

**Gorkhaland and Madhesi Movements in the Border Area of  
India and Nepal:A Comparative Study**

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By

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Date: 28/10/2017

**DECLARATION**

I declare that the thesis entitled “Gorkhaland and Madhesi Movements in the Border Areas of India and Nepal: A Comparative Study” submitted to Sikkim University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy is my original work. This work has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

- ABAP – Akhil Bharat Adivasi Parishad  
ABS – Association for Borderland Studies  
AINBS – All India Nepali Bhasa Samiti  
BGP – Bharatiya Gorkha Parisangh  
BJP – Bharatiya Janta Party  
CBES – Chure Bhawar Ekta Samaj  
CPA – Comprehensive Peace Agreement  
CPI – Communist Party of India  
CPI (M) – Communist Party of India (Marxist)  
CPN (M) – Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)  
CPN (UML) – Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist Leninist)  
CPRM – Communist Party of Revolutionary Marxist  
CRPF – Central Reserve Police Forces  
DDCC – Darjeeling District Congress Committee  
DGHC – Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council  
EPG – Eminent People’s Group  
EU – European Union  
FDFN – Federal Democratic National Front  
GDNS – Gorkha Dukha Nivarak Sammelan  
GJMM – Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha  
GNLF – Gorkha National Liberation Front  
GoI – Government of India  
GTA – Gorkhaland Territorial Administration  
ICG – International Crisis Group  
INC – Indian National Congress  
JAP – Jan Andolan Party  
JTMM – Janatantrik Tarai Madeshi Morcha  
JTMM (G) – Janatantrik Tarai Madeshi Morcha (Goit)  
JTMM (JS) – Janatantrik Tarai Madeshi Morcha (Jalwa Singh)  
MJF – Madhesi Janadhikar Forum  
MJF (D) – Madeshi Janadhikar Forum (Democratic)  
MJF (N) – Madeshi Janadhikar Forum (Nepal)  
MLA – Member of the Legislative Assembly

MNLF – Madhesi National Liberation Front or (Madhesi Rashtriya Mukti Morcha  
MRMM)

MP – Member of the Parliament

MPRF – Madhesi People’s Right Forum or (MJF- Madhesi Janadhikar Forum)

NC – Nepali Congress

NDF – National Democratic Front

NEFEN – The Nepal Federation of Nationalities

NEFIN – The Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities

NGO – Governmental Organisations (NGO’s)

NSM – New Social Movements

NTC – Nepal Tarai Congress

RPP – Rastriya Prajatantra Party

SBI – State Bank of India

SDF – Sikkim Democratic Front

SJDA – Siliguri Jalpaiguri Development Area

SLMM – Samyukta Loktantrik Madhesi Morcha

SMO – Social Movement Organisation

SPA – Seven Party Alliance

TJMM – Tarai Janatantrik Mukti Morcha

TMLP – Tarai Madesh Loktantrik Party

UCPN – United Communist Party of Nepal

UPA – United Progressive Alliance

USSR – Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

WBPSA – West Bengal Public Services Commission

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.1. Background

Historically, social movements in many countries have been organised mostly for achieving civil rights and also for attaining national independence from the exploitative or authoritarian regimes (Thomson and Tapscott 2010:1). The creation of modern India and Nepal were also engineered through social movements. The earlier forms of authority that is colonialism in India and monarchy in Nepal came to an end with a long struggle for independence and democratisation movement.

Democracy in these countries has provided a reasonable accommodative space for social movements and endures its existence. French sociologist, Alain Touraine holds a positive opinion about democracies capable of 'self production' through internally generated social movements (Oommen 2008:17). Likewise, Tilly and Wood (2009:3) are of the view that if social movements begin to vanish then it is an indication of decline of ordinary people's participation in public politics. Therefore, they claim that the "rise and fall of social movements" are signals of "expansion or contradiction of democratic opportunities".

