concepts and questions were combined together as one set of principles which today comes under this paradigm. The framework extensively examined the issues ranging from culture, cognition and emotion which were under studied in the earlier social movement studies. McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly have referred contentious politics as all kinds of collective political struggle (Tarrow, 1996).

In *Dynamics of Contention*, McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly who are collectively known by the eponym McTT introduced the paradigm of ‘contentious politics’ in studying social movement dynamism. It introduced the dynamism of contentious politics as encompassing all kinds of political struggle. They have defined contentious politics into two ways namely “transgressive” and “contained” contentions. Transgressive contention involves “some of the parties who are not formally constituted political actors and the means used in the struggle are not conventional” whereas contained contention involves those parties who are previously established actors employing established means of claims. They have unified the field of all the above studies as political contention. McTT emphasized the need to examine political contention as a relational process because they recognize the limitation of existing explanatory framework which seeks to understand these by explaining the behaviour of a single actor (McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2001, pp. 93-94)

Unlike earlier social movement which give primacy to opportunities, frames and repertoires as explanatory variables for political contention. McTT emphasize on the dynamics of contention, an understanding that each of the key variables in action intertwine and interact with the others. They do this by making a detailed set of case study analyses which make a new approach to social movement studies. The new framework of contentious politics adopted by McTT aims at identifying and investigating some common social mechanisms to produce different outcomes.

Each particular episode of contention can be explained through a sequence or combination of a set of such mechanisms. McTT have focused on social mechanisms such as identity shift, ethnic revivalism but not environmental issues. They have examined varieties of “contentious episodes” ranging from “antislavery movement in the USA” to “Tain'anmen”, from “French Revolution” to the “Soviet decomposition”, from “Swiss Unification” to “Mexican democratization”. When we take apart the three episodes, we find a number of common mechanisms that drive the contentious politics and transform them and create new actors and identities. These episodes are characterised by a set of common causal mechanism like brokerage, certification and social appropriation which in turn drift the contentious episodes and transform them. These episodes leverage the creation of new actors and identities, brokerage by activists who connect previously 'local clumps' of people. What makes each of the above contentious episodes interesting is the fact that each case has its own internal dynamism and content whereby actors of the movement put imagination and talent to use emotional and analytical intelligence to shifting situational dynamics (McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2001).

According to McTT the framework of contentious politics was used to examine a common set of concepts and principles that identified the causal mechanism, concepts such as mobilization, collective identity and strategic action for analysing the episodes of contentions. Charles Tilly's last book published before his death *Contentious Performances* analyses the premise that the partakers of “contentious gatherings” deduce their assertion from the confined repository of guidelines and paradigm. The

partakers pursue the set guidelines and documents which undergo metamorphosis over a certain period of time as they are continually modifies as per requirement

(Tilly, 2008, pp. 35-89).

Contentious performances has become a guiding principle for research of political contention especially of political gatherings. Tilly focuses on the 'actions and programmes of the movement that are necessary for mobilization of the actors which he categorises as performances'. Tilly gives explicit importance on “concepts and their empirical” referents in Contentious performances. He also makes the reader realize the limitation of those concepts and dialogues with the evidences he cites. Tilly’s book is motivated by the project known as “from words to numbers” expanded by Roberto Franzosi which was used to study the contention in Italy. Franzosi is critical of “crude content analysis” and emphasizes more on “linguistic narrative” events, the subjects that can be produced from newspapers and journals of contentious events. Franzosi explains three factors that, according to him, narrate the event or events. These factors are actors, actions and objects. Tilly, on the other hand, utilizes the simplest version of Franzosi’s methods; he tabulates the verbs that describe the actions of participants in the contentious gatherings, describing the main actors and objects linked in the verbs.

Tilly’s main focus in contentious performances is Great Britain from 1758-1834 a period known as popular contention in Great Britain. This period is significant because it witnessed the change in contentious gathering. He also talks about the qualitative transformation in performances since 1830s. Earlier performances were particular, parochial and bifurcated concentrating on local targets of contention. 19th century performances and repertoires constituted a relatively modular, autonomous and cosmopolitan set for example strikes, demonstrations, electoral rallies, public meetings, petitions, marches, turnouts, planned insurrections, organized social movement and electoral campaigns. One can call Tilly’s analysis of contentious performances as “subject-verb-object-triads” present in newspaper accounts of contentious gatherings (Tilly, 2008, pp. 90-110)

Participants in contentious performances draw their claims from standardized limited repertoires, i.e. they follow known available scripts, adapting them to local circumstances and changing them bit by bit. He further states that repertoires are responses to the political situations and arrangements specific to place and time. In the *Rebellious Century 1830-1930* of Great Britain Charles Louis and Richard Tilly writes “collective action which leads to violence is the very stuff of history”. The process is like the smelting of iron; iron emerges but so does slag. All smelting produces some slag, although the quantity and quality depend on both the raw materials and the procedures used yet the by product is so intimately connected with the political process that we can use it to detect what sort of politics is going on. This metaphor is used in collective violence and it works in contentious gatherings. Charles Tilly basically explains that there is a limited scope to study a power structure, a political system or a class structure especially the one that existed in the past but it is possible to diagnose it based on the evident i.e ‘slag’ left behind. ‘Slag’ here means outcome of performances visible in the forms that contentious gatherings take. He establishes a correspondence between repertoires of participants and political arrangements practices specific to time and place. So the correspondence between repertoires and political change in Great Britain (1758-1834) is the focus of Tilly’s contentious performance study.

He also adds in the dimension of spatiality with the variations in the capacity and democracy of a state or a country. Tilly explains that contentious gatherings tend to be less violent when states have high capacity in democratic status and more violent in undemocratic status. Contentious performances since the 19th century focus on establishing WUNCiness of the participants. WUNC of the participants is an acronym for Worthiness, Unity, Numbers and Commitment in contentious gatherings. It explains why some of the episodes of contention leads to violent form of gatherings and some use peaceful repertoires of performances. Tilly focused on close, systematic analysis of processes, mechanisms and events specific to time and place. He also infused these analyses with important concepts and ideas of transforming performances that sharpened and refined the study of contentious politics as a paradigm (McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2001, pp. 91-160), (Tilly, 2008, pp. 31-146).

Unlike McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, Mess focuses on classic social movement agenda that has its impact on social change, organizational bases, framing processes and repertoires. He focuses on 19th century Spanish state and nation building from the Basque perspective. In case of Spanish movement, Basque nationalism was transformed to cultural nationalism as people became aware and started to celebrate their cultural difference, their common myths of ancestry and their shared memories with a clear political aspiration by new socioeconomic opportunities (Tilly, 2008, pp. 475-476).

Jack Goldstone on the other hand focuses on contentious problems in contemporary social movement (cited in Tilly 2004:475-476). He argues whether democratic institutions help social movement to retard or rapidly move forward within its activities. He argues that, as political parties expand social movement tend to fade away. He elucidates three conditions which underpin the three distinct trajectory of contemporary social movement that convey a) conditions facilitating social movement, b) conditions promoting the emergence of social movement, c) conditions conveying failure or success of the movement. He also mentions Political Opportunity Structure (POS) which constitute political alignments, division among elites, influential allies and provides a framework for comparative study to explain the emergence of the movement, its dynamics and outcome (Tilly, 2004, pp. 475-476).

Tarrow argues that there has been a rebirth or return of contentious politics in social sciences (Tarrow, 1996, pp. 874-876). He defines contentious politics as collective activity on the part of the claimant relying on the non-institutional forms of interaction with elites, opponents or the state. Tilly and Tarrow defined social movement as challenges to the power holders in the name of a disadvantaged population living under the jurisdiction or influence of the power holders. Tilly studies social movement as all forms of contentious politics which define relation to institutions, political alignments and long term political struggle.

Tilly states that the framework of contentious politics has provided more systematic, historical and comparative structure of political struggle. They provide more defined methodologies to understand contentious politics, instead of narrating stories by observing the movement they record the data base and public accounts in contemporary press on those movements. The scholars come together with years of psychological and resource mobilization application which is different from previous disciplines. The scholars use comparative and historical framework to understand social movement rather than a case study model. For example Tilly's work on *Contentious Performances* compares the movements in Britain and it is a comparative analysis (Tilly, 2008).

Perry's work on China follows a "heterogeneous social actor across a century of changing economic, social and political system" (Tarrow, 1996, pp. 874-876). As social movements differ from place to place the content also changes. Therefore, each case varies from the other in the study of contentious politics. Over time scholars have looked at contentious politics with more systematic application of a set of rules. Tilly has taken a sample study on contentious performances in London, over many years of experiment and analysis. The method used is to analyze the actors, their actions and their targets of contention in the context of political struggle. He says sociology meets history and relies on contextual than on serial data. Tilly states that contentions in Britain led to bifurcated, parochial, local, particular and violent gatherings of the people (Tarrow, 1996, pp. 874-876). He focuses on long term changes that are related to the centralization of the national state and the capitalization of British economy. On the other hand, Perry has talked about Shanghai strike where she has cited the gender and skilled hierarchies connection.

Jenkins and Klanderman's *The Politics of Social Protest* looks into the new approach altogether (Jenkins and Klanderman, 1995). They have suggested to move beyond existing social movement by examining the role of state in social movement (Tarrow, 1996, p. 875), Tilly, 2004, p. 875). Andrain and Apter in *Political Protest and Social Change* have focused on electoral context in which protest occurs

and the outcome depends on the political opportunity structure, (POS) that assumes social change (cited in Tarrow, 1996, p. 875), (Tilly, 2004, p. 875). According to Tarrow “collective action” approach focuses on the changing interactions between movement and their actors and in this process produce new or transformed symbols, frames of meaning and ideologies that justify collective action around which the actors can be mobilized. “Collective action” allows the participants to participate with the rational choice as the individuals also calculate the risks, costs and constraints on collective action based on demands and allowances they expect from the collective action repertoires. Political actors do not mobilize in response to raw grievances and discontents but at the expense of opportunity and incentives that surround them.

The collective action of the individuals in the form of protest, strikes, charivari all constitute the social movement. Repertoires, wars, revolution, social movement, riots, ceremonies all are contentious politics. The solution to retrieve the actors of contentious politics is to build up a strategic interactions between the makers of the claim and the authority. To understand the contentious clashes in the public space requires a greater view, less homogeneous understanding and a definite strategy than a systematic analysis of events. The practitioner have to decide whether they want a serial data with inclusiveness or information through protest (Tilly, 2004, p. 876).

Helga Leitner emphasized on the spatiality condition in the mobilization of contentious politics and advocate to incorporate this feature in the conceptualization of social movement (Leitner, 2008). Helga Leitner’s understanding of contentious politics refers to concerted, counter hegemonic social and political actions in which differently positioned participants come together to challenge dominant system of authority. The participants challenge the hegemony of the authority whether it be state, market or civil society.

In Helga Leitner’s research, space/geography matters to the imaginaries of the participants. The strong trend in discussing the spatiality of

contentious politics is through the lens of politics of scale. However, recently scale tropes have been replaced by networks and mobility. It is not only important to know the spatiality in particular context but also their co-implication. Identity, race, class and gender are not distinct realms existing in isolation nor can they be merged together, they come into existence with relation to each other may be in contradictory ways. Participants in contentious politics have different spatial imaginaries which do not necessarily implicate philosophical view rather they have the empirical practice in the conceptualization of the term. Central to spatial issue is the indication of the geographical extent, scope of political practice distinguished from global, local, and national movements (Leitner, 2008, pp. 157-168).

Places impregnate “power and meaning” which are important in contentious politics. Social movement however, manipulate and indicate predominance and intentions of spaces in contentious politics. One of the example is “St. Paul Metropolitan area in Minnesota” that highlights the religion-labour coalition, alliances and determination of micro spaces in the city (Leitner, 2008, p. 162).

Social movement in order to challenge states and corporations must have their own communication networks. Such networks are required to strategize their plans and formulate their demands against the power holders that decide and make their call in the society. Technology such as internet and mobile phones are some of the instruments that connect the members of social movement (Leitner, 2008, p. 162).

Thirdly, positionality cannot be neglected as social and spatial are mutually related to each other. Social movement always have to face the challenge of forming alliance between individual groups in diverse socio-spatial condition. Fourthly, mobility is also important as these groups mobilize in this very arrangement of spatiality within and between places. It is perhaps essential to the strategies and struggles of contentious politics. Mobility such as mass demonstrations, rallies, pickets in public

space, bike and bus rides, have been used in social movement. This increases the ability of social activist to appear in certain places as an effective tactic in revolutionary movement (Leitner, 2008, pp. 163-164).

In contending contentious politics no single spatiality be it space or place should be privileged since they are co-implicated in complex ways often with unexpected contentious politics.

In the face of social mobilization the Chilean student movement of 2011 has been one of the most dominant social movements. The movement was led by the University students of Chile against the long standing free market orientation of educational system. the movement was against the educational system and for the demand of more proper regulation and supply of education by the state. The students came to the forefront as the educational system was getting privatized. Therefore, students formed organization and started a social movement.

The prime concern of the student protest during 2011 was to change the structural reforms from elementary to higher education. This was the most pure form of social movement in Latin America over the decades. In terms of economic and standard education Chile has been presented as a successful story in international forum. Because of decades of economic growth Chile has been appointed as the first South American member in its democratic institutions holding in the (OECD) Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (Salinas & Fraser, 2012, pp. 17-47) However, the question remains why was then Chilean education system a complete failure? What was the target of the students exactly?

