
Gorkhaland Movement: History and its Evaluation in Present Context of Integration vs. Disintegration of Bengal

Ramendra Nath Bhowmick¹

¹Assistant Professor
Department of history
Samuktala Sidhu Kanhu College
Samuktala,Alipurduar, West Bengal
prof.rnbhowmick83@gmail.com

Abstract:Gorkhaland Movement is now a hotbed historical issue and historians, scholars and academicians are of different opinion and till now there is to some extent historical gap in respect of the question of integration and the present problem of disintegration. Subhash Ghising was the man who first established G.N.L.F. (Gorkha National Liberation Front) for the set up of new separate state for the Gorkha people of Darjeeling and its adjacent region keeping in mind the Gorkha sentiment. Earlier Gorkhaland Movement was called the ‘Ghising’s Movement for Land’. Though Subhash Ghising is no more with us but his movement is still with us with new valour. Now the problem is not confined among the Gorkha people, it is the symbol of emotion of the hill people including non-Gorkha people. Few years ago a non Gorkha man sacrificed his for the cause of Gorkhaland. Now some pertinent questions came to our forefront i.e. why people of Darjeeling are fighting for their separate state for them refuting the question of integration of our state and our country? What will be the socio-economic condition of Darjeeling if we established separate state i.e. Gorkhaland? All problems will be solved? My intention is not to raise some pertinent question but to create an academic atmosphere to think and sort out some fruitful measures so that the problem of Gorkhaland may disappear from the political atlas of Bengal purely from historical perspectives.

Keywords:*Blue Salute Gorkhaland, Gorkha identity, , Gorkha Fouj, Operation Fijo, Nilojhanda*

Date of Submission: 10-10-2022

Date of Acceptance: 15-0-2022

Gorkhaland Movement: History and its Evaluation in Present Context of Integration vs. Disintegration of Bengal

Introduction:

'Khukri is mightier than pen'

-----Subhash Ghising

Subhash Ghising, one of the prominent leader of the Gorkhaland Movement saying this and he also stated that *'Gorkhas are not the beggars and he challenged to everybody that you will not find a single Gorkha begging for his livelihood'*. He was determined to establish separate state for the hill peoples of Darjeeling. So, he was also fond of the song *'Amar Sonar Bangla Ami Tomay Valobasi'* (My golden Bengal I love you) of poet Rabindra Nath Tagore because he was inspired by Tagore's love for Bengal and he wanted to say *'Amar Sonar Pahar Ami Tomay Valobasi'* (My golden hill I love you).¹ Ghising was in the Indian army for five years and he left the service in 1958 protesting against inhuman torture upon Nagas in Nagaland through *'Operation Fizo'*. There Subhash had take part in the operation and gun down many guerrillas.² It was the turning point for Subhash to do something for his peoples.

Now, in North Bengal a great problem has been engulfing the vast territory including Terai and Duars for the establishment of separate state for the Gorkha peoples of India. Though it had a long history behind the origin and expansion of the Gorkhaland Movement comprising the Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Siliguri subdivision and some parts of Terai and Duars region of North Bengal, yet we could not find any fruitful solution for the problem keeping in mind the sentiment of the Gorkha people of hilly region. Both Government of India and Government of Bengal tried to implement some constitutional reform for the interest of the Hill peoples but it fails to fulfil their demand of separate state of Gorkhaland. So many people sacrificing for the cause of Gorkhaland and the problem is still remains in the soil of North Bengal. Situation turned in to very complex after the origin and development of *Adibasi Bikash Parisad* and *Amra Bangali* through the establishment of *Banglabhasa Bachao Committee*.

Now some of the pertinent questions came to our forefront i.e. Why Gorkhaland Movement? When did Gorkhaland Movement started in Darjeeling and its adjacent region? How was the demand of Gorkhaland originated in Darjeeling? What was the legal right of the of the Gorkha people to establish Gorkhaland State? What is relevance of it in the present context of

Gorkhaland Movement: History and its Evaluation in Present Context of Integration vs. Disintegration of Bengal

integration vs. disintegration of Bengal's unity? How far it is justified for the establishment of separate state for the Gorkha peoples in North Bengal? Or what is the nearest alternative Government step to reduce the tension for the demand of separate state in Darjeeling? So, many historians, social scientists, academicians, researchers, scholars, journalists and others have written on it both in queen's language and in vernacular language and of course, more or less some of the scholar's writing is very important and ushered new perspective on the theme and it need more research purely from historical perspective.