India and Nepal at present times are two major democratic nations in South Asia. India is regarded as the biggest democracy in the world and Nepal promulgated a constitution in 2015 which was adopted by more than eighty per cent members of the Constituent Assembly (Muni 2015:16). These nations are multiethnic, multilingual and multicultural in nature and also shares a very close historical, geographical, socio-cultural and politico-economic interlinks. These attributes are found in much higher degree and intensity particularly among the communities living in the border areas between India and Nepal.

Gorkhas of Darjeeling district of West Bengal in India and the Madhesis of Nepal's southern plains are two major borderland communities inhabiting in the border region between these two nations. These communities bear strong historical, geographical, political, economic, socio-cultural and ethnic affiliations with communities across their national frontiers. Due to the existence of such cross-

national ties, Gorkhas and Madhesis have often been misunderstood with regard to their national identity in their respective countries. Consequently, Gorkhas of India are viewed as Nepalese, nationals of Nepal and the Madhesis of Nepal as Indian nationals. The confusion over their national identity including the aspiration towards politico-economic and socio-cultural emancipation of these groups is profusely considered to be the key reason for these groups to organise movements for separate state or autonomous province within their respective nations. Oommen's (2011:38) claim that social movements are also grounded on the issues of identity, concerns for equity and security is equally applicable to these movements as well.

Statehood movements demand control of certain parts of existing nation states by often stressing on cultural identity and affiliation with particular language, religion, ethnicity, history and geography (Mitra 1998:14-15). Due to substantial stress on primordial elements like ethnic identity, region and language, many times these statehood movements have also been termed as ethno-national, ethnic, regional or linguistic movements. The Gorkha and Madhesi movements in the border areas of India and Nepal are peculiar movements that use ethno-regional traits in asserting their statehood demands.

After the long struggle for freedom, India gained independence from the British in 1947 and the autocratic Rana rule in Nepal ended in 1951. Subsequently, both these countries became democracies. Democracy became a stable system of governance in India but was not so in case of Nepal. In democratic India, the states were reorganised on the basis of multiple criteria considering the geography, language, religion, tribal features and economic backwardness (Singh 2011:45). However, most of the states were created on the basis of language as the Indian National Congress (INC) during the national freedom movement at Nagpur Session in 1920 had accepted the idea of setting up linguistic states in the independent India. However, when they were slow in declaring linguistic states after the independence, agitations broke out in several regions of the country. The death of Potti Sriramulu for his fast for the creation of Telegu speaking state of Andhra Pradesh along with pressure from other areas accelerated the reorganisation process of the Indian states predominantly on the basis of language. The reorganisation of states on linguistic lines could not meet the aspiration of all the linguistic groups and it was manifested through the emergence of sub-regional movements (Dube 1990:128). Under such

political conditions and settings the Nepali speaking Indian community who call themselves Gorkhas got a fillip to demand for a separate state of Gorkhland outside the imperium of West Bengal state within India.

In Nepal the Rana autocracy was brought down in 1951 through a political revolution initiated by the newly formed Nepali Congress party and the Shah royal family, the original founders of the Kingdom of Nepal from whom the Ranas had usurped the political power and authority since 1846. When the Rana rule was made inoperative, Nepal also opted for democratic political system. The complete transition from autocracy to democracy in Nepal took almost a decade. As such when the Nepalese democracy was just in its infant stage of a year and half years, King Mahendra Shah in 1961, centralised the state power and started to control the nation through the party less Panchayati system of governance for another thirty years. In 1990's the First People's Movement (*Jan Andalon I*) was launched in Nepal by the leaders of different socio-cultural and political organisations and demanded for multi-party system in Nepal.