In the early 1970s, free State public schools were established in Chile. The system continued until radical neoliberal reforms were introduced under the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet with the guidance of 'Chicago Boys' who graduated from the University of Chicago. In higher education as well, financial and regulatory incentives were created to support private supplies.

The neo-liberal phase was marked by strong privatized educational supply which was allocation of students from public to private institutions. Higher education in private schools was affordable by the higher class intellectuals but for the poor middle class the quality of public schools were declining which created a gap in socio-economic dimension.

This was the reason for massive students protest and national strike. The students primary demand was for more state support, end of decentralization of administration over public schools and the elimination of profit motive driven private voucher schools. The opportunities after the collective challenge opened the ground for new conditions which was pushed by economic development and educational expansion where new generation could channelize their capabilities into political action. Collective challenge highlighted four factors: a) grievances, b) framing, c) political opportunity, d) mobilizing resources. These four factors are referred to understand Chilean student movement.

The movement was admittedly a case of mobilizing grievances of the students over their rights to education. Because of framing the grievances they attracted large number of people supporting their demand which helped in educational reforms. The students movement created unexpected political opportunity though the centre-right was not responsive but the international organizations were. As the students tactically admitted that under the Ministry of Education, changes were not substantial, in 2012 Chilean Congress passed a national budget that included substantial increase in educational funding and scholarship for 40% of most vulnerable students and decrease in the interest rates of loan. These were the victories of the Chilean student movement (Salinas & Fraser, 2012, pp. 17-47).

Ruud Koopmans (Koopman, 2004) describes, how media report influences social movement and its impacts of information on social movement participants. He treats movement activism and media representation as co-evolving through confined social mechanism which he calls discursive opportunities (Tilly, 2004, p. 476).

The issues of contentions are covered by the media. Contentious issues may be in politics, economy, environment and each domain have their own arguments. However, news articles have their set of biases in delivering the content of issues. The role of the media is to increase the awareness on conflicting views which may be biased in a way therefore the author presents “disputant-relation” based method. For understanding the discourse of contentious politics the participant of contention such as politician, companies, stakeholders, civic groups, experts, commentators etc. are important elements.

The news producers select a specific disputants/participants who play an important role as commentators in delivering the argument. The “disputant-relation” is based on the observation of opposing groups of two disputants who compete for news coverage. “They influence readers and gain support from them. This method is performed in three stages; a)disputant extraction, whereby the participants of contention are extracted, b) disputed partitioning, where two opponents each representing one side of the other disputants are divided according to their relation to the opponents whether they stand for or against and news classification stage which classifies news by analysing the sides covered, it covers either one of the two sides or the other category” (Park, Lee, & Song, 2011, pp. 343-347).

All the concepts be it collective action, social movement, protest, political conflict and contentious politics come from general law of its operation. The change in performance can be noted as the social mechanism may differ with the social and economic settings of each contentious episode.

Dynamics of Gorkhaland Movement

Protest movements have a life course, they are dynamic and get transformed as they evolve, grow, and mature. “Sometimes, the objectives of the movement emerge on a narrow and local basis, eventually they evolve to broad aims for social transformation”. Protest movements undergo change because of ideological differences, in the process the strategies and programmes of the movement also evolve. Actors and leaders of the

movement emerge particularly during the growth of the movement who play an important role in “articulating the ideologies and objectives” of the movement to determine the type of movement organization. The ideological differences amongst the movement participants and the leaders in particular shape the movement and “broaden the support base of the movement, which in turn give it its dynamism”. The present study seeks to identify and examine the causal mechanism in the transformation of the movement over a span of time

Before we look into the 1980s Gorkhaland movement let us briefly take into account the pre Independence party formation and the character of Gorkhaland movement. The Hill Men’s Association came into existence in 1907 in Darjeeling Hills consisting of educated people as the members of the association. They put forward the petition for Autonomous Administrative Unit to be set up in Darjeeling Hills. The demand made by the Hillmen’s Association was signed by leaders from different hill communities including Kharga Bahadur, Dr. Yensing Sitling and Deonidhu Upadhaya. The leaders from the very beginning of their demands made clear that the demand for separate administration was not on the grounds of ‘Backwardness of Tracts’ but because of difference in language, culture and livelihood of the people of Darjeeling from the rest of Bengal. The Hillmen’s Association was able to form an Executive Committee after holding several meetings and conferences. This Executive Committee was called Hill People’s Social Union which was also known as NEBULA. NEBULA stands for ‘NE’-Nepali, ‘BU’- Bhutia and ‘LA’- Lapchea or Lepcha. This particular Union worked especially to eradicate economic and social inequality of the people of Darjeeling hills. After the death of its President S.W Ladenla the work of the association slowed down. The party could sustain for a short period of time as it could not build a strong political base (Dasgupta, 1999).

The party AIGL was established in 1940s in the hills of Darjeeling and was headed by Damber Singh Gurung. “All India Gorkha League was established after a series of conferences and meetings held at different places of Darjeeling. Its main members were Damber Singh Gurung, Rupnarayan Sinha, Shibkumar Rai, Randhir Subba, Ari Bahadur Gurung, who unanimously consented to name the association” as All India Gorkha

League (Roy B. , 2012, p. 125). The President and General Secretary of this association were Damber Singh and Randhir Subba respectively. The demand for a separate administrative set up of Darjeeling started with the All India Gorkha League. The objective of AIGL was to address the issues and problems of the people of Darjeeling, protect their rights, to officially recognize Nepali language under the “Eighth Schedule of Indian Constitution”.

AIGL was basically concerned about the recognition and consolidation of the Gorkhas throughout India, preservation of the cultural and tradition of the Gorkhas and development of Nepali Language. After Indian Independence, AIGL under the leadership of Damber Singh Gurung came up with an idea of the merger of Darjeeling and Assam. The attempt to merge Darjeeling with Assam was popularized with the slogan ‘Assam Chalo’. The President of AIGL, Damber Singh expanded the activities of the party by taking up the issue of the Gorkhas living in the region. AIGL submitted a petition in 1952 to Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru with a demand for “a separate state for Gorkhas outside Bengal”. However, with the appointment of new leader Deo Prakash Rai, the party started to decline as he could not hold the members and supporters together and also because of the emergence of Gorkha National Liberation Front under Subhash Ghising in 1980s. AIGL for a short period associated itself with the Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF) for the common cause of a “separate state of Gorkhaland” (Dasgupta, 1999, p. 32).

Ideologically and strategically, Ghising favoured radical approach. Ghising depicted radicalism as he came from the background of a warrior. He used different method of “violent and radical protest armed struggle”. The 1980s agitation is therefore a violent struggle that led to combat and the loss of 200 lives. In 1980s Ghising started the struggle by deciding on the 11-point programme action which will be discussed in details in the third chapter. In August 1988 the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC) came into effect as Ghising gave up the demand for a separate state of Gorkhaland. Ghising’s reputation in the region was initially noteworthy as the movement attracted national and international attention in the mid1980s. Secondly, Ghising was well aware

of the local idioms, values and practices of the Gorkhas, which were critical for him to connect with the mass and make his movement broadly based.

Ghising was a known literary figure of Darjeeling who had the “knowledge and experience of cultural arena of Darjeeling”. He was the first leader to generate the feeling of oneness and “articulate” the demands of Indian Nepalis; they needed media skills and rhetorical abilities to identify opportunities and overcome obstacles in political arena. Ghising was a mastermind in manipulating public sentiment which became instrumental in his claim for the status of an undisputed leader of the Gorkhas in India. Ghising was equated with Gorkhaland and vice versa. “The movement of 1980s got personified in its leaders. The personification of the movement under Ghising’s leadership provided a structure whereby Ghising as a leader got an edge to manipulate the political institutions and processes to his advantage. Other political parties got marginalized in terms of economic, political, social and psychological rewards. Ghising too felt the power competition from aspiring leaderships within the Gorkha National Liberation Front. Ghising was identified with Gorkhaland because under his leadership Gorkhaland movement for the first time emerged as an identity based protest movement” (Subba, 1992, p. 65).

“The feeling of nationhood and a sense of belongingness as a community first emerged under his leadership. His style and commitment to an armed movement immediately captured the attention of the media both at local and national levels. Under his leadership an Autonomous Council called Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC) was formed to address the issues confronting the Gorkhas in India. The failure of governance gave other leaders the chance to stand against the autocratic rule of Ghising for the fact that even after 20 years of the formation of DGHC under GNLF nothing seemed to have changed in Darjeeling Hills. The failure of the working of DGHC and Ghising’s attempt to register sixth schedule status for Darjeeling and set aside the original demand of a separate state was seen by the masses as a strategy to divide the society and weaken them in the collective claim for Gorkha identity. At this juncture, the movement witnessed certain implications. Firstly, it opened a new prospective for the aspiring leadership to come to the forefront with the plea to fulfill the promise of a

separate homeland for the Gorkhas within the framework of the Indian Constitution. Secondly, the leadership conflict was mature enough to displace Ghising's leadership in hill politics" (Roy, 2012, p. 403).

The early 2007 was marked by the upcoming leader Mr. Gurung who replaced the former leader Mr Ghising for emancipation of the Gorkhaland movement. Though Ghising's leadership upheld the movement gave it its success, the movement also witnessed fractures and frustration among the masses led to internal contradiction until a new leader came to the forefront. The failure of DGHC under Subhash Ghising "crystallized the re-emergence of the Gorkhaland movement under the leadership of Bimal Gurung and the new party, Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha (GJMM)" (Roy B. , 2012, p. 164). Like Ghising, Bimal Gurung could not win the hearts of the people at initial stage of the movement. However, with the passage of time, "Bimal Gurung gradually came to be relegated in the backyard in Ghising's political camp". It was the "Short Message Service (SMS) campaign in 2007 for Prashant Tamang" who was a contestant in a reality show named *Indian Idol*, which brought Bimal Gurung to the limelight. It was the interaction with the people and the emotional ties that helped him become the messiah of the emerging Gorkhaland Movement (Dasgupta, 1999, p. 57).

Two way interaction is one of the most significant aspects of effectiveness in organizational leadership. Any movement to reach its peak needs active leaders who can connect to the masses and mobilize them. Otherwise, their leadership efforts and programmes become insignificant no matter how promising or innovative they are. Effective mobilization consists of mutual participation by leaders and the followers. Unlike Ghising, Bimal Gurung actively "campaigned for Prashant Tamang who eventually won the show" (Mohanty, 2014). With the desire to establish a separate state of Gorkhaland, Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha came into existence in 2007 (Heckel, 1972).

The second episode of the movement under the leadership of Bimal Gurung desired full-fledged statehood unlike Ghising who later led a movement for the Sixth Schedule status for Gorkhas. There are major turn that shows the difference in strategy and method used by the leader in the second episode of the movement. Firstly, "the movement aims to achieve the goal of a separate statehood through non-violent method

following the Gandhian ideals. Secondly, the party not only included the three sub divisions of Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong, but also extended the area of demand towards Siliguri and parts of Dooars that fall in Jalpaiguri district in West Bengal. While GNLF included Dooars in its programme list, GJMM managed to amass support from Adivasis in the plains. Mr Gurung smartly turned his attention to the plains mainly in Siliguri and Dooars. He influenced the people in Siliguri and Dooars area by protest actions in the form of bands, meetings, demonstrations and petition marches” (Roy B. , 2012, p. 224).

An important objective of GJMM was to oppose the proposed Sixth Schedule status as it would divide the Gorkhas along its caste, creed and religion. The party also believed that the Gorkhas identity problem would be solved only with a separate state of Gorkhaland and nothing less than a state. GJMM launched its protests in the form of indefinite hunger strike and “burning of the memorandum of settlement signed between the Government of India”, Government of West Bengal and Chairman of DGHC Subhash Ghising which was signed for the implementation of “Sixth Schedule” status. “The outcome of these protests was the fresh assessment of the ground realities of the Gorkhas by a Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs and the resignation of Subhash Ghising from the post of Chairman of DGHC on 10 March, 2008. The significant difference of the Morcha leadership to that of previous leadership is its reliance on non-violent form of protest that took the form of non-cooperation and home rule movement by way of non-payment of taxes to the Government that included electricity bills, phone bills, vehicle taxes, land taxes, housing taxes etc” (Dasgupta, 1999, p. 38).

Nepali culture has always been protected and preserved by the people of Hills which can be traced back to 1886 with the publication of a large number of magazines and newsletters such as *Gorkha Bharat Jiban*, *Gorkha Khabar Kagat*, investigating different aspects of hill culture and society, engaging in socio-cultural reforms. Some associations like *Nepali Sahitya Sammelan* (NSS) and *Gorkha Dukha Niwarak Sammelan* (GDNS), were devoted to socio-cultural endeavours. To ventilate their thoughts and ideas several dramas were performed and journals were published to

highlight their socio-economic demands and problems. The emergence of new leader Bimal Gurung was due to the use of electronic media apart from print media which was the major factor for mobilization. GJMM has created its own “homepage that provides information and ideas, strategies and development in the movement” (Roy B. , 2012, pp. 240-245).

So, the current episode of the movement under Bimal Gurung sheds some light on the role of the cultural associations and electronic media that he uses as a strategy to mobilize the people along the lines of culture and plight. Thus, the movement was transformed with the change in leadership. In case of Gorkhaland movement the change in leadership and different outcomes in the two episodes has been central argument in the “movement dynamics’. In the third and fourth chapter we further dwell into the outcomes and dynamics of the movement with in-depth analyses.