Review of Literature

Many historians, social scientists, scholars, academicians', journalists have taken the issue from various perspective. Foremost among them are Dr. Ananda Gopal Ghosh and he has written 'Sastho Toposhil Udbhab, Bikash o Proyog' where he describe the emergence of Six Schedule and its implication for the development of tribal people of Darjeeling, Dr. Sailen Debnath has edited 'Social and Political Tensions in North Bengal (since 1947) in this book Soumen Nag has written 'the role of Tea Planters in creating the demand of separate Gorkhaland' where he critically analyze the role of Tea Planters in Gorkhaland Movement', Bhai Nahar Singh & Bhai Kirpal Singh (ed) 'History of All India Gurkha League 1943-1949' with some original documents where they tried to discuss the origin and development of 'All India Gorkha League' from 1943 to 1949, Tushar Prodhan has written 'Gorkhaland or Ghising's land' where he explains the prominent role played by Subhash Ghising for the establishment of so many organisation in favour of Gorkhaland Movement , in 'Socio- Political Movements in North Bengal (A sub Himalayan Tract)',Vol. 2 by Sukhbilas Barma (ed), Asesh Kumar Das Bojrer Desh Darjeeling(Bengali) where he discusses the origin and expansion of the Movement of the Gorkha peoples of Darjeeling and its adjacent region , Soumen Nag has written 'Communist Party o Prosanga Gorkhaland', in that article he narrates the role of Communist Party to crystallize the Gorkhaland Movement in 'Uttarer Gono Chetanar Gotiprokriti' by Debobrata Chaki(ed), Dr. Sailen Debnath in 'Battle cry from the hills, where he describes that West Bengal

Gorkhaland Movement: History and its Evaluation in Present Context of Integration vs. Disintegration of Bengal

is really in doldrum with the problem of Darjeeling in 'West Bengal in Doldrums' by Dr. Sailen Debanth, Aresh Kumar Das has written 'Asthirotar Darjeeling : Uthser Sandhan' , in 'Titir' by Sanjoy Saha (ed), Rajatubhra Mukhapadhyaya has written article titled as ' Tensions and Anxiety over proposed Six Schedule for Darjeeling Hill' where he explain the origin and development of Sixth Schedule and its impact upon the Nepali peoples of Darjeeling, in 'Social and Political Tension in North Bengal (since 1947) by Dr. Sailen Debnath(ed), Krishna Gopal Mohanta anlyze through his article titled 'Anchalikotabad o Atmaporichoyer Rajniti' where he nicely describe the regional politic and its impact in the national unity in ' Bischinnotabader Uthsa o Abhimukh' Sankar Sarkar & Kalikrishna Sutradhar (ed), Amiya Kumar Samanta another scholar explain 'Gorkhaland Movement : A Study in Ethnic Separatism', Satisiddha Sarkar 'Gorkhalanad Movement : Ethnic Conflict and State Response' where he analyze the role of state to suppress the movement, Sumit Mukherjee a scholar has written 'Gorkhaland the Dormant Volcano' , ' B.J.P. Bandana Bangal Kapate Chan Ghising by Tushar Prodhan, 'Ajkal' 17th August,2000 and others.

Gorkhaland Movement and Historical Background

Chronologically, the demands of Gorkhaland were presented in 1907, 1917, 1929, 1934, 1939,1943 during the pre independence period and in 1952, 1955 and 1981 during the post independence period.³ The first demand for separate state was made in 1907 in North Bengal at the time of Swadeshi and Boycott Movement after partition of Bengal in 1905 during Lord Curzon. To understand the historical background of the Gorkhaland Movement it would be better to study the census report initiated by the colonial master and in connection with this, it would be very rational to follow the census report of the Government of India after independence. The first Census had a total population of Darjeeling was 94,712 in 1871-72 and the density of the population was 81 per square miles. ⁴ Total number of population in Darjeeling in 1911 was 2, 65, 550 and out of these Sadar Subdivision had 1, 52, 097 and Kurseong had 41, 207 and Siliguri Subdivision 72,246. ⁵ In 1921 Darjeeling had 2,82,748 persons out of it Sadar Subdivision had

Gorkhaland Movement: History and its Evaluation in Present Context of Integration vs. Disintegration of Bengal

1,08,511 and Kalimpong Subdivision had 65,582 and Kurseong Subdivision had 40,257 and Siliguri Subdivision had 75,787. ⁶ There were nearly about 3,19,635 persons in Darjeeling in 1931 and population density and religious variation in Darjeeling were not so complex as it is. ⁷ In 1941 community wise population in Darjeeling was 1,98,811 and out of these numbers Hindus 90,375, Christians 2458, tribes 76,344, and others 23,603. ⁸ If we carefully study the percentage of increase of population of Darjeeling in 1951, then it would be vivid to us that the numbers of total population 4,45,260 and out of these Sadar Subdivision had 1,69,631, Kurseong Subdivision had 65,713, and Siliguri Subdivision had 1,16,475 and Kalimpong Subdivision had 93,441. ⁹ It is opined that after independence of India migration of Nepali people started in the region which is still going on and it is a political game for vote bank of all national and regional parties. The population of Darjeeling is exceedingly heterogeneous. The majority of the Hillmans are Mongolian origin belonging chiefly to various Nepalese castes, but also including a large number of Lepchas, Bhotias, and Tibetans which was earlier favourable for habitation in the region. ¹⁰ But after coming of the British in the region situation became more and more complex. If we categorically study the demographic profile of Darjeeling historically then we will understand when and how the seeds of separate movement for state sow in the soil of Darjeeling and its adjacent region. The first regular census took place 1872. The total number of persons in the District each of the censuses¹¹ is shown below –