The outcome of this movement was Nepal became a constitutional monarchy with a multi-party system but a firm political stability was not established as the ruling political parties were not very strong and competent on their part to complete their full political tenures. Moreover, the Maoists started their revolution against the government in 1996 and it continued till 2006. Under such a situation Nepal witnessed a political crisis. As such King Gyanendra Shah reclaimed the monarchical power in 2003 and started to rule the country directly. Such an obligating act of the monarchy was disliked by the civil society and political parties. Therefore, they organised the Second People's Movement (*Jan Andalon II*) in 2007 to remove monarchy and establish democracy in Nepal. The civil society members along with the leaders and supporters of eight political parties including the Maoists demanded for shift of power from the palace into the hands of people and preferred to be governed by a constitution written by the Constituent Assembly. Democracy became a reality in Nepal only when the monarchy was completely brought down through this movement.

The restoration process of democracy in Nepal began from 2008 onwards with the introduction of the interim Constitution jointly approved by the eight major

political parties and by conducting the first general elections where the Maoists became victorious and formed the government. The Maoists in particular were very much concerned about the issue of federalism. One of the demands of the Maoist Revolution of 1996, which lasted for ten years, was also setting up of federal provinces. They demanded granting of territorial autonomy to the ethnic groups (Whelpton 2013:232). Later all the major political parties of Nepal including the Nepali Congress (NC) and Communist Party of Nepal – United Marxist and Leninist (CPN-UML) also accepted the idea of federalism. The Interim Constitution of Nepal which was prepared in 2008 including the newly enforced Constitution of Nepal clearly defined Nepal as a federal state. It is under this consideration that the Madhesi community of Nepal started to demand a separate province of Madesh Pradesh in a vehement manner.

The Gorkhaland movement demands the creation of a separate autonomous state for the Gorkhas or Indian Nepalis in Darjeeling and Dooars region of West Bengal in India. It traces its origin to 1907 when the ‘leaders of Hill People’ of Darjeeling submitted a memorandum to Morley-Minto Reforms demanding ‘a separate administrative set up’ for Darjeeling hills outside the Bengal province. The demand was again placed in 1917, 1929, 1930, 1941 and 1947, during the pre-independence era. After the independence, the demand for separation of Darjeeling from Bengal was placed by All India Gorkha League (AIGL) in 1952. In 1955 a memorandum was submitted to the State Reorganisation Committee demanding a formation of a new state comprising of Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Cooch Behar. In the post-independence years the demand for the creation of an autonomous hill council was also placed by various parties and leaders in the year 1968, 1977, 1981 and 1983 (GJJM Central Committee Report 2009:3-5).

It was only in 1986 that the most vociferous demand for Gorkhaland was made by the Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF) under Subash Ghising by invoking Article 3A of the Indian Constitution. The movement soon gained a nationwide attention and the movement soon turned violent when the state turned uncompromising towards their demand. It eventually came to an end with the signing a tripartite accord which compelled Subash Ghising to drop the statehood demand. The agreement also declared the formation of an autonomous council called the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC). After twenty years since the formation of

DGHC and Ghishing's autocratic rule in Darjeeling hills, the Gorkhaland movement resurfaced in the region again in 2007 under the flagship of Gorkha Jana Mukti Morcha (GJMM) led by Bimal Gurung.

While in Nepal in the beginning of the same year, the Madhesis also started to demand for a separate autonomous province called the Madesh Pradesh comprising of the twenty Terai districts of southern plains in Nepal. The Madhesi movement has its genesis in the 1950's which was initiated by the Nepal Terai Congress (NTC) under Vedanand Jha. NTC then had demanded regional autonomy, recognition of Hindi as the official language and equal opportunities in civil services for Madhesis.

The movement was revived in a certain extent in the 1990's under the aegis of Gajendra Singh and his Sadbhavana Party. In 2007 the Madhesi movement was re-started by Upendra Yadav and his party the Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF) (ICG Report 2007, Jha 2014), this movement is often referred to as the first 'Madhesi Uprising' as this was the most effective movement in the history of the Madhesis. Again after eight years in 2015, the United Democratic Madhesi Front (UDMF), a unified political front of Madhes based political parties came into limelight for demanding autonomous Madesh region within Nepal. Both the Gorkha and Madhesi movements have been in existence for quite a long time now and are still very much active and alive.