Leadership Roles and Movement Dynamics

“According to the theory of collective action advanced by Sydney Tarrow, movements operate within a complex context of changing political opportunities and constraints. Movement leadership utilizes opportunities in order to advance the goals of the movement and are set back by constraints. This background helps in understanding the shift in the movement from offensive to defensive political positions depending on internal and external political factors. Hence, movement change and transform, in the process, ideological orientation of the leaders differ” (Tarrow S. G., 2011, p. 184). Their choices of mobilization also affect the objective, character and nature of the movement.

Since 1907, the demand for an autonomous administrative setup was the result of insecurity of the people who belonged to the minority in the Bengal Province. The Gorkha identity has been striding a different path in which it has tried to maintain a balance between its cultural identities, demands of citizenship and national culture of India. “Hence, the lexical juggleries like Indian Nepali, Bharatiya-Gorkhali and Gorkhali” (Dasgupta, 1999, p. 27). Ultimately, Gorkhas were connected along similar emotions imbued within their minds. The movement was led by different organizations like, All India Gorkha League (AIGL), Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF) and

Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha (GJMM). In each of the episodes, the objective of the movement have been altered, modified or replaced by new ones. The changes in the goals and objectives of the movement have impacted on the nature of the strategies and techniques adopted by the movement leaders. AIGL leadership mostly adopted legal-constitutional methods and mechanisms for the realization of the movement's objective that emphasized primarily on the recognition of language and access to development opportunities. The movement relied on the submission of petitions, memoranda submitted to the Government and peaceful demonstrations. Though the leaders of the AIGL were good orators and writers, their influence on people was not impactful. AIGL also failed to attract supporters from the grassroots (Lacina, 2014, pp. 20-27).

Leaders cannot exist without followers. Kellerman points out that there are many kinds of followers primarily isolates, bystanders, activists and diehard in as much as there are variety of leaders (Heckel, 1972, pp. 6-8). Each follower plays an important role in unfolding repertoires of social movement. Without the followers the ambitions and goals of the leaders are not achieved. The major task of the leader is to interact and connect with the followers effectively and successfully. The task of the leader is to generate the feeling of trust amongst the followers, to create and achieve shared goals and mobilize collective work. Leaders change and so do the programmes of the leaders, every leader offer new approaches and new vision around which to mobilize. Emotional appeal of a leader is also effective in order to mobilize the people. Leaders who communicate well and respond enthusiastically build trust among the followers and help them to articulate their goals. Unlike Mr. Gurung, Mr Ghising was an effective leader. He was a visionary. He believed in connecting people through popular songs and music that generated the feeling of togetherness as he quoted "simplicity is the strength of vision." His commitment as a leader inspired the people to support the movement.

As Williams states "real leadership is an interactive art that requires creativity and imagination, rather than a singular set of well-honed practices" (Heckel, 1972, p. 20). Mr Ghising as a leader was a visionary. He transformed the movement from economically backward region to an identity based protest movement. Having a

comprehensive and compelling vision is necessary but not sufficient. A leader must also understand the feelings of the people. Successful leaders instinctively connect with the people and mobilize them. Mr Gurung had this ability to connect to the people, he was determined to win the hearts of the people. In interacting with the people it is important for a leader to listen to them. The people gradually started trusting their new leader as he interacted with them and gave the space to voice their opinion. Eventually, he emerged as a new leader of Gorkhaland Movement.

One can call Mr Gurung a transformational leader who challenged settled expectations and demands and gave a new paradigm of performances to the movement altogether. He raised the level of consciousness of the followers, encouraged them not to settle with less than a separate state of Gorkhaland. He also encouraged participation of the people in all the activities of the party in the form of protests, meetings and discussing bills. His non-violent approach was surely an act of reason, the ability to see and think clearly (Heckel, 1972, p. 31).

Contentious politics consists of three major elements; leadership, mobilization and organization. In case of Gorkhaland Movement leadership is not only an image of action and power but also a process of influence between a leader and the people. It involves interaction aimed at attaining mutual goal of a separate state. Along with the leader, followers are also important in a movement. It involves someone who exerts influence and those who are influenced. Hollander (Hollander 1978:6) states “all leaders, some of the time to some degree are followers, they may and sometimes do become leaders” (Hollander, 1978, p. 6). This is true in case of the second episode of the movement under Mr Gurung. Mr Gurung was the follower of the party GNLF headed by Mr Ghising. Mr Gurung separated from the party and led the movement under a different party GJMM. The leader is defined as an effective and influential leader if the followers are responsive.

The relationship of three elements in contentious politics are- leaders with his or her personality, perceptions and resources relevant to goal attainment. Followers with their own character and perception. Second element is mobilization, motivating followers to accept and to support a vision of attaining a separate state of Gorkhaland. Successful

mobilization is a difficult task and depends on persuasive arts, in case of both the leaders of Gorkhaland movement they immediately connected to the people through the use of local idioms and music that helped in uniting and strengthening both the leader as well as the masses. In order to mobilize the people, a leader should effectively create and maintain the influence, they can afford to minimize the use of destructive and violent means of approach (Hollander, 1978, p. 26). Mr Gurung strategically relied on the use of non-violent means of programmes in order to fight for the people. Such positive approach help the leader to maintain his position in the struggle and build trust among the followers. Thirdly, Organization, where the followers and the leaders are bound together in a relationship within a situation. The leader and followers each contribute something and receive something in the relationship (Hollander, 1978, p. 8). Organization defines the movement and sets the strategy and objectives of the leaders and their influence on the followers.

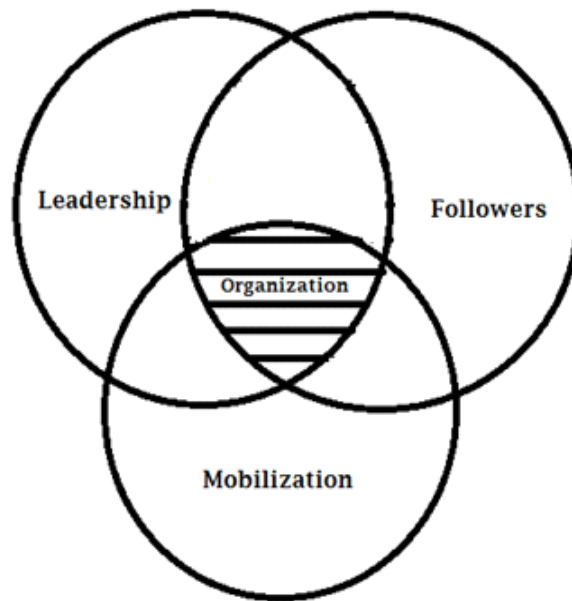


Figure 1: Factors of Contentious Politics

Note: modified version of Hollander, 1987, p. 8.

Three factors involved in Contentious Politics are explained in Fig 1

The crosshatched area represents their intersection. The leader does not stand apart from the followers but is represented as being related to them in the area of leadership. The leader is expected to live up to commitments and obligation to the organization. Trust is important in order to build a strong interdependent relationship. With trust the organization is more likely to function and tolerate the costs involved in the movement. GJMM under the leadership of Mr Gurung grew out of experience and it gradually developed. For an organization to function, it is not enough only for a leader to do everything. There are different leadership roles, such as problem solving, setting objectives and tracking improvement, developing its strategies and programmes with

which they can mobilize the crowd efficiently. As the GJMM President, Mr Gurung, directed the roles of the leaders and the actors. He decided on several subjects like conduct of meetings, development of the region, cultural activities, budgets etc. GJMM as an organization was firm in its belief of non-violence that generated trust from the people. For any organization to work effectively two way interaction is necessary as an act.

Various organizations involved in the movement adopt strategies based on their ideological grounding contributing to the movement dynamics, sometimes weakening the movement and sometimes strengthening it. Arora contends “one finds shifting stands from independent nation to a separate state to the demand for getting this region included in the sixth schedule of the constitution. Ghising justified the demand for the inclusion of the region a stepping stone towards statehood” (Ganguly, 2005).

The 1986 movement led by Subhash Ghising adopted a radical approach for the realization of its prime objective- the creation of a separate state with the Indian Constitution. The claim had the potential to address the issue of identity crisis confronting the Indian Gorkhas. Mr. Ghising mobilized the supporters by preparing them for an armed struggle. In order to convey his political messages to the people, he resorted to less censored media. Through popular songs of sorrow that signified the Gorkha culture he gathered support of the people. The songs reflected grief the wariness of the Gorkhas in India, generated in them the feeling of insecurity and oppression for which only a “Gorkha Homeland” within the Union of India would give them a political space defining their identity. Music connected the Gorkhas as it provided a basis of common understanding and common experience for a generation in revolt. The themes of the songs were blood, land and sacrifice. The people were ready to sacrifice their lives and become martyrs to create unity among the people who remembered them, praised them and worshipped them as sacred (Bhattacharya, 2017).

Some of the songs that connected the people were-

Original Song in Nepali (Jyoti R., Swastika R, 2019)

Party Bhandha Jaati Thulo!

Jaati bhandā maato

Sabai ris rakh bhulli banou ek sutra ghatho

Sapna sapna narawos

Sahith ko aatma lai sumpi dilaunu cha

Futera hoina aawaj uthayera

Gorkha ko sapna sakar banaunu cha

Sathik ma pahilaunu cha

Barsaudekhi oojhama parkhaudaicha

Biswa ma eslai parichay dinu cha

Naya bihani ab leunu cha

Ab ekta ko haath samai

Jati ko raksha garnu cha

Samai yehi ho suna Gorkha

Mato lai ab mukti dilaunu cha

Jati ko aastitva bujhaunu cha

Translated version in English by Bibhor Ghimirey

Culture is Greater Than Politics!

Land is greater than culture.

Let's forget our differences,

A tightened knot for future.

Let our dreams not remain just dreams

May the souls of the fallen find peace.

Not by shattering, but by shouting,

Shall we fulfill the Gorkha dream.

We shall march towards righteousness

We've been dreaming this for far too long

We shall introduce the world to our hopes

And a brand new sunshine to our folks.

For our land, we shall hold hands in unity,

Listen all Gorkhas-The time has come

For this land to get its freedom,

And for our people to seize our identity.

The mechanism in uniting the people divided on different lines such as religion, culture, language and socio economic dimension were the songs that reflected their culture and dream of establishing a separate state for Gorkhas. Other mechanisms of unification under the leadership of Ghising were the emphasis on the use of Khukuri (a curved knife, an ethnic symbol of Gorkhas) and Nepali cap called "dhaka topi" that represented Gorkha culture. Under his leadership political platform for students and women started

emerging. Ghising was termed as a radical leader as he believed that the “movement gained its significance and reached its climax because of the use of violent strategies and techniques” (Ganguly, 2005). Mr. Ghising’s strategy of violent armed struggle resulted in the creation of Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC), an autonomous council for the three subdivisions of Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong in 1988.

The newly formed Council had a lot of responsibility with its new Chairman Subhash Ghising. Promises of development and welfare of Gorkhas were not easily fulfilled and the Council failed to deliver even the subtle promises it had made to the people. As time passed, the Council failed to address the aspirations of the people and ultimately crumbled down leaving the hill people to the earlier situation of despair and insecurities. The corruption of the Council and conflict inside the party ultimately weakened the party’s stronghold over the movement and on its way gave birth to a new political party Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha (GJMM) under the leadership of Bimal Gurung in September 2007 (Roy, 2012, pp. 419-421).

Initially the party followed the footsteps of GNLF in its framing of objectives and issues of the movement but did not support the demand for Sixth Schedule status to be incorporated for the people of Darjeeling. The Sixth Schedule of the constitution dealt with the provision of the administration of tribal lands in the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram. GJMM believed that Darjeeling was never a tribal region, although it had diverse culture, language and religion that together formed the very essence of Gorkhas. Mr Gurung strongly criticized Subhash Ghising for introducing Sixth Schedule in Darjeeling, as Mr Ghising initially rejected the Sixth Schedule status for Darjeeling. In one of his speeches Ghising clearly said that “Those provinces (Sixth Schedule) are applicable only to Assams’s backward tribal populations. But we are not tribal. We are civilized. Look at me; I wear a three piece suit and shoes! We are advanced people. (Ghising Frontline 1986: 9-22). Therefore, the incorporation of Sixth Schedule status in Darjeeling hills was unpopular with most Gorkha, who considered the designation as “tribal” to be demeaning”. With the agenda of removing the leader of GNLF, GJMM designed movement strategy which differed from that of earlier movement. The ideology of GJMM was grounded on the Gandhian

philosophy. The new movement relied on a non-violent model of strategy. However, with few incidents like the assassination of All India Gorkha League leader Madan Tamang the party somehow still share commonalities with the previous episode of the movement. The party also distributed pamphlet with a model code of conduct. The title of the pamphlet was “*Aachar Samhita*” (code of conduct). Few concepts like ahimsa and satyagraha were the main guidelines of the movement mobilization (Golay, 2006. Roy, 2012).

With each redefinition of the movement objectives and consequent alteration of the movement strategies, the movement has changed and transformed. In both the episodes of the movement, i.e the 1980s and the post 2007, has seen the protest movement germinating, maturing and institutionalizing. First, the movement sprouted then gradually grew and finally institutionalized with the formation of DGHC under the leadership of Subhash Ghising . Similarly in the second episode i.e post 2007, under the leadership of Bimal Gurung, the movement arose after a decade and grew finally institutionalizing with a new arrangement in the form of Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA) under GJMM leadership. The actors of the second episode of the movement played an accommodationist role at the later stages giving a platform for various organizations, elite activists, to incorporate new ideas giving an edge to the movement.