Table No 1
Total numbers of persons, increase and percentage

Year	Total numbers of person	increase	Percent
1872	94,712	-	-
1881	1,55,179	**60,467	** 64
1891	2,23,314	**68,135	**44
1901	2,49,117	25,803	12
1911	2,65,550	16,433	7
1921	2,82,748	17,198	6

Gorkhaland Movement: History and its Evaluation in Present Context of Integration vs. Disintegration of Bengal

1931	3,19,635	36,887	13
1941	3,76,369	56,734	18

That means the establishment of tea plantation made a practical change in the volume of population e.g.in 1881 and 1891 Britisher started tea plantation in Darjeeling and it geared up to launch separate State Movement in the region. When there was no enough population in Darjeeling, nobody raised voice to establish separate state for the Gorkha people in the region.

In the census of 1891, 88000 persons were recorded as having been born in Nepal. The table below show 1931 census record and birth place of the population¹² of the District-

Table 2
Census of 1931 and the record of birth place of people in Darjeeling

Place	Population
Born in Bengal (including Darjeeling)	2,18,935
Born in Bihar	24,540
Born in Sikkim	5,321
Born elsewhere in India	8,277
Born in Nepal	59,016
Born elsewhere in Asia	2,052
Born in Europe outside UK and Ireland	130
Born in UK and Ireland	486
Miscellaneous	878
Total	3,19,635

Most of the peoples in Darjeeling either Gorkha or Nepali or non Gorkha immigrated from either Nepal or from other parts of India including Darjeeling are now supporting Gorkhaland Movement. Though cent percent population's birth place was not Darjeeling but they are now

Gorkhaland Movement: History and its Evaluation in Present Context of Integration vs. Disintegration of Bengal

demanding a separate state for them in the area. As per Census 1931, the total population of Darjeeling was 3,19,635 and out of these number 2,18,935 population whose birth place was Bengal (including Darjeeling) and 59,016 whose birth place was Nepal.

To understand the basic nature and the pattern of separatist Movement like Gorkhaland Movement and others movement in North Bengal, we have to look back of the history of it. Now who are 'Gorkha' and why they are demanding separate state for them is very important. There was village called 'Gorkha' which was situated on the western side of Kathmandu and the distance was nearly about 25 Miles. There lived a monk in a hilly cave and his name was 'Goroknath' and it was a concept that the name 'Gorkha' originated from the name of monk 'Goroknath'. The Saha dynasty of Nepal after conquest of Nepal they formed an army regiment named 'Gorkha Fouj'. During that time Mallaraj of Nepal declared war against Saharaj dynasty of Nepal and 'Gorkha Fouj' and Saha Raj fought against Mallaraj and British. In that battle Mallaraj was defeated by the Saharaj of Nepal due to the power and strength of 'Gorkha Fouj' which was attracted by the Britisher and they establish 'Gorkha Regiment'.¹³ So, with this the Britisher paved the way for the establishment of Separate state of Gorkhaland to conquer the sentiment of Gorkha peoples and this also compelled them to demand for separate state for them to the 'State Reorganisation Commission in 1953-56'. By the name of Gorkha league it was understand that immigrant Nepalis are not Nepali, they are Gorkha community. What an ironical historical fact is that when they crossed the Indian border, automatically it changed their father's title.¹⁴ And another thing added with it that is the narrow effects of Indian politics. Most of the Indian politicians always thought about their own interest instead of state interest keeping in mind the vote bank. National political Party of India always thinks about their vote nothing else. This was happened in case of British period and in the pre independence era and also in the post independence era in Darjeeling. This was the principal cause responsible for the creation of present tensions in Darjeeling and its adjacent region and the common masses are the worse sufferer for this.

Gorkhaland Movement: History and its Evaluation in Present Context of Integration vs. Disintegration of Bengal

After Anglo Nepal war and the treaty of Sagauli in 1816 the British Government handed over Darjeeling to Sikkim only to take part of it back in 1821 and it came to be called “British Darjeeling”. In 1835 Darjeeling and Karseong were taken back from Sikkim and after the Second Anglo Bhutan war and the treaty of Sinchula in 1865 with the occupation of Kalimpong the entire zone became a non regulated area of the British Empire, though the new immigrants were not declared as permanent citizens with any right to suffrage.¹⁵ At that time, there was no such identity crisis among the Gorkha peoples of Darjeeling and its adjacent region. Because there was denying the fact that the British for the first time implanted in the Nepali psyche a strong aspiration of political identity of the Nepalese in India, but alongside the British in the last years of colonial rule, a few Indian political parties too inspired the Nepalese to assert their separate political identity.¹⁶