The historical background of Gorkhas and Madhesis including the open border policy between the two nations blends their demand for autonomy into a complicated and contradictory situation in the contemporary period. Their historical mass-migration in their present geographies and their strong socio-cultural affinities with communities across their national borders conflated with the legally valid free movement of their nationals across their borders questions the validity of the national identity of these border communities. This also puts their demand for respective autonomous state under suspicion.

According to the regional history in 1835, the British ceded Darjeeling from Sikkim for building a sanatorium for their sick soldiers. Gradually, they started to develop the infrastructure of the place and on realising the commercial viability of tea cultivation in the region, they started tea plantation in an extensive scale. Darjeeling then had a population which was not more than one hundred (O'Malley 1999:22,



Dash 2011:49). Due to deficiency of labour force they encouraged migration of large number of Gorkhas from across the border, from the neighbouring Nepal to work in tea gardens, in construction projects (Dash 2011:50) including agriculture and to join the British regiment. The Nepalese political and economic situation under the Shah's was miserable then. They were taxed high by the governing authorities and employment opportunities were rare then. Therefore, the Gorkhas also migrated to Darjeeling in large numbers in search for better economic fortunes. These immigrants were 'tough' and 'full of energy' (O'Malley 1999:42), best suited to work in the hilly terrain of Darjeeling hills.

On the other hand in between 1860 and 1951, the Rana regime in Nepal decided to develop the sparsely inhabited Terai region of Nepal. Due to the hot and humid climatic conditions along with the malarial problems of the plains, the hill people were not willing to migrate there. Therefore, the Ranas encouraged large number of Madhesis to migrate from across the Indian border, particularly from the present day Indian state of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar into the southern plains of Nepal. The Madhesis willingly came forward and settled in Nepal's Terai as population was increasing in a rapid manner in those Indian states resulting in land deficit. Madhesis were used to transform the sparsely inhabited dense Terai forest into a flourishing agricultural region. It is also to be noted that the ancestors of Gorkhas and Madhesis were living in Sikkim (of which Darjeeling was a part before it was ceded to the British) and lowlands of Nepal respectively even before they were invited to migrate by the British or the Ranas in these areas (Sinha 2009:367-368). Due to these historical factors the Gorkhas share socio-cultural and linguistic ties with Nepal and similarly, the Madhesis have close socio-cultural affiliation with North Indian.

In addition, the Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1950, makes India and Nepal the only open border countries in the entire South Asian region. The Article VI of this treaty states that the citizens of other country in their territory would be given the same treatment which it gives to its citizens (Sinha 2009:366). Article VII of this treaty allows the citizens of both the nations to cross over their national boundaries and give them the right to reside, own property and engage in trade and commerce in the other country (Khawas 2009:176). As a consequence, people have not been able to differentiate between an Indian Nepali and Nepalese in India and likewise it is also difficult to distinguish between those Madhesis who are the citizens

of Nepal and those Madhesis who have migrated recently from North Indian states under the provision of the 1950 treaty.

As a result the mainstream India often mistakenly consider Gorkhas to be immigrants from Nepal and perceives them to be more loyal towards that country and the condition of Madhesis in Nepal is very much similar, where they are considered to be Indians by the mainstream Nepalese (Parmanand 1986). These historically migrant groups have constantly suffered identity crisis in the modern democratic framework. One very reason for the emergence of Gorkha and Madhesi movement is to put an end to the problem of identity crisis and claim a secure political identity. Both the groups believe only a separate state can solve the question of their political identity.

The nation-building project in these South Asian states is still in progress. The Gorkha and Madhesi movements are demanding for a creation of new federal states particularly for their socio-political and economic empowerment. In the process they challenge the existing socio-cultural and politico-economic inequalities and demand for more inclusive and responsive governance. These border communities, the Gorkhas of India and Madhesis of Nepal have now become very much conscious about their political identity, their participation in the governance and decision making procedures. At the same time the process of nation-building in India and Nepal has reached a