CHAPTER III

Contentious Politics and the 1986 Gorkhaland Agitation

History of Gorkhaland Movement

Historically the territory of Darjeeling belonged to Sikkim and Bhutan. In the year 1835 the Raja of Sikkim surrendered part of Sikkim hills to the British rulers. In the following year Sikkim was annexed, and through the Treaty of Segauli in 1819 Morang and Terai was also annexed. In 1865 “Anglo-Bhutan” war ended with the treaty of Sinchulia that took over the entire eastern area of the Tista river and south of Sikkim. Therefore, the total area of the present three sub divisions of Darjeeling district i.e. Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong belonged to British India. With the interest of the “East India Company” over the territory of Darjeeling, the region came under the British occupation in 1835. The inclination of the “East India Company” towards Darjeeling was because of the geopolitical importance and the growth of tea industry in the district. In 1841 Dr. Campbell the Superintendent of Darjeeling started the experiment of growing tea in Darjeeling, the rapid progress of the tea industry further attracted the British planters. The third factor that encouraged the Britishers to stay in Darjeeling was the possibility to set up health resort and sanitorium in the cool climate of the Sikkim hills.

As far as the settlement of the people is concerned, in 1829 there were few Lepcha households and the rest of the hills was covered by forest. The Lepcha population was slowly outnumbered by migrants from Nepal. Subsequently Nepalis indeed became the majority ethnic group in Darjeeling district. Now the district of Darjeeling comprised of Caucasoid khas and Tibeto-Burman kiratas cultures residing in and around Himalayas who are now termed as Gorkhas. In other words the Gorkha people would mean the amalgamation of the Caucasoid khas and Tibeto-Burman kiratas living in Himalayas. Nepali or Khaskura was the medium of language in Darjeeling, all the caste in Darjeeling spoke Khaskura. This language forged a bond of cultural unity among the people of Darjeeling. In 1901 the first Nepali journal *Gorkha Khabar Kagat* was published which focused on the aspects of Nepali society, culture and language. On this

line culture, language and identity became the crucial factor for the Gorkhas (Golay, 2006).

The first wave of demand for a separate administrative setup was made in 1907 by the retired Nepali army and police officers. They were supported by a small group of aristocratic Tibetan and Bhutia families, who together formed Hillmen's Association under the leadership of S.W Ladenla. The objective of the Hillmen's Association were; to strengthen the social ties of all the communities viz, Nepalese, Bhutias and Lepchas, to bring about upliftment in socio-economic dimension and growth in education, to start an unemployment bureau, to create awareness amongst the people regarding their culture and help them learn to compose their differences among themselves. They focused on preserving and maintaining the fraternity of the three communities and resolving the internal divisions between the three hill communities. The first step towards uniting their communities and bringing them under one umbrella term "Gorkhas" was through the publication of the magazine "*NEBULA*" which is the acronym of Nepali, Bhutia and Lepcha. The three different communities accepted the common ethnic term Gorkha and the Nepali Language (Roy B. , 2012, pp. 36-41).

The Hillmen's Association not only addressed the grievances of the people but also as an organization created political consciousness of the people. However, the political hold over the hill society was feeble and the demand for the separate administrative setup that was unheard by the then Governor General or the Viceroy of India led to administrative fluctuations. On 4 August 1934, the Association submitted a memorandum to Sir Samuel Hoare and Sir John Anderson (Governor of Bengal), demanding the safeguard of the minorities of the hills. Darjeeling's administrative position was always an "excluded" one and not a "backward" one, which benefitted the people under two respects; Firstly, of the Nepali men with the people in Bengal. Secondly, the preferential treatment in government appointed jobs (Subba, 1992, p. 80).

The Hillmen's Association under the Presidentship of S.W Ladenla was able to unite the communities in the hills of Darjeeling. Political consciousness started growing amongst the people, the Hillmen's Association culturally, linguistically and politically united different communities. The Association was not able to build a strong political base, but

it mobilized the Gorkhas and brought their insecurities and frustrations to the forefront. The movement was not known by its leader, unlike 1980s agitation but as an organization it delegated the needs of the region as a whole and not just the community.

After the death of S.W Ladenla, a young lawyer from Calcutta, Damber Singh Gurung gained the socio-political reputation emerging as a messiah of the Gorkhas in 1943 (Subba, 1992:84). He headed the party All India Gorkha League (AIGL). The formation of AIGL dates back to 1923 during the time of imposition of Nepali Language as a medium of instructions in schools by Damber Singh Gurung but its formal existence was seen only after 1934. The AIGL could not formally exist as a party prior to 1934 because the President of Hillmen's Association provided strong, effective and intellectual support which was persistent. However, with the demise of S.W Ladenla in 1936 AIGL's popularity grew rapidly as it could gather support from Jalpaiguri and Dooars districts unlike Hillmen's Association which could only materialize in Kalimpong and Kurseong sub divisions. The League slowly extended to other parts of India such as Meghalaya, Manipur and Assam to the east and Dehradun, Bhagsu and Kangra (known as Dharamshala in present) to the west. The League also published its monthly magazine called *Gorkha* which acted as a catalyst in enhancing its political success. The magazine could travel rapidly to numerous regional and national readers. It was through this magazine that the problems of Gorkha ethnicity, their marginalization and their insecurities in the future of India were gaining wide attention (Poddar & Prasad, 2009).

The League not only addressed the fear and insecurities of the people regarding their future but was also concerned about the Gorkha at large who had settled in different regions of the country. With wide political support highlighting the problems of the Gorkhas in India it became inescapable to consider the League turning more into a Gorkha dominated association.

The AIGL focused on several issues such as;

- To make everyone realize that the Gorkhas belong to the great martial race.
- To preserve the civilization, tradition and culture of the Gorkhas.

- To further the development of the Nepali Language.
- To establish political rights of the Gorkhas in India.
- To promote friendship and harmony with all the communities of India.
- To mobilize the Gorkhas spread all over India (Roy, 2012, pp. 324-341).

The ultimate aim of the League was to build a foundation for the recognition of Nepali language, assert political rights as citizens of India. The demand for the separation continued but the League's ideology rested on petitions, demonstrations and meetings. Meanwhile, in 1949, Uttarakhand movement was conceived by Randhir Singh, who was a think tank of the movement and also an editor of the magazine *Gorkha* (Subba, 1992, p. 72). The feeling of insecurities among Gorkhas started deepening as they had no secure future among the two crore Bengalis. Singh made a demand for a "Separate Provincial Legislature" under the name of Uttarakhand which comprised of Darjeeling, Sikkim, Jalpaiguri, Dooars and Coochbehar or just Darjeeling district (Subba, 1992, p. 87). On 29 October 1949, Uttarakhand Sangh Committee was also formed with the active participation of the members from Sikkim, Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Coochbehar with Mr Rupnarayan Sinha, a literary figure, as its President. The movement gained reputation and admiration as the thought "Uttarakhand" brought to the minds of the people a hope for a permanent home (Subba, 1992, p. 89).

The death of Damber Singh Gurung on 7 April 1948, created a political vacuum for leadership in the hills of Darjeeling. This time the movement in the hills was not escalated by the hill people alone. The Gorkhasthan movement was initiated by the Communist Party of India (CPI). The proposal of Gorkhasthan was raised by the undivided CPI in 1947. At its outset it worked with the AIGL and in 1945 it got separated from the party. The CPI had close ties with the workers of the tea gardens. The two undisputed members of the CPI were Ratanlal Brahmin also popularly known as "Maila Bajey" and Ganesh Lal Subba. The former had a good bond with the workers of the tea gardens while the latter handled the entire intellectual arena. But referring to ethnicity Ratanlal Brahmin could arouse individuals' emotional character rather than the rational one.

The idea of Gorkhasthan popularized Ratanlal Brahmin and it ensured victory in 1946 Provincial Council elections. Since then the card of ethnic exclusiveness was played in order to mobilize the people (Roy B. , 2012, pp. 336-337). CPI submitted a memorandum in 1947 to the Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru. The memorandum demanded for the creation of “Gorkhasthan” comprising Nepal, Sikkim and Darjeeling district. The party’s memorandum was based on geographical, cultural and linguistic homogeneity of the three regions. Soon after Independence of India, especially with the formation of the State Reorganization Committee of 1954 that dealt with the problem of linguistic minority and clarified the expression “substantial portion of expression” that says “a state should be recognized as unilingual only where one language group constitutes about 70% or more of its entire population and that where there is substantial minority constituting 30% or more of the population, that state should be recognized as bilingual. The same principle might hold good at the district level that is to say if 70% or more of the total population of a district consists of a group which is minority in a state as a whole the language of a minority group and not the state language should be the official language in that district” (Ganguly, 2005).

The demand for regional autonomy was put forward by the CPI and the AIGL 1957. The party together passed the resolution for the creation of an Autonomous Administrative setup. However, the demand for autonomy was conceived by the Union Home Minister, Govind Ballabh Pant as having “dangerous implications” which would pave the ground for the “secessionist forces”. The victory under CPI was the grant of Autonomous District Council. The political instability and multiple rise and fall of the political party in the hills of Darjeeling, triggered the issue of sensitivity of the Nepali community (Poddar & Prasad, 2009).

The third wave of demand was made by the middle class intellectuals of Darjeeling under the leadership of Parasmani Pradhan who was engraved in nepali literature and culture, they demanded regional autonomy of Darjeeling within the province of Bengal. Consecutively, demand for autonomy was made by the then rising Communist Party in favor of the tea plantation workers. But with the freedom movement and the declaration of Independent India the movement was dropped. The feeling of alienation and

discrimination started with the rejection of the inclusion of Nepali language in “Eighth Schedule of the Constitution” which created a deep rooted frustration amongst the people. The people mobilized to form an organization known as *All India Nepali Bhasa Samiti* which was formed on 31 January 1972. With the effort of AINBS and other cultural organizations like *Khetipati* and *Teshro Aayam* ‘Third Dimension’ established in 1952 and 1962 respectively transformed Indian Nepali literature (Roy, 2012, pp. 225-229).

All of the above organizations made an effort towards the inclusion of Nepali language in 1992. The Constitution (Seventy First) Amendment was made for the inclusion of Nepali language under the Eighth Schedule. The declaration of Sikkim as twenty-second State on 16 May 1975 ignited the demand for a separate state of Gorkhaland. Furthermore, the psyche of Nepali people was triggered by the statement by the then Prime Minister Morarji Desai who stated in one of the meetings that he would not let the inclusion of the foreign language in the Eighth schedule of the constitution. This caused serious frustration and feeling of insecurity in the minds of Indian Nepalis of the hills. In the long run it led to the formation of Gorkha National Liberation Front under the leadership of Shri Subhash Ghising. Ghising was a young furious, brave Gorkha leader of 1980s. He was also referred to as “Tiger”.

Formation of Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC)

Before discussing the Gorkhaland Movement in detail, let us look at the organizational setup of Darjeeling. In 1980s, Darjeeling Pranta Parishad was formed by Indra Bahadur Rai as its President. It was not a political party but a loose association of intellectuals and politicians like the All India Nepali Bhasa Samiti. Number of leaders from Gorkha League and Congress were also associated with the association. Pranta Parishad was in favor of a separate district of Darjeeling including Terai, Dooars and Jalpaiguri. Unlike the CPI(M) and Gorkha League, Pranta Parishad was in favour of separate state of Darjeeling and nothing short of a full-fledged statehood to meet the aspiration of the people of the Hills. Pranta Parishad had a short stay in the struggle for a separate state as it made a dramatic move by boycotting the elections of 1982 thinking that it would pressurize the state and the central government. However, with the passing of the

resolution by the CPI (M) for the regional autonomy in the district of Darjeeling, the elections were unexpectedly held. Interestingly CPI (M) won two seats and the remaining seats were won by the independent candidate supported by Gorkha League.

The reason behind the failure of Pranta Parishad was the organizational structure as it was an association of intellectuals, lawyers and politicians. It was not able to connect to the people. Moreover, the rising popularity of GNLF under the leadership of Mr Ghising led to the downfall of Pranta Parishad which also faced internal fractures due to the shifts in leadership and their ideological divergence. The growing political career and their rising radical approach altered the membership of the Pranta Parishad in 1980s.

On 30 July 1980, Subhash Ghising founded Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF). The Parishad could not compete with the GNLF in terms of its programmes, vigour and aggressive character. As Parishad lacked a prominent leader, GNLF on the other hand was guided by a strong leader Subhash Ghising. On 5 April 1980 he raised the demand for a separate state of Gorkhaland. Ghising was the first leader to coin the term Gorkhaland. Competition among movement members in general and leaders in particular for social, economic, political and psychological rewards along with ideological differences led to the development of factions. This in turn compels new recruitment to broaden the support base of the movement and give it its dynamism (Sarkar, 2013).

The 1986 Gorkhaland Movement led by Subhash Ghising was a radical and aggressive movement. Ghising had a background of a military soldier. He adopted a radical method of protest and armed struggle that marked the violent agitation of 1986. Ghising's idea was to create a separate state of Gorkhaland through protests, petitions and if needed armed struggle. The movement started due to a weak political representation and threatened identity of the Gorkhas. As Wenner (2013) states, "the leaders of Gorkhaland construct Darjeeling as a different place first and then the centre for all Indian Gorkhas." Gorkhas speak Nepali that is why they are different. They should be treated differently in an administrative terms. Hence, demand for a separate state of Gorkhaland is a social, political and symbolic centre for all Indian Gorkhas. The leader received

much appreciation from the people because he was able to bring the crucial topic of identity and citizenship which united the Gorkhas (Wenner, 2013).