The first Memorandum for separate state named ‘North Eastern Frontier State’ was submitted by the planters Association in the name of ‘Hillman’s Association’ in 1917 and again the planters of North Bengal also renewed their another memorandum in 1929 to enhance the Hillman’s sentiment through the establishment of separate state.¹⁷ In 1917 in the memorandum it was written that ‘...*The District of Darjeeling, where the Gurkha population predominate, should be, excluded from Bengal and be treated as an administrator vested with much more powers than that of District Magistrate assisted by a small executive council (Like the provincial Governor’s Executive Council) representative of all interest, in the administration of the area.....*’.¹⁸

The political awareness and agenda of the Nepalese entered a new phase in the 1930s as they formed ‘The Hillmans Association’ in 1934. In 1943 another organisation came in to being which called ‘*All India Gorkha League*’. The Gorkha League’s objectives were both political and linguistic and soon it became a platform for setting up of correspondence and relation with other Nepalese living elsewhere in India. The anti Bengal sentiment came to a climax when on October 30, 1949 some chosen representative of Darjeeling (All India Gorkha League), Sikkim (Sikkim Praja Sammelon), Coochbehar (Coochbehar State Praja Congress) in a meeting at Darjeeling adopted a resolution to carry on their political exercise and power for the

Gorkhaland Movement: History and its Evaluation in Present Context of Integration vs. Disintegration of Bengal

establishment of a big State to be called 'Uttarkhand' .¹⁹ If we meticulously study the resolution of the All India Gorkha League on 19th June 1943 at the Head office Kalimpong, then we will understand that Gorkhas were ignored under British and the same thing happened in case of Indian independent rulers and this compelled them to think about their right. The extract of the resolutions are like in the following-

Resolution passed at the executive committee meeting of the 'All India Gurkha League' held on
held on the 19th June, 1943
Head Office Kalimpong

*'Resolved that the Gurkhas domiciled in British India realise that at this time it is their first duty to fight all they can, as they have been doing, to bring victory to the allies; nevertheless, in view of the fact that the political Status of the British Indian Gurkhas is uncertain though they have settled in India for generation, and that they have been totally ignored and even neglected when political concessions were made to Indians, the All India Gurkha League reserves the right to formulate their demands and put them forward to the British Government at the right time'.*²⁰

Sd/

D.S.Gurung

From this time, British had shown the seeds of discontent and tension in a written form which gradually engulfs the peace of the region and turn into the area in a living volcano.

From 1907 to 1966 the Gurkha peoples were searching a leader who could assure them to establish separate state for them to safeguard their interest. At that moment Subhash Ghising was born in 1936 at Manju Tea Estate of Mirik. He joined in the 8th Gorkha Regiment of the Indian

Gorkhaland Movement: History and its Evaluation in Present Context of Integration vs. Disintegration of Bengal

Army when he was the student of class IX. He left the Army in 1958 protesting against inhuman torture upon Nagas in Nagaland through '*Operation Fizo*'. Then he was thinking about the identity of the Gorkha peoples. Then Nepalis or Gorkhas got their real leader within him. Ghising's political activity started with the establishment of '*Tarun Sangha*' in 1966. After that Ghising established new party 'Nepali' which was also known as the 'Blue Flag' or 'Nilojhanda'. The colour of the flag was blue. The 'Blue Salute' was their symbolic identity.²¹ After 1980 the Gorkhaland Movement turned in to violent direction which was a great problem not only to the peaceful inhabitant of the region but also to the visitors also. Because Darjeeling is a basically a tourist place and cent percent of the income came from tourism. On 22nd August,1988 a treaty was signed in presence of G.G. Somaiho, Home Secretary of the Central Government, R.N. Sengupta, State Secretary, Government of West Bengal and Subhash Ghising,chief of Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF) to form Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC).²²

Both Subhash Ghising and Bimal Gurung played their important role to establish separate state for the Gorkhas and Nepali people in the region. In this regard, both the Central Government and state Government is following diplomatic policies to control the situation. Political tensions largely declined with the establishment of Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council under the chairmanship of Subhash Ghising. The DGHC was given semi-Autonomous powers to govern the District. Later the name of DGHC was changed to Darjeeling Gorkha Autonomous Hill Council (DGAHC).²³ When Assembly Election took place in 2011,Mamata Banerjee had given promise to the Hillman that if she wins in the election she will solve three important problem of West Bengal i.e. 1)Singur 2) Maoist of the Jangalmahal areas 3) Darjeeling or the problem of Gorkhaland. In connection with this, after victory in the Assembly Election in 2011, Mamata Banerjee, chief minister of West Bengal concluded a historical pact with Gorkha Janamukti Morcha (GJMM) on 18th July,2011 in the presence of P. Chidambaram, Home Minister of India, Gyandutta Goutam, chief secretary of West Bengal, K.K. Pathok, Joint Secretary of Home Minister of India, Rosan Giri, Secretary, GJMM to form Gorkha Territorial Administration (GTA).²⁴