GNLF was ready to fight for a separate statehood with the violent “repertoires of contention”. The failure of Pranta Parishad and their weak ideology, feeble activities of development made way for violent struggle in the hills.

GNLF launched a struggle based 11-point programme action as follows:

- To observe a Black Flag Day on 13 April 1986 and protest against discrimination and atrocities perpetuated on Indian Nepalis
- To organize a 72-hour bandh from 12 to 14 May 1986, to highlight the demand for Gorkhaland
- To announce burning of the State’s Reorganization Commission Report of 1955, which had increased the area of West Bengal by annexing the areas of Darjeeling, Mirik, Siliguri and Dooars that have different language and culture
- To burn the Indo-Nepal Treaty of 1950, which had relegated the Indian Nepalis to the status of immigrants,
- To launch a protest against the indiscriminate felling of trees in the hills of Darjeeling,
- To launched a “do or die” movement against the Gorkhas being treated as outsiders,
- To condemn the celebrations of national interest like, Independence Day, Republic Day, Gandhi Jayanti, until the demand was fulfilled.
- To convince the people not to pay taxes to the Government (Ganguly, 2005, pp. 476-482) (Roy, 2012, pp. 378-386).

A violent agitation broke out in the hills of Darjeeling on the eve of the commencement of the 11-point programme action in 1986. The Gorkhaland movement was officially

announced on 12 May 1986. Shopkeepers and public servants were terrorized to keep their shutters down and stay at home. Two buses of state transport were damaged though it is not on the records of information document. At Panihatta, Naxalbari Police Station outpost was attacked which led to police firing and death of one person.

The next series of incident took place in Kurseong on 25 May 1986 when about 600 people carrying deadly weapons came to motor stand. Eventually their number swelled up to 2,500 and despite the declaration by the S.D.O the mob was engaged in unlawful activities. They also started throwing bombs and brickbats at the police party injuring S.D.O, Circle Inspector (C.I), Sub-inspector (S.I) and other policemen. Subhash Ghising's politics could be understood in his well-written book *Maneh*. He had a rebellious character; he formed his first political organization named *Nilo Jhanda* in 1968 to highlight the socio-economic deprivation of the hill people. The ideology and strategy used by Subhash Ghising represented radicalism. Ghising was a literary figure, who had the knowledge of the cultural arena of Darjeeling. Through his speeches and the use of music to unite the Gorkhas, the movement not only mounted the approval and supports of the masses but also bore the allegation of being secessionist movement rupturing the national integrity and unanimity.

The 11-point programme formulated by GNLF challenged the Government of West Bengal. Ghising also made the use of symbols for mobilizing the people. He announced the display of khukuri (a curved knife, an ethnic symbol of Gorkhas) that represented Gorkha culture and the people were emotionally driven and also used songs to mobilize the people

The theme of the songs were land, sacrifice and defeat of the Gorkhas.

Some specific strategies used by Mr.Ghising were the songs to mobilize the movement.

Original song in Nepali (Arun R, 1990)

Samayako

Samayako maang hoy o,

Yug ko aaj ho yo

Har ek mutu ko dharkan

Ani sab ko pran hoy o

Gorkhaland! Gorkhaland!

Chahana hami sabiko Gorkhaland

Jaslai banayo aguwa bhagwan u bhaidiyo

Jaati ra mato sitai, bikwan bhaidiyo

Bandhan torero aayo ab aago bhayeka chou

Birodhi Ravan ko lanka, jalauna ayeka chou

Gorkhaland! Gorkhaland!

Lakshya hami sabaiko Gorkhaland

Mato ko Yudh hoyo, bato ko yudh hoina

Kehi jaati drohi haru ko, swartha ko khel haina

Saakar ko sapna banauna ayeka chou

Ghar hamro aafno banauna ayeka chou

Gorkhaland!Gorkhaland!

Lakshya hami sabaiko Gorkhaland!

Translated version in English by Bibhor Ghimirey

This is the need of an hour,

This is the voice of today,

The collective beat of every heart,

And the essence of all our lives-

Gorkhaland! Gorkhaland!

The desire of every heart is Gorkhaland!

The abducted became the God,

As race and land were brought.

Us unchained are now on fire,

Ravan's Lanka shall burn on pyre.

Gorkhaland! Gorkhaland!

The desire of every heart is Gorkhaland!

This is fight of our land,

Not for mere tiny streets.

Not a game of self interest

Of a handful deceiving ingrates.

To fulfill our dreams, have we come,

Our dreams of calling our homes our own!

The fear of unjust treatment, the issue of threatened identity were the reasons that forced Mr Subhash Ghising to write a letter seeking help from the King of Nepal and to the United Nations Secretary. The then Union Home Minister, Mr Buta Singh requested to open a dialogue with Mr Ghising and the Bengal Government to which the Bengal Government was willing, if Ghising withdrew his letters to the King and abandoned the idea of a separate state. The dialogue took place in 1987, which ultimately led to creation of an Autonomous Council. After several rounds of discussions, on 10 July 1988 the proposal for the creation of Autonomous Hill Council was officially accepted. The Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC), was granted by the West Bengal State Legislative Act in the form of a “regional autonomy” on 22 August 1988.

Making Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC) Work

The end of 1998 was marked by the establishment of DGHC that was approved by the State government and the Union government. The DGHC was chaired by Ghising and the council was bestowed with social, educational and cultural powers to be exercised in the hills. However, with the formation of an Autonomous Council, there arose a sense of abject betrayal on the part of a great number of people Vis a` vis the “giving up” of the demand for Gorkhaland by GNLF.

The GNLF since the start of the movement repeatedly stated that it was against all forms of alternative, including DGHC. But the party apparently changed its stance and accepted DGHC. A few weeks before signing the Tripartite Agreement with the Union when Subhash Ghising was asked in an interview conducted by *The Telegraph* “when you initially launched the movement you had said that the Gorkhas would accept nothing short of a separate state”, he replied by saying “the GNLF was fighting for the identity of the Gorkhas. We were treated like foreigners in our own land and often confused with the Nepalis of Nepal. Now that the State Government has agreed to include the word “Gorkha” in the Council, the identity problem is over. Since we achieved what we were fighting for, we decided to bury the other issues for the

present.” When questioned further, “Do you think that the Hill Council will satisfy the aspirations of the people?” he replied, “why not, now the Gorkhas will be ruled by their own men and they will decide their own destiny” (Roy, 2012, pp. 394-396).

The Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council Act 1988, constituted a nominally elected Hill Council with twenty eight elected numbers out of forty-two total members. The interests of the Non-Gorkha communities like Rongs, Bhutias etc were protected through nomination to Council by the State Government. DGHC envisaged an Executive Council which comprised of an Executive Councilor and the Vice Chairman as the Ex Officio members and seven other members of whom five were nominated by the Chief Executive Councillor. The most important feature of the DGHC was that it was vested with executive powers. Agriculture, public works, forestry, public health, education and financial budgeting was now managed by the Council. DGHC was administered from 1988 to 2005 for three successive terms by GNLF.

After the formation of DGHC, the political mobilization took a new shape with the ascendancy of the language demand over other issue. The language demand brought the various hill groups and tribes together and accelerated the growth of hill identity. On 22 July 1987 GNLF submitted a memorandum seeking the inclusion of Gorkhali language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

In October 1989, GNLF chose to participate in the General Elections. It offered its party ticket for Darjeeling Lok Sabha seat to Inder Jit Khullar, a journalist and an editor of India News and the Feature Alliance (INFA), based in New Delhi. With several meetings held between Khullar and Mr Ghising, Khullar decided to contest the election as the GNLF candidate from the Darjeeling Constituency irrespective of the outcome of the Parliamentary election. He also promised to take the responsibilities as an MP both in terms of the GNLF’s election manifesto and in the best interest of the people of the said constituency of India. He was ultimately elected to the Parliament displacing the CPI(M) candidate. In 1989, Nar Bahadur Bhandari was elected as the Chief Minister of Sikkim; he was of Gorkha origin in India. Bhandari supported GNLF leaders and cadres during the movement. He gave shelter and aid to more than a lakh of people when they were displaced from the hills of Darjeeling. The Gorkhas supported him and began to

call him as the “champion of the Gorkhas.” Certainly, as a Chief Minister he was deemed to be in a position to represent Gorkhas more effectively.

Bhandari organized the All India Conference on Nepali Language at Gangtok on 11th June 1990. The conference discussed issues involving the incorporation of Nepali Language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. The conference concluded with the formation of a new Committee named “Bharatiya Nepali Rashtriya Parishad”, and Bhandari was elected as its President. On 4 September 1990, Bhartiya Nepali Rashtriya Parishad submitted a memorandum to Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh requesting him to introduce a Bill in the Parliament incorporating Nepali Language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. While the Bharatiya Nepali Rashtriya Parishad alone did not make the ultimate difference, it surely added a great deal of reach on the part of Bhasa Andolan (Dasgupta, 1999).

Unlike the politicians of Darjeeling hills or elsewhere, Nar Bahadur Bhandari as a Chief Minister had a great deal of political reach and good will. Interestingly, Nar Bahadur Bhandari’s wife Dil Kumari Bhandari was a prominent Congress leader and a member of the Parliament. Dil Kumar raised the issue of the inclusion of Nepali Language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution at times confronting the Member of Parliament from Darjeeling, Inderjit Khullar, who vehemently opposed the inclusion of Nepali Language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. On 4 September 1990, Mrs Bhandari escalated the demand for the inclusion of Nepali, Konkani and Manipuri languages in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. On 20 August 1992, Nepali along with Konkani and Manipuri was incorporated in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. The incorporation was the result of a concentrated effort made by both, All India Nepali Bhasa Samiti and Bharatiya Nepali Rashtriya Parishad.

There was a great deal of celebration all over the nation on the inclusion of Nepali language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. However, GNLF was not ready to accept the inclusion of the Nepali Language as they believed, as a violation of the Gorkha Citizenship Accord signed between the Union Government and the GNLF. In an emergency meeting held in Darjeeling on 21 August 1992, the party strongly

condemned the granting of Constitutional recognition to the Nepali Language. The following resolutions were passed:

- The GNLF will revive its original “demand for a separate statehood within the Union of India”,
- The GNLF will take a strong step to pressurize the Central Government for incorporating the land of Darjeeling and lease hold lands of Kalimpong, Dooars in Indian Union,
- The GNLF will observe “Black Flag Day” for the violation of the Citizenship Accord of 23 August 1988,
- The GNLF strongly condemns the inclusion of “Nepali language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution”,
- The GNLF will pressurize the Government to delete the names of the Nepali from the voters list (Roy B. , 2012, pp. 381-409).

After strong disagreement put forward by the GNLF cadres there was a clash between the supporters of the Bhasa Andolan on the one hand and the party on the other. Interestingly, the Union Home Ministry issued a notification on 20 August 1992, stating “while including Nepali language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution the Government of India has also noted that in some areas this language is also known as Gorkha Bhasa or Gorkhali. The Autonomous Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council has declared Gorkha Bhasa or Gorkhali to be its official language. The DGHC will therefore, be free to continue using Gorkhali as its official language.” The notification reached the hills of Darjeeling on 22 August 1992 and the GNLF opposition to the inclusion of Nepali language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution effectively ended.

In the last quarter of 1992, the hills of Darjeeling began to be politically isolated. This was due to the political supremacy of the GNLF and its leader Mr Subhash Ghising within the party. Mr Ghising did not allow dissent within and outside the party and hence, popular voice began to dissipate. Ghising began to take decisions on his own

without the advice of other leaders of the party. Political isolation was followed by GNLF's reluctance in offering shelter to the Bhutanese refugees who entered the hills of Darjeeling in 1992. Among the refugees it was believed, were also Bhutanese militants of Himalayan Union of Gorkha Liberation Army (HUGLA), who could help the party and particularly Subhash Ghising. The Bhutan National Liberation Front was also formed with active support of the GNLF and Subhash Ghising. At the end of 1992, political murders also began to take place in the hills of Darjeeling under the leadership of Subhash Ghising.

After 1988 General Election, Ghising's attitude towards politics changed. In Hague debacle of 1988, Ghising appealed to the International Court of Justice at Hague to resolve the "Legal and Constitutional Status" of Darjeeling. The ICJ did not accommodate Ghising's appeal. The Court issued a statement saying, "The International Court of Justice does not accept appeal from private citizens". Ghising was criticized by a large number of people, as he tried to divert people's attention from the failures of the DGHC. The Hague debacle, led to a great deal of negative media attention upon Subhash Ghising. Ghising began to concentrate more on building temples, community halls and roads rather than on administrative works of the Council. He also diverted his attention on spirituality and shamanistic practices. The mellowing down of the GNLF President was taken to by many to be indicative of his desire to step down. There was an internal strife within the party. On 28 March 1999, Rudra Kumar Pradhan one of the most popular Councilors and party leaders of GNLF was hacked to death in Darjeeling. With this incident, an era of political murders had begun in Darjeeling.

Rudra Kumar Pradhan was the President of the Darjeeling Branch Committee of GNLF. He had successfully contested the DGHC election from the Singamari-Tukvar Constituency before being hacked to death. On 30 March 1999, the day Pradhan's body was to be cremated Subhash Ghising was sworn in as the Chief Executive Councilor. Meanwhile, Pradhan's supporters called for a bandh and numerous GNLF Councilors sworn in on the day requested for police protection. Following the incident, on 10 February 2001, Subhash Ghising was attacked while travelling to Darjeeling. He was shot and wounded in the head near Kurseong town. Two of Ghising's bodyguards were

killed and six injured. The GNLf cadres declared a 72 hour strike and Ghising was rushed to Siliguri for medical treatment (The Telegraph, 11 February, 2001). Chattarey Subba who was the President of the Gorkha Liberation Army (GLO), was alleged to have masterminded the attack on Ghising. On 24 March 2001, Subba was arrested in his hideout at 4 miles in Sukiapokhari in the Indo-Nepal border (Poddar & Prasad, 2009), (Sarkar, 2013).

The culture of political attacks and assassination however, did not end. The series of attacks and murders took place one after another in the hills of Darjeeling. On 3 October 2002, C.K Pradhan, the former President of the Kalimpong branch of GNLf was shot dead. The reports said, “Pradhan had been planning to form a separate party called Gorkha National Liberation Revolutionary Front (GNLRF), with the help of certain GNLf dissidents. As Pradhan was a popular leader in Kalimpong, his death created suspicion against GNLf and particularly Subhash Ghising. The resentment against Ghising further grew when he refused to attend Pradhan’s funeral and other condolences. Pradhan was a victim of growing infighting within the GNLf. The next attack took place on 13 May 2003, with the assassination of Prakash Theeng. He was a GNLf leader and a DGHC Councilor from Bijanbari Area. Theeng was shot dead at Goke about 48 kilometers from Darjeeling. The reasons behind his death were not known immediately; however, the infightings within the party were not ruled out (The Telegraph, 2003).

The era of political murders and internal strife within the GNLf took a great toll on the party. An aura of mistrust began to engulf the party and the leaders began to be suspicious of each other. This led to the weakening of the party.

Ghising’s efforts to retain the DGHC were not effective after 2005 elections. Subhash Ghising now turned his attention to the incorporation of Sixth Schedule status for Darjeeling. He stated that this status would reform the powers of the Council along with the Constitutional guarantee. The Sixth Schedule of the Constitution primarily dealt with the provisions of the administration of Tribal Lands in the States of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram. Since these regions consisted of tribal areas, the Government of India through the provisions of the Sixth Schedule had established

Tribal Councils for the administration of these regions. Ghising wanted a similar Tribal Council to be established in the hills of Darjeeling. He believed, with the establishment of the Tribal Council in Darjeeling the political problems that vexed Darjeeling would be solved. The identity problem of the Gorkhas would also be solved with the inclusion of the term Gorkhaland.

However, there were a great number of complications for the implementation of the Sixth Schedule in Darjeeling. Since the Sixth Schedule was formulated to protect the “tribal” population of the North Eastern States of the country. West Bengal did not qualify as a tribal region and the provisions of Sixth Schedule could not thus, be “Constitutionally” implemented in Darjeeling (Roy B. , 2012, p. 429). Ghising knew about the complications in the implementation of the Sixth Schedule Status in Darjeeling. He tried to resolve the complications by impressing upon the Union Government the following: i) the provisions of Sixth Schedule could offer perpetual solutions to all the political problems and the identity of the Gorkhas in India, ii) a vast majority of Gorkhas were indeed tribals. In Darjeeling, meanwhile, through religious and social manipulations Ghising initiated “back to our tribal roots” programme. It was believed that the Lepchas and Bhutias were the original inhabitants of Darjeeling who used Tibeto-Burman language as a mode of communication. Later the population slowly outnumbered by migrants from Nepal who used Newari and Nepali as the mode of communication. Both these languages are spoken by the people of Darjeeling which is known as Khaskura.

He banned idol worship and offered patronage to the Shamans. He participated in Shamanistic rituals and made every aspect of the tribal culture a part of tourist attraction. He also promoted the drinking of “Tongba” a homemade, tribal alcohol and established the tribal heritage of the Gorkhas (The Telegraph, 2005).

Ghising’s change in strategies, idea of a full-statehood was now replaced by the inclusion of a Tribal Council in the hills of Darjeeling. On this stance of Ghising, there was a great deal of resentment among the people over the implication of the Sixth Schedule Status. Various opposition parties namely, Gorkha League under the leadership of Madan Tamang vehemently opposed it. They believed that the tribal status for the hills of Darjeeling would divide the

people and the Gorkhas at large. They also believed that the formation of the “Gorkhaland Autonomous Council” under the provision of the Sixth Schedule would “once and for all” end the contention for the separate state of Gorkhaland (Roy, 2012, p. 430).

The Sixth Schedule Constitutional amendment bill 2007, was introduced in the Parliament by then Union Home Minister Shivraj Patil. There was a lot of opposition to Ghising’s idea of Sixth Schedule status. There was a general strike to protest the demand for the inclusion of Sixth Schedule. The major opposition came from the GJMM supporters who assembled outside Ghising’s bungalow to stop him from entering his bungalow. Ghising fled to Delhi after the incident and ultimately resigned from DGHC on the request of the then Chief Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee” (Golay, 2006, p. 21. Sarkar, 2013, p. 35).

CHAPTER- IV

Contentious Politics and the rise of Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha

During the latter half of 2008, a great deal of political activism was witnessed in the hills of Darjeeling. The failure of DGHC under Mr Subhash Ghising caused a great amount of discontentment among the people. Restraints of power being the perpetual power of contention between the GNLF and State Government and absence of effective communication with the local authorities and lack of planning at the core level had a conspicuous fallout, which was a decrepit and feeble economic structure in the hills. Despite a number of discussions undertaken to plan the development of natural resources in the hills, there was no forward planning nor an effectual framework to initiate concrete steps towards it. Ultimately, the hills suffered. Basic services became inaccessible or insufficient. Lack of water, provision of clean drinking water and adequate sewage disposal, poor hygiene and sanitation, dismal stature of women in the society and political scenario were just to name a few of the aftermaths. Inadequate funding and limitation imposed on local bodies curbed their powers to build and develop social and economic infrastructures, a prerequisite for the progress of the region.

DGHC performed unsuccessfully and faltered in its attempt to proficiently discharge its duties. The need for an independent state of Gorkhaland gained prominence and fell out of the hands of existing leaders. It witnessed the birth of GJMM that overtook the current political scenario by storm and instilled hope in the public eyes fighting against the system for a separate state of Gorkhaland.

On the 23 September 2007, Prashant Tamang who was one of the finalists in the reality show Indian Idol got selected for the finale. The people of Darjeeling began to support him and by the end of September 2007 it achieved fanatical proportions. The political parties in the region gauging the public response also began campaigning for him. The GNLF however remained aloof. A reported statement made by the GNLF President Mr Ghising that “he was busy with more important things” resulted in a great deal of resentment among the general populace.

Prashant Tamang's selection in the finals of the Indian Idol galvanized the Gorkhas in India in a manner that had never been witnessed earlier. Gorkhas from all the corners of the nation formed "Prashant Tamang Fan Clubs" and campaigned for him. In Darjeeling a Municipal Commissioner Tenzing Khambachey initiated the "make Prashant Indian Idol" campaign. The campaign received great public support. Khambachey was praised for his fortitude and public service. In the months leading to the finale of Indian Idol, Mr. Bimal Gurung before forming the party GJMM, was a prominent leader of GNLF from Singamari-Tukvar constituency, he actively began campaigning for Prashant Tamang. He travelled throughout the region and requested people to support Tamang. He also condemned Subhash Ghising for not supporting Prashant Tamang.

Gurung's campaign improved his own political image among the general populace. Prior to his involvement in the campaign he had been regarded as a handline militant leader. On 23 September 2007, Prashant Tamang was crowned Indian Idol. Gorkhas all over the Nation celebrated victory. Mr Gurung openly condemned Subhash Ghising. He also stood against the implementation of the provision of Sixth Schedule in Darjeeling calling it divisive. Gurung's remarks were significant, since it was the first time that any GNLF leader of any standing had denounced the party supremo openly. After this move, he was expelled from the party on 4th October, 2007. On 7 October 2007, Gurung addressing a massive gathering in Darjeeling announced the formation of Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha. He also raised the demand for a separate state of Gorkhaland and also stood firmly against the implementation of Sixth Schedule in the hills of Darjeeling. All Gorkha Students' Union (AGSU), a powerful students Union based in Darjeeling also merged with Gorkha Janmukti Morcha. The President of All Gorkha Students' Union was Mr Roshan Giri who was later elected as the General Secretary of GJMM.

Programmes and Strategies of Mobilization

In the distant history of Gorkhaland Movement it is observed that the movement has passed through different levels and character of leadership. The Gorkha League, the GNLF and then the GJMM. After every point of transfer of power, as the leadership changed hands, the proposed plan of action and procedural approach have too undergone substantial changes.

Difference in objectives decided upon and the blue print adopted to pursue by different leaders brought about considerable changes. The League's focal points were social and political identity of an Indian Gorkha, the recognition of native language and ethnic and economic development of the community. They depended on peaceful strikes and protests. However, in 1980s Mr Subhash Ghising emerged and transformed the movement radically in terms of goals and objectives.

He organized the supporting public, equipped them with weapons and encouraged them to prepare for aggressive and violent campaign. In the name of freedom struggle. He counted on popular songs that reflected the Gorkha culture, to communicate with the people and influence their sentiments to his advantage. Music was used as an instrument to bond the people over the common thread of history, culture and understanding. It integrated them into a community that was undergoing tumultuous dissent movement. His inclination towards usage of cultural symbols of identity such as "Khukuri" (a symbol strength and daring) and Nepali cap typically mirrors his strategy to coalesce politics with culture.

The songs of sorrow reflected the insecurities of the Gorkhas and they believed only a separate state would create a space for defining their identity. Ghising was repugnant to passive methods of struggle, he stated that "the movement gained its significance and reached its climax with the use of violent strategies". The violent armed struggle eventually led to the in "creation of Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC) in 1988" (Ganguly, 2005).

In 2007 a new party was formed which gave dynamism to the Gorkhaland Movement. On 21 November 2007, Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha called a strike for 96 hours. The closure was marked by a number of clashes between the supporters of AIGL, GJMM and GNLF. The supporters of AIGL and GJMM also restricted the movement of GNLF leaders and cadres at different places in the hills heating up the political tension. The closure was called off but at the same time a number of houses of GNLF supporters were damaged. Counter attack was made by the GNLF cadres by calling an indefinite strike, protesting against the attack on one of its leaders, Kul Bahadur Gurung. Gurung was attacked by GJMM activists in Darjeeling town. The clash between the parties

heated up the situation and on 27 November 2007, more than 1000 residents of Darjeeling brought out a silent rally requesting all the parties to deal peacefully with each other. The residents also requested the GNLFF to withdraw the indefinite strike. By the evening of that same day, the markets began to open and the situation began to get normal. One of the most remarkable factors about the silent rally was that it did not bear any party flag.

The GJMM intensified programmes and called for indefinite hunger strike in opposition to the implementation of the provisions of Sixth Schedule status in the hills of Darjeeling. The efforts of the GJMM bore results as the Sixth Schedule bill was delayed that created panic among the leaders of the GNLFF, the party also threatened to call for the Gorkhaland agitation if the bill was not passed immediately.

The political tension further intensified when Bharatiya Gorkha Parisangh, a non political organization based in Siliguri, raised the demand for the separate state of Gorkhaland. It also condemned the implementation of the provisions of the Sixth Schedule in the hills of Darjeeling. The next programme launched by the Gorkha Janmukti Morcha against the incorporation of the Sixth Schedule status was a series of “Non-Cooperation Movement” at the public meeting held at Lebung near Darjeeling. The party demanded that the Chief Principal Secretary of the DGHC along with other officials should resign. The GJMM also addressed the gathering not to pay taxes.

He further announced various agitational programmes which included “gherao” or the surrounding of the DGHC headquarters at Darjeeling and the initiation of hunger strikes. Many youths including the Democratic Youth Federation of India (DYFI) joined GJMM. The indefinite hunger strike was initiated by the GJMM cadres in order to remove Mr Ghising from the post of Caretaker Administrator of DGHC. The strike was lobbied for three days until the Chief Minister of West Bengal issued a statement saying that Subhash Ghising would resign within 10days. Ghising was also blocked from entering the hills of Darjeeling by the GJMM.

The party also refused to participate in an all-party meeting called by the Chief Minister of West Bengal Buddhadeb Bhattacharya. Ghising resigned from the post of Caretaker Administrator of DGHC on 10th March, 2008. Meanwhile, Deepak Gurung, the President of the Darjeeling Branch Committee of GNLF, was arrested after shots allegedly fired from his house led to the death of Pramila Sharma, a GJMM cadre. She was one of the members of GJMM women cadres who had gathered near Gurung's house. After the incident the President of the party Mr. Subhash Ghising was banned from entering the hills of Darjeeling.

Mr Bimal Gurung who had been the right hand of Mr Subhash Ghising in the earlier movement was not ready to accept Mr Ghising as the Chairman of DGHC. However, the new leadership followed the footsteps of GNLF in forming the objectives and issues of the movement but differed widely in terms of strategies and programmes for the realization of the movement. The GNLF led movement of 1980s focused on issues such as citizenship and identity of the Indian Gorkhas, creation of a separate state and inclusion of Gorkha language in the VIII Schedule of the Constitution.