Gorkhaland Movement: History and its Evaluation in Present Context of Integration vs. Disintegration of Bengal

Aims and objectives of the Movement

Sailen Debnath categorically mentioned some of the aims and objectives of the Gorkhaland Movement in his book entitled 'West Bengal in Doldrum.' The aims and objectives are as follows-

- 1) To organise the Nepalese, if possible, also other hilly tribes willing to speak Nepali or using it as a lingua franca, in the platform of G.N.L.F for the assertion of the Gorkhaland.
- 2) To fight against the West Bengal Government for Statehood of Darjeeling and to assert the demand of Statehood from the Central Government.
- 3) To change and revise article 6 & 7 of the Indo- Nepal Treaty of 1950 by which the immigrant Nepalese in India even enjoying the right to residence, ownership of property and participation in trade and commerce, were deprived of legally India citizenship, and as per the term of the treaty whether the Nepalese were entitled to citizenship by birth in India was not clear at all.
- 4) To furnish the logic of Gorkhaland to the United Nations Organisation for the purpose of gaining international support.
- 5) To internationalise the issue of deprivation of the Nepalese in India by furnishing the facts of the plight of the Nepalese to the head of the State and head of the Government of Nepal, America, Soviet Russia, France, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Srilanka, China, Great Britain and Bhutan and all powerful Ministers, Intellectual of Nepal be informed in order to inculcate their support and help. ²⁵

Expansion of Gorkhaland Movement

Gorkhaland Movement was started first by Subhash Ghising from Mirik through burning Indian constitution on 7th April, 1985 and they observed 'Black day' everywhere in Darjeeling Hill and

Gorkhaland Movement: History and its Evaluation in Present Context of Integration vs. Disintegration of Bengal

strike was continued for many days. Opponents and Government properties were set into fire to show their power and glory. Gradually the movement expanded from Mirik to Pulbazar, Darjeeling, Jore Banglow, Rangillranglott, Sokhia Pukhri, Kurseong, Kalimpong, Gurubathan, Siliguri, Kharibari and Phansideoa. Now it is expanded to Terai and Duars region also. What is interesting is that now some of the Non Gorkha or Non Nepali peoples in the region are supporting and demanding Gorkhaland Movement through print media and electronic media. Mangol Sing Raoyat sacrificed his life for the cause of Gorkhaland Movement, though he was not a Gorkha by birth, is the classic example in this regard.²⁶

DISTRICT DARJEELING EXCLUDING KALIMPONG SUBDIVISION SHOWING POLICE STATION WHERE GORKHALAND MOVEMENT EXPANDED

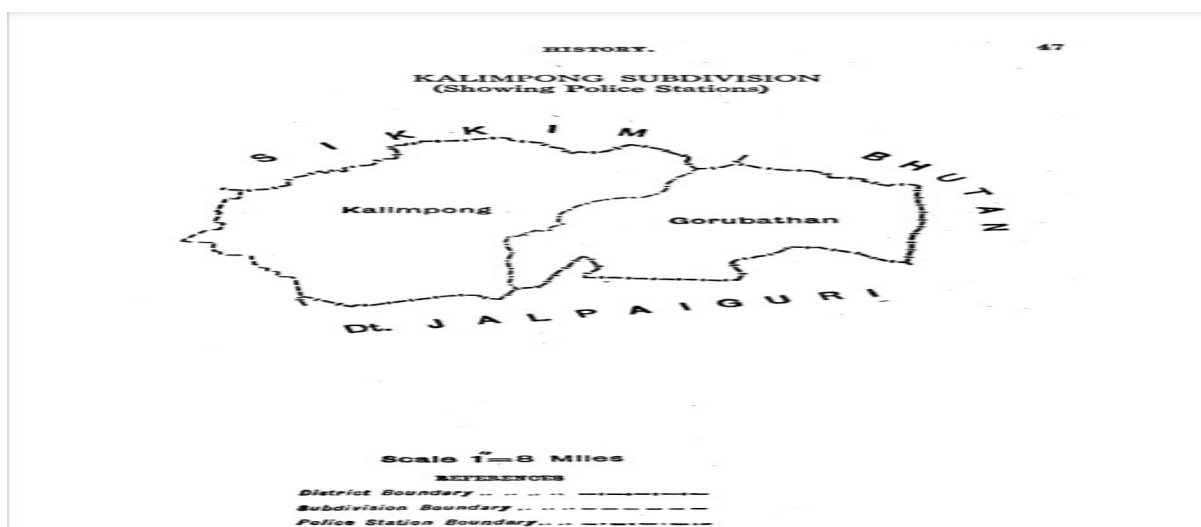
Two important maps will help us to know the particular boundary of the movement and the places where the movement expanded in the following -



27

Gorkhaland Movement: History and its Evaluation in Present Context of Integration vs. Disintegration of Bengal

These two maps are important to understating the expansion of the Gorkhaland Movement in Darjeeling and its adjacent region. Actually, in the initial phase of Gorkhaland Movement, it was confined within Darjeeling Sadar, Kalimpong, Karseong, Gurubathan, and some parts of Siliguri region and gradually it spreads like a epidemic disease in Khoribari, Phansidewa and Gurubathan area of Darjeeling District.