The second episode started in 2007 concentrated more on identity problem and held the idea that only a separate state would solve the problem of the Gorkhas. The leader designed the movement strategy with the single agenda in mind. The ideology of the second episode was grounded on the Gandhian model of strategy.

The movement was a non-violent one which shared common character with the earlier episode of the movement. The GJMM's "Aachar Samhita" (the model of code of conduct) states the following

"Ahimsa (non-violence) is humanity's biggest power. Gandhism and Ahimsa constitute the main mantra of the Gorkha Jana Mukti Morcha. What we have achieved and what we have lost in our violent movement of the past is self-explanatory. Let us understand that Ahimsa is our avowed religion. Let us refrain from violent activities; to fight amongst ourselves is antiethical to Gandhian principles. Our objectives can be achieved through constitutional mechanisms. Since the Constitution provides for such provisions, we can invoke the constitutional provisions to achieve our goals. It is futile

to adopt violent strategies...” The GJMM campaigned outside Darjeeling and convinced the people to support the movement by not co-operating with the State government. In fact, the people stopped paying their phone bills, electricity bills, land taxes as a sign of protest against the State government. GJMM also acknowledged the participation of cultural organization in the Gorkhaland Movement (Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha, Aachar Samhita, 2007 p. 3)

Number of publications focused on the religion and culture of the refugees. “Noyo” particularly reflected the story of deprived society of the refugees in India. Some Nepali novels like Noyo also focus on the stories of inhuman treatment of refugees in India. Some associations like Nepali Sahitya Sammelan (NSS), Pragatisil Nepali Sahitya Parishad (PNSP), Siksha, Teshro Aayam (Third Dimension) and Gorkha Dukha Niwarak Sammelan were devoted to socio-cultural endeavours. Poems were written by the students on the light of Gorkhaland movement, the associations came forward and created a space where they could work in peace and harmony.

One of the poems recited in Gorkha Dukha Niwarak Sammelan hall was-

Original poem in Nepali (Zingme W, 2017)

Maile J Dekhe Tei Lekhe

107 dekhi ko Andolan lai GTA2 le dheke

Hamro pahar 3 saal ko GTA bhayeko pani dekehe

GTA ko kaalo badal le dhakiyeke pani dekhe,

Mo ta kalilo janta sampurna pahar ko janta,

Rajniti ma rajdharma nibhaune janta

Mo ta Gorkhaland sabda ko janma data

Mo ta Jhanda Gorkha ko timiharule bachako

Timiharu tyo basne sabai GTA2 ko paisa ko,

Afaile afailai bechera ladeko

Bhanthe Gorkha le Prithvi golo cha sabai ko samai aucha,

Mo ta raati ladeko kosaile dekhena malai,

Timi ta dindaharai timrai manch bara lade sabai le dekhyo timilai

Translated version in English by Bibhor Ghimirey

I write what I see!

A revolution since 1907 being smothered by GDNS is what I saw,

Our hills becoming a GDNS for three years is what I saw,

Our hills being shrouded by the dark clouds of GDNS is what I saw.

I'm just an unripened populace of these hills,

Just an unheard voice in politics,

Just the mother who birthed "Gorkhaland",

Just the Gorkha flag that you claim to have saved.

You all live there with the money from GDNS

From when you sold your own self.

"The world is round", they said to me.

They said, "Your time shall come too."

But I fought amidst dark nights and no one saw me,

While you fought in sunny days and everyone saw you.

The emergence of the new leader was partly due to the reliance on electronic media apart from print media which was the major factor for mobilization. The major turn in the movement comes along with the difference in aims of the movement. The second episode of the movement expanded its protest programmes to other parts of Siliguri, Dooars that fall in Jalpaiguri districts in West Bengal, extending up to River Sunkosh on the border with Bhutan. While the GNLF had included Dooars in its programmes, it did not push for its inclusion in the map of Gorkhaland. As a result, when the DGHC was formed, only the hill subdivisions were included in it. The large number of Gorkhas living in the plains were left out.

The GJMM along with the Gorkhas was backed by the Adivasis from the plains which gave strength to the organization in terms of numbers. Mr Gurung formulated programmes in the plain areas which was instrumental in his claim for a transformational leader. The party also had commonalities with its predecessor. The hills of Darjeeling went through an era of political murders and internal strife under the leadership of Mr Bimal Gurung. On 22 January 2008, a clash took place between the cadres of GJMM and the GNLF at Ghayabari near Kurseong. The GJMM cadres returning from the Court of the Sub-Divisional Magistrate was allegedly fired upon by I.N Pradhan, the President of the Kurseong branch of GNLF. The police arrested Pradhan's wife and confiscated a number of "unlicensed weapons." I.N Pradhan was declared absconding. Immediately after the incident the GJMM called for a general strike demanding the arrest of Pradhan. (Roy, 2012, p. 437).

Next incident took place on 25 July 2008, when Mr. Deepak Gurung, the President of Darjeeling Branch Committee of GNLF, was arrested after shots allegedly fired from his house lead to the death of Parmila Sharma, a GJMM cadre who had gathered with the rest of the protesters near Gurung's house. Two prominent GNLF leaders Aitraj Gurung and N.K Kumai including 12 GNLF cadres were also arrested. The political arrests and strife between the parties took a great toll both the parties. An aura of mistrust and frustration against the GNLF strengthened the movement altogether. The GJMM was a strong organization compared to the party GNLF. GJMM was also able to

multiply its numerical strength as an organization with the people from different caste, class and religion.

The Formation of Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA)

In the year 2008, several meetings were held between the existing parties like AIGL, GNLF and GJMM. The all party meetings concentrated on discussing the issue of separate statehood movement. However the consensus politics was short lived because of political rivalry between All India Gorkha League and Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha. There were numerous reasons behind the two parties' rivalry. The most important reason being each party's desire to lead the movement, filling the political vacuum left behind by the Gorkha National Liberation Front. In January 2009, the Darjeeling District Committee of Bharatiya Janata Party was also able to impress upon the national leadership of the party the need to support the issue of Gorkhaland despite the party state committee's resolute stand against it. The winning over of the party's national leadership in favour of the issue of Gorkhaland polarized the local parties in favour of Bharatiya Janata Party. Parties like Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha, Gorkha National Liberation Front and Communist Party of Revolutionary Marxists began to drift towards Bharatiya Janata Party.

GJMM in particular began to increasingly ally itself with Bharatiya Janata Party, the two ultimately settling down to an electoral alliance. In March 2009, Dawa Sherpa was declared as Bharatiya Janata Party's candidate for the Darjeeling Lok Sabha Constituency. The Gorkha Janmukti Morcha was however, not particularly impressed by his candidature and as such strongly lobbied for his replacement. The BJP replaced Dawa Sherpa by Jaswant Singh which was seen as a major political victory for Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha since Jaswant Singh was a political leader of national standing and a former Union Minister. Jaswant Singh received an overwhelming support from the voters in Darjeeling Hills. However, BJP was unable to win seat in Bengal. The failure on the part of BJP to form the Government at the Centre led to a major set-back for the Gorkha Janmukti Morcha. Indeed the party had banked heavily on the coming to power of the BJP at the Centre. The GJM President had even gone to the extent of declaring that he would inaugurate the state of Gorkhaland by the 10 March 2010. Jaswant Singh

was expelled from the party saying he had deviated from the party ideology. The party was particularly critical of Singh's book. In the book Singh had excessively praised Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, while being critical about Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, India's first Home Minister (Roy, 2012, p.465). The expulsion of Jaswant Singh from BJP led to a further set-back for the Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha. The party had lobbied hard for the selection of Jaswant Singh as the party's candidate for the Darjeeling Lok Sabha Constituency.

Following the incident Mr Bimal Gurung revealed a secret proposal which had already been sent to the Union Home Ministry. On 15 March 2010, the contents of the secret proposal was the "The Formation of an Interim Administrative setup" in the name and style of "Gorkhaland Regional Authority" or "Darjeeling and Dooars Regional Authority". The GJMM was slowly deviating from its prime objective of attaining a separate statehood. The reason behind the GJMM's change in stance was mostly the expulsion of Jaswant Singh from the Bharatiya Janata Party and its ally's inability to form a government at the Centre. The party also found itself under pressure at the local level forcing it to look towards an interim solution leading towards Gorkhaland if not the full-fledged state of Gorkhaland. The Gorkhaland Regional Authority (GRA) as proposed by Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha was to be an autonomous administrative setup based on suitable Constitutional Provisions. The GRA was also to be an interim administrative setup existing only till the 31 December 2011. The GRA was to have all three Legislative, Executive and Judicial powers as proposed by the GJMM. Its Legislative wing was to be made of a Regional Board. The Regional Board was to have not less than 55 members elected through adult suffrage supervised by the Election Commission. The members of the Board would elect a Speaker and a Deputy Speaker who would in turn be responsible for the general functioning of the Board. The Board would be able to frame laws in wide ranging subjects independently of the State Legislative Assembly.

The Executive wing of GRA was to be made of the Executive Committee headed by the Chief. The Chief was to be elected by the members of the Regional Board thus also being responsible to the Regional Board. The Executive Committee of the Gorkhaland

Regional Authority was to have administrative authority over all the areas coming under the Gorkhaland Regional Authority.

Finally, the Judicial wing of the GRA as proposed by the GJMM was to be headed by a judiciary subordinate to its own High Court- the High Court to be established in Darjeeling.

Other demands made by the GJMM in the secret proposal were:

- Financial assistance from the Government of India for the formation of an interim authority for five year which can be extendable to six years,
- Financial coverage of 2000 Crore to be distributed equally in the region for five years ,
- Direct fund to be provided yearly in terms of approved yearly and “Five Year Plans” without the involvement of State Government,
- Special financial assistance from Union Government in terms of development of the region without the interference of the State Government,
- Recruitment of public offices and improvement of Public Service Commission,
- Establishment of substantial amount of hydro power, trade and industrial powers.
- Allotment of seats in higher education across India,
- Improvement of roads, National Highways by the “Border Road Organization” (BRO),
- Construction of Super Speciality Hospitals,
- Transport facility in Sukna, Birpara, Sevoke and Kalchini,
- Opening of more tea gardens in Darjeeling,
- Recruitment of paramilitary forces in the region,
- Opening of Attorney Genaral (AG) office in Darjeeling,

- Special recruitment for education, disaster management and environmental openings,
- Setup of a “Tribal Research Institute” (Roy, 2012, p. 205).

Reaction to the secret proposal made by GJMM, the Union Home Ministry proposed the formation of Gorkhaland Autonomous Authority (GAA) under the direct control of the Governor of West Bengal. Compared to the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC), the Gorkhaland Autonomous Authority (GAA) was to have Executive powers over 54 subjects including theatre and culture, management and maintenance of cremation grounds, minor minerals and mineral development, management of land and markets, town and country planning. The GAA was to comprise of 20 members of whom 15 were to be nominated by the political parties. (Parmar, 1990, p.85).

The All India Gorkha League and the Communist Party of Revolutionary Marxists opposed the demand for the formation of Gorkhaland Regional Authority. The parties also rejected the Home Ministers proposal for GAA. The AIGL President, Mr Madan Tamang, particularly opposed the GJMM alleging that the party had gone astray and had begun to make deals with the State and the Union Governments at the cost of the aspirations of the people. In 2009 and 2010 a series of meetings and conferences were held in New Delhi and Darjeeling between the representatives of the Union Home Ministry, the State Government and the GJMM. The Tripartite talks basically revolved around the proposal for the formation of Gorkhaland Regional Authority and Gorkhaland Autonomous Authority put forward by the GJMM and the Union Home Ministry (Bhattacharya, 2017).

As Mr Madan Tamang the President of AIGL, was preparing for a political meeting to commemorate the Foundation Day of his party he was attacked by a mob leading to his assassination on 21 May 2010. The next day, Laxman Pradhan, the General Secretary of All India Gorkha League, lodged an FIR at the Darjeeling police station implicating the Central Committee members and cadres of GJMM in the assassination of Madan Tamang. Among the leaders mentioned in the FIR were party President Mr Bimal

Gurung, his wife and President of Gorkha Jan Mukti Nari Morcha, Asha Gurung, Party General Secretary Roshan Giri and Central Committee Member Harkha Bahadur Chettri. “While no immediate arrests were made, public opinion at least in Darjeeling seemed polarized as the funeral procession of the slain AIGL President transformed into anti-GJMM outburst” (Mohanty, 2014).

Many prominent leaders resigned from GJMM, among the leaders were Amar Lama, Anmole Prasad, Dr. Harka Bahadur Chettri, Trilok Dewan, L.B Pariyar, C.R Rai, Palden Lama, Narayan Thapa and CK Subba. There was a leadership crisis and an era of political vacuum appeared once again in the hills of Darjeeling. The President of GJMM Mr Bimal Gurung decided to hold a talk with the Union Government. The GJMM’s initiative was condemned by the AIGL and the Urban Development Minister particularly demanded that GJMM should not be included in the talk as the party had been implicated in the assassination of the Gorkha League President and had lost people’s mandate. (Samanta, 2001, p. 106).

On 30 May 2010 GJMM rejected the proposal of GAA. It also shelved its own demand for the formation of the Gorkhaland Regional Authority. The party now demanded for the formation of the state of Gorkha Adivasi Pradesh. Party President Mr Bimal Gurung, at a meeting held in Darjeeling, said, “From today the proposed state would be known as Gorkha Adivasi Pradesh” (Sharma, 2015).