28

In the eighties the movement took a momentum under the leadership of Subhash Ghising. During this time Kalimpong and Gurubathan two subdivisions were very much affected by the movement which was accepted by the historians, academicians, researchers and scholars of both India and abroad.

From AIGL to ABGL, from GNLf to DGHC and from DGHC to GJMM and from GJMM to GTA a historical journey

Gorkha peoples of Darjeeling and Duars were willing for the establishment of separate political party named 'All India Gorkha League' (AIGL) in 1943 and it had a branch named 'All Bengal Gorkha League'.²⁹ Some historian stated that there is no existence of All Bengal Gorkha League. In 1950, Bardoulay Committee submitted memorandum and in connection with its sixth

Gorkhaland Movement: History and its Evaluation in Present Context of Integration vs. Disintegration of Bengal

schedule was made by Government and incorporated with Indian constitution. As per this sixth schedule majority of the tribal peoples got the right to frame their own laws in respect of education, land and service and it will be affected for hill area except plain area of the District. District Autonomous Hill Council (DAHC) was formed under this schedule. Constitutional experts called this as 'State within State'. Central Government was not ready to create more small state to decrease the national power and for this reason they wanted to suppress the statehood demand by giving sixth schedule.³⁰ In 1952 the All India Gorkha League submit a memorandum to the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru demanding separation from the State of West Bengal after three years Daulat Das Bokhim , the President of 'District Shamik Sangh' submits another memorandum to the chairman ,State Reorganisation Committee demanding the creation of separate state consisting of Darjeeling , Jalpaiguri and Coochbehar District.³¹ In 1945 at Karseong Conference of Gorkha League it was demanded –

- 1) Recognition of the Gorkha Community
- 2) Representation in the State Legislative Assembly
- 3) Representation in the interim Government of India
- 4) Release of political prisoners.³² Actually the then political leaders of the State as well as country could not understand the inner meaning of these demands of Gorkha League and it ultimately resulted to birth of separate statehood demand of the region.

The West Bengal Government passes a unanimous resolution supporting the creation of an Autonomous District Council consisting Darjeeling and related area. In 1981 the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi receives a memorandum from Pranta Parisad, demanding a separate state and in 1980 the demand of Gorkhaland was intensified under the leadership of Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF) supreme Subhash Ghising.³³ The Movement turned violent during the period of 1986-88 and around 1200 peoples are killed and after two year long protest, the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC) was finally formed in 1988 to conquer the mental support of the Gorkha peoples in the region.³⁴ At the last phase of the Left front rule in West Bengal, the mass movement for Gorkhaland takes place under the leadership of Gorkha Jan

Gorkhaland Movement: History and its Evaluation in Present Context of Integration vs. Disintegration of Bengal

Mukti Morcha(GJMM) supremo Bimol Gurung. Both the central Government and State Government had taken initiative for a permanent solution of this problem by bringing it to the sixth schedule of the constitution giving some degree of autonomy to a tribal area. But the Gorkhas opposed this sixth schedule and demand statehood gains pace. The four year long movement comes to an end after new Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee,s declaration of Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA) and Gurung is made its leader. With the formation of Telengana on July 20, 2013, the movement for Gorkhaland state again intensifies. Gurung resigns from the head of GTA, says peoples have lost all faith. However, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has said ‘Bengal can not suffer the pain of yet another partition.’³⁵ On 16th August,2013 was the historic day because on that day all political party of Darjeeling were unanimous to form ‘Gorkhaland Joint Action Committee’ (GJAC) and it is for the first time after 106 years in hill, all political party are agreed to carry on their movement for separate state for them.³⁶ It is called politics because she had given promise before West Bengal Assembly Election in 2011 that ‘if she would wins she will give priority to solve Gorkhaland problem of Darjeeling’ and the promise is yet not fulfilled.

So, it is very clear to the researcher that from AIGL to ABGL or from GNLF to DGHC or from DGHC to GJMM or from GJMM to GTA each and every step of state and central government was nothing but a historical hoax and it can be entitled as ‘*a political game*’ which started from British period to modern era and it undoubtedly affected the national unity in the region and the neighbouring countries are taking the opportunities. Because the Communist party of India published their souvenir on 6th April, 1947 where they played their political game for the Gorkha peoples to gain their support in the following way –

*‘...In the opinion of the Communist Party of India the District of Darjeeling belong to the Gorkhas and it is their homeland....The Communist Party of India therefore, demand that after making necessary revisions of the existing boundaries of the contiguous areas of Darjeeling District, Southern Sikkim, and Nepal be formed into a single zone to be called Gorkhasthan’.*³⁷

Gorkhaland Movement: History and its Evaluation in Present Context of Integration vs. Disintegration of Bengal

At present the question of integration vs. disintegration came to our forefront and we cannot avoid the unexpected circumstance in the region. We are not able to find out the root of the problem and our political leaders know everything takes no fruitful measure rather some of them are trying to provoke Gorkha and Nepali peoples to gain their Gorkha sentiment.