The reason for the transformation of the nomenclature of the proposed state of Gorkhaland to Gorkha Adivasi Pradesh was made by the party leadership as an attempt to bring the aboriginal tribal population of Dooars and Terai into the fold of the statehood movement and to make them part of it. The tribals had so far remained suspicious of the Gorkhaland Movement in the Dooars Terai and even opposed it. The GJMM called the parties in the Dooars Terai including Akhil Bharatiya Adivasi Vikas Parishad (ABAVP) to join the movement. However, there were not many takers as the prominent parties in the region remained mostly antagonistic to the demand for the formation of the separate state of Gorkhaland or Gorkha Adivasi Pradesh. The CPI opposed the demand while the ABAVP considered it seeking to incorporate Sixth Schedule status in the hills of Darjeeling.

With several meetings held between the Government and the GJMM, negotiations were made to drop the demand for Gorkha Adivasi Pradesh and instead discuss about the formation of an Interim Setup proposed by the Union Home Ministry. On 24 July 2010 Tripartite Talk was a triumph especially for the Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha. The party facing a great deal of political opposition in the hills of Darjeeling after the assassination of AIGL President Mr Madan Tamang regained political upper hand in the region. The representatives of both the Union Government and the State Government agreed to work with the party to solve the Gorkhaland issue.

The Union Home Ministry also proposed the formation of an Interim Setup replacing the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC). The Interim Setup was to exist until 31 December 2011. The State Government and the Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha accepted the proposal given that a series of Tripartite Meetings were held so that important issues pertaining to the formation of the Interim Setup was sorted out especially between the State Government and the GJMM.

There were number of contentious issues involving in the Interim Setup between the GJMM and the State Government. These primarily included the division of Executive powers and the Jurisdiction. The GJMM wanted the incorporation of the Dooars and Terai, involving parts of Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling districts. The GJMM also wanted various Executive powers and departments to be incorporated in the Interim Setup these included the department of Tauzi(the body that is in charge of leasing out land owned by the State government including Tea Estate land, renewal of lease, receiving annual rent to a new body) among others. The AIGL opposed to the formation of an Interim Setup. The State Government rejected the Interim Setup in Darjeeling which caused a series of incidents in the Dooars area starting from mob procession to protest. In a mob procession many GJMM supporters were killed in police firing which led to indefinite strike called by the GJMM. After the incident all the parties in the hills of Darjeeling declared that the Assembly Elections would be contested in the three subdivisions of hills. With the support of Sikkim Legislative Assembly the party GJMM was able to win the elections and also secure the resolution for a separate state of Gorkhaland within

the Union of India. All the parties in the hills of Darjeeling welcomed GJMM including apolitical organizations like Bharatiya Gorkha Parisangh.

With the victory of GJMM in the Assembly Elections, on 8 July 2011, an agreement was reached between the State Government and the Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha on the draft of a new autonomous administrative setup by the name Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA). On 9 July 2011, the Union Home Ministry also gave its endorsement to the formation of the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration. (Subba, 1992, p. 81)

Making Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA) Work

The memorandum of apprehension signed between the GJMM, the State government and the Union government led to the establishment of Gorkhaland Territorial Administration. GTA was bestowed with three important powers- legislative, executive and judiciary. The GTA administered the area of Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong along with the plain areas of Siliguri, Terai and Dooars. It was an official body that consisted of three members from the GJMM, three representatives from the State government and a director of census operations to be conducted by the Union government.

The GTA also comprised of a Sabha with a Chairman and Deputy Chairman to conduct the business of the Council. The GTA Sabha consisted of 45 elected members and five members nominated by the Governor to give representation to members of SC, ST, women and minority communities. The MPs, MLAs and chairpersons of the municipalities were to be ex-officio members of the GTA Sabha. The GTA Sabha was to have tenure of five years. The Executive body of the GTA consisted of a Chief Executive who would nominate 14 members out of elected members as Executive members. The Union Government approved of providing financial assistance of Rs.200 Crore per annum for 3 years for projects to develop the socio-economic infrastructure in GTA over and above the normal plan assistance to the State of West Bengal. In 2012, GJMM committed itself to the formation of the separate state of Gorkhaland. However, after signing the GTA accord, the party has looked increasingly towards implementing

the provisions of the GTA accords in the hills of Darjeeling. In July 2012, the party participated in the GTA polls and won all the seats. Mr Bimal Gurung was elected as the Chief of the GTA Sabha.

As the Administration of Darjeeling holds Executive powers that looks into the cultural aspect, the second episode of the Gorkhaland Movement under Mr. Bimal Gurung, apart from mobilizing the traditional print media, electronic media has also been mobilized. The GJMM has created its own website which provides information on various issues, strategies and developments in the movement. Apart from the leadership spearheading the movement, the leaders of the opposition have also resorted to electronic media for mobilization. For instance, in the aftermath of the death of Mr Madan Tamang, a website named Madan Manch have been created as a virtual space wherein supporters of AIGL could come together, interact and mobilize popular support.

With every aspiring factor of GTA under the Chairmanship of Mr Bimal Gurung there is an opposition from the party AIGL. The GJMM had always been respectful towards AIGL though the party alleged Mr. Gurung for corruption, fraudulent activities and misconduct of the administration. Mr. Madan Tamang who was the leader of AIGL wanted to conduct a meeting and tell the people how they have been deceived by the leader. The unfortunate death of Mr Tamang shattered the Gorkhas and led to the set-back for the GJMM cadres as they were the main targets. Like Ghising, Mr Gurung also realized that GTA was a placebo that had been granted to the hills instead of a separate statehood that his people had fought for. With all the important decisions vested to the District Magistrate and West Bengal Government the financial authority was controlled and development was restricted.

Factional politics, which had plagued the Gorkhaland movement ever since it began (1907 when the Hillmen's Association first sought a separate homeland for the hill people), aborted whatever chances Mr. Gurung had in succeeding where Ghising had failed. The GTA like the previous "autonomous" body did not address the real issues, political aspirations defined by ethnic identity. On 15 May 2017, the State Education Minister, Partha Chatterjee, announced a three language policy with Bengali as a compulsory subject in all schools in West Bengal. A day later Mamta Banerjee

reiterated that it would be done without any exceptions. Mr Gurung, seized upon the situation and reignited the demand for a separate state of Gorkhaland where the Gorkhas identity would be protected and not trampled upon by outsiders. The agitation was revived in no time and Mamta Banerjee rushed to clarify that the schools in the hills would be exempted from the new rules and also offered to include Nepali as an optional subject in the State Civil Services Exams. In such a popular rage all the political parties in the hills came together in support of the movement once again. The imposition of Bengali language created the feeling of insecurity among the Gorkhas and their quest for identity and recognition started to mobilize once again under the GJMM and the Gorkhaland Movement Co-ordination Committee (GMCC).

GJMM took out rallies and demonstrations in various parts of the hills demanding fair play of the Government. Soon after the call for indefinite strike by the GJMM, the internet services were banned in the hills. Members of all the political parties dressed in Nepali traditional attire and took out candle marches and rallies raising slogans in support of the movement. GJMM activists and NGO's like Hayden Hall, Drishti and Sunshine were seen distributing food among locals as supply remained insufficient because of indefinite shutdown. For the first time in the history of Gorkhaland Movement the people initiated a talk with the Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh, along with the parties; GJMM, GMCC and GNLF.

The talk was recorded and live casted, the Government was ready to form a Board of Administration BoA. Meanwhile, the GJMM Chief Mr Gurung resigned from his post which was filled by Mr. Binay Tamang who was the Ex Convener of GJMM. The Board consisted of eight members and was vested with Administrative powers with leaders such as Binay Tamang, Anit Tamang, Mann Singh and others. There were now two camps within the party one led by Mr. Tamang and the other led by Mr. Gurung, the second camp soon saw the anticipated removal of Mr Gurung and other GJMM leaders for six months. On 20 September 2017, Mr Tamang was appointed as the party President by the Cental Committee. From the demand of a separate state of Gorkhaland now the question remains whether it should be a Union Territory. The age old demand for Gorkhaland claiming its own language, identity, culture and administrative standout,

the movement have not been settled, the change in organization and its leaders have continued and the hills continues to struggle with every changing leader.

In each of the episodes of Gorkhaland Movement, the leader focuses primarily on the Gorkha identity crisis, development of the region adopting different strategies and programmes that help in mobilizing the participants of the movement. Mr Ghising adopted a violent approach in order to attract the participants of the movement and draw favourable outcome. Mr Gurung on the other hand inclined towards non-violent approach and relied more on peaceful means of protest strategies which ultimately led to the creation of an autonomous council.

Chapter V

Conclusion

The present study has examined the evolution of protest movement in the State of West Bengal within the Union of India with a particular focus on the Gorkhaland Movement. The study has evaluated the role of the leadership, organizational structure and mobilization of the participants in the life and course of the Gorkhaland Movement. The study has also attempted to locate three major elements of Contentious Politics. These are firstly, leadership with his personality, perceptions and resources relevant to goal attainment, followers with their own personality and perception, secondly, mobilization, motivating followers to accept and support the cause of the movement and thirdly, organization where the followers and the leaders are bound together in a relationship within a situation. Organization defines the movement and sets the objective of the leaders and their influences on the followers. Further, the study also aimed to compare and contrast the role of the leaders in the protest movement dynamics. It attempted to analyze the social mechanism that differentiated the two episodes of Gorkhaland movement under two different leadership.

The study analyzed the interplay of various elements of the movement ranging from socio-structural elements like class and religious affiliations, culture and ethnicity. These elements have the potential to mar the efficiency of the movement mobilizations.

In the first episode of Gorkhaland movement Mr. Ghising initiated the programme of 'back to our tribal roots'. Ghising used specific social mechanisms to establish a tribal identity in the hills like the practice of shamanistic rituals and promoting the drinking of homemade tribal alcohol. The issue of Gorkha ethnic identity versus the tribal identity

affected the movement mobilization. The Gorkha ethnic identity demands that all other identities are subsumed under pan-Gorkha identity for the Gorkha community as a whole. The other ethnic groups like the Bhutias and the Lepchas have claimed that Darjeeling belongs to them. This has limited the mobilization of the movement.

Lepchas, Bhutias and Sherpas are recognized as Scheduled Tribes (ST) in the Indian Constitution. The STs get perks by way of reservation in several fields like educational institutions and governmental offices. Therefore, the tribes prefer not to join in the struggle for recognition as an ethnic community which would jeopardize their status. This division has limited the leader's effort to mobilize the movement.

In the second episode with the rejection of the Sixth Schedule status, Mr. Gurung tried to unite the people in the hills irrespective of their caste, class and tribe. Mr. Gurung's experiences framed his outlook in an opposite direction, he followed non-violent, passive resistance approach with a potential to give rebirth to the movement. In post 2007 several organizations also contributed in the socio-cultural upliftment of the community. In the year 2008 Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha (GJMM) began to drift towards Bharatiya Janata Party which ultimately settled to an electoral alliance. This drift was due to the statement made by BJP in its manifesto for Lok Sabha elections that stated "the party would sympathetically examine and appropriately consider the long pending demand of the Gorkhas". The programmes of GJMM resulted in an alternative administrative setup for the Gorkhas in Darjeeling.

The chapters analyzed the ideological commitment of the leadership and movement dynamics, strategies of protest adopted by the leader and its impact on the movement

dynamics, leadership conflicts and the role of cultural associations.

McAdam has discussed how a violent movement attracts the protestors and creates favourable outcomes in protest movement dynamics. He gives an example of the bus boycott of the late 1950s in Montgomery, Alabama which was a political and social protest against the racial discrimination on the public transport system. Many important figures took part in the movement including Martin Luther King Jr. The techniques of boycotts and protests were used initially which were not effective for the protest movement. These techniques of boycott and non-violence had lost its appeal. In order to remain a powerful force the protest movement needed a new technique for attracting the protestors and defeating the Whites (opposition). According to McAdam the boycott movement of 1950s which was started by Black protesters under Martin Luther King Jr and the other leaders in Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) rose to the challenge by devising a new technique that led the movement victorious during the early 1960s. Martin Luther deliberately provoked violence to generate successful outcomes.

In the first episode of Gorkhaland Movement under Mr. Ghising the movement's skillful and efficient use of diverse tactics of armed struggle and violent agitation were the main source of power that enabled the movement to succeed. In addition the mobilization of extraordinarily large numbers of people was crucial to technical effectiveness in Gorkhaland Movement. According to Mr. Ghising "movement gained its significance and reached its climax with the use of violent strategies" (Ganguly,

2005). He believed that violent agitation is the need of the moment to mobilize the movement and produce effective outcome. If the movements leadership do not show innovativeness in terms of programmes and strategies, the outcome of the movement is not likely to be attractive.

The emergence of the second episode post 2007 stems primarily from the sense of humiliations and deprivation experienced by the leaders of the movement especially its architect, Mr. Gurung. Further an effective leader is one who has the ability to manipulate and mobilize media and communication to the general public. The leader in the second episode used various types of print media at local levels to mobilize the participants. The outcome of the ability of the leaders has been positive for the movement which is released with the formation of Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC) and Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA) respectively.

The chapters analyzed the relationship between the leaders and the followers, the organization and the process of mobilization. How are these elements inter-related, we may ask. Apart from the role of the organizations in setting the objectives and defining the goals the contribution of other cultural and social organizations have also been studied. The contribution of media in mobilizing the movement and highlighting the character of the movement. Lastly, the social mechanism like songs and poems were used as specific strategies of political mobilization by the leaders that defined the movement, united the people and strengthened the community. All these elements contributed to the movement dynamics.

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