Integration vs. Disintegration of Bengal's Unity

So, the question of integration vs. disintegration is a great concern to the inhabitant of Darjeeling now and what is more surprising fact is that many non Nepali; non Gorkhas are supporting this Gorkhaland Movement. Is it not a matter of great question of national unity or integrity? Because the Nepali migration was possible only due to colonial ruler's will. And the agreement of independent Government of India was also echo in 31st July, 1950 agreement between India and Nepal in the following way-

' The Government of India and Nepal Agree to grant , on Reciprocal Basis, to the Nationals of one country in the territories of the others the same privilege in the matter residence, ownership of property, participation in trade and commerce, movement and privileges of a similar nature '

38

This friendship agreement between India and Nepal resulted to the birth of a new tension in the region till today. The colonial master showed the seeds of unrest in Darjeeling and the independent Government rare up the seeds to become a big banyan tree of social discontent. Because this agreement paved the way for huge migration of Nepali peoples to India and most of them permanently settled in Darjeeling and its adjacent region.

Conclusion

At present it is not a regional problem it is a great national problem. National and State political party is consisting in a safe distance and they are trying to catch fish without touching water and

Gorkhaland Movement: History and its Evaluation in Present Context of Integration vs. Disintegration of Bengal

it resulted to the birth of new problem within existing problem. Naturally, from Subhash Ghising to Bimol Gurung their principal aim was to establish separate state for them named 'Gorkhaland' but central and state Government are not willing to solve the problem permanently. They are keeping safe distance from the problem and to gain Gorkhas and Nepali people's support and continuously provoke Gorkha peoples and made them a prisoners of circumstances. Prof. Rajat Subhra Mukhopadhyaya in this regard rightly commented in his 'Tension and Anxiety over proposed sixth schedule for Darjeeling Hills' that the problem turned into more complex when The All India Scheduled Caste Association (AINSCA) brought out a huge rally in Sukhiapukhri near Darjeeling on march 19, 2006 demanding seat reservation for SCs in the proposed Hill Council under the Sixth Schedule. Mr. Kamansingh Ramudamu, the president of the association demanded that on the basis of their population (i.e. 6 %) there must be at least three seats reserved for them (SCs) in the proposed council. Thus the issue of reservation of seats for SCs became a point of tension as the new council has no provision for such a reservation. The Akhil Bharatiya Nepali Anusutit Janajati Sangh however, did not endorse Ghising's proposal and convert them to Schedule Tribe leaving their own identity.³⁹ Naturally there must be problem, side by side there must be political parties both national and regional and due to lack of their will problem is still exist and nobody can predict the future of the people of Darjeeling and its adjacent region. We must remind the greatest Sanskrit verse like 'Gotoshya Shochona Nasti' (no profit of thinking the past incident) what actually happened in the region, we must end the sacrifice of innocent people in the name separate state 'Gorkhaland' through mutual understanding and collaboration with both Central and State Government and leaders of the locality. So, prof. Ananda Gopal Ghosh rightly raised some pertinent questions i.e. nobody knows where is the end? This tribal ethnic movement or separate statehood movement is not enhancing the unity of the state or country rather it is breaking our unity in diversity is not it? Then why this special system i.e. sixth Schedule is implemented in Darjeeling? We must think it and of course it is the right time. Subhash Ghising, Bimol Gurung, Rosan Giri and many others have come to fulfil the demand of the peoples of Darjeeling but who knows when and how the

Gorkhaland Movement: History and its Evaluation in Present Context of Integration vs. Disintegration of Bengal

problem will solved permanently because some time local leaders are more responsible than the national leaders to solve it.

NOTES AND REFERENCES:

¹ Tusar Prodhon, 'Gorkhaland or Ghising's land', in Sukhabilas Barma(ed) ' *Socio-Political Movement in North Bengal Vol. 2* ', Global Vision publishing house, New Delhi, 2007,p.298.

² Ibid. p.299.

³ Soumen Nag, ' The Role of Tea planters in creating the demand of Separate Gorkhaland', in Dr. Sainen Debnath(ed) ' *Social and Political Tensions in North Bengal (since 1947)* ',N. L. Publishers, Siliguri, 2007, p.209

⁴ L.S.S.O, Malley, ' *Bengal District Gazetteer, Darjeeling* ', Logos Press, New Delhi, The Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, 1907,pp.35-37.

⁵ L.S.S.O, Malley, ' *Census of India, 1911, Volume V* ', Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, and Sikkim Part I Report, Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, Calcutta, 1913, p.101.

⁶ W.H. Thomson, ' *Census of India, 1921, Vol. V, Bengal Part I Report* ', Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, Calcutta, 1923,pp.66-67

⁷ A.E. Porter, ' *Census of India, 1931, Volume V* ', *Bengal and Sikkim, Part I Report*, Central Publication Branch, Calcutta, 1933,

⁸ R.A. Dutch, ' *Census of India, 1941, Vol. IV, Bengal* ', Manager of Publication Delhi, Government of India Press, Simla, 1942, p.36.

⁹ A. Mitra, ' *Census of India, West Bengal, District Handbook, Darjeeling* ', West Bengal Government Press, Alipore, West Bengal, 1954,p.1

¹⁰ L.S.S.O, Malley, opcit.p.40.

¹¹ Arthur Jules Dash, ' *Bengal District Gazetteer Darjeeling* ', N.L.Publishers,Siliguri,2011,pp.49-50

¹² Ibid.p.50

Gorkhaland Movement: History and its Evaluation in Present Context of Integration vs. Disintegration of Bengal

¹³ Asesh Kumar Das, 'Asthirotar Darjeeling: Uthser Sandhan', in '*Titir'Akti Sahitya Potrika*, Mathabhanaga, Coochbehar, 2009.p.143.

¹⁴ Ibid.p.143.

¹⁵ Dr. Sailen Debnath, 'Battle-Cry from the Hills', '*West Bengal in Doldrums*', N.L.Publishers, Siliguri, 2009, p.143.

¹⁶ Ibid.p.144

¹⁷ Soumen Nag, Opcit. Pp. 213-215.

¹⁸ Asesh Kumar Das,opcit.p.142

¹⁹ Ibid.pp.145-146.

²⁰ Bhai Nahar Singh & Bhai Kirpal Singh (ed) '*History of All India Gurkha League 1943-1949*', Nirmal Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi, 1987,p.6

²¹ Tushar Prodhan, 'Gorkhaland or Ghising's land'? in Sukhbilas Barma(ed.), '*Socio- Political Movements in North Bengal (A Sub Himalayan Tract)*, Vol. 2',Global Vision Publishing House, New Delhi,2007, pp.299-300.

²² Krishna Gopal Mahanta, 'Anchalikotabad o Atma Porichoyer Rajniti: Prosanga Gorkhland Andalon' in Sankar Sarkar o Kalikrishna Sutradhar (ed) '*Bichhnotabader Uthso O Abhimukh : Prosanga Uttar Banga*', New Bharat Sahitya Kutir, Kolkata,2021,pp.74-75

²³ Tushar Prodhan,opcit.p.313

²⁴ Ibid.pp.78-80.

²⁵ Sailen Debnath,Opcit.pp.149-150

²⁶ Krishna Gopal Mahanta,Opcit.p.78.

²⁷ Opcit. Arthur Jules Dash,p.46.

²⁸ Opcit. Arthur Jules Dash,p.47

²⁹ Krishna Gopal Mohanta,Opcit.pp.74-75.

Gorkhaland Movement: History and its Evaluation in Present Context of Integration vs. Disintegration of Bengal

³⁰ Ananda Gopal Ghosh, 'Sastho Toposhil: Udbhab, Bikash o Proyog', in Dr. Krishna Deb (ed) '*Tista Torsa*', *Saradiyo Sankhya*, Dhupguri, 1416(BS), pp.19-21

³¹ Arnab Mitra, 'Tracing the history of Gorkhaland movement : Another Crisis Triggered by Language', '*The Indian Express*, New Delhi, updated April 13,2021, 4:26:05 PM

³² Asesh Kumar Das, 'Gorkha League, Gorkhasthan o other Parties, in Asesh Kumar Das, '*Bajrer Desh Darjeeling, Bhasa Binyas*,' Kolkata, 2010, pp.47-48

³³ Arnab Mitra, *Ibid.*

³⁴ Arnab Mitra, *Ibid.*

³⁵ Arnab Mitra, *Ibid.*

³⁶ Krishna Gopal Mohanta, *opcit.* pp.79-80

³⁷ Soumen Nag, 'Communist Party o Prosanga Gorkhaland', in Debabrata Chaki (ed) '*Uttarer Gono Chetonar Gotiprokriti, Uttarprosanga Publication*, Coochbehar, 2010, pp.193-194

³⁸ Asesh Kumar Das, '*Bajrer Desh, Darjeeling*', *opcit.* pp.52-53

³⁹ Rajat Subhra Mukhopadhyaya, 'Tension and Anxiety over proposed Six Schedule for Darjeeling Hills' in Dr. Sainen Debnath (ed) '*Social and Political Tension in North Bengal since 1947*', *opcit.* pp.225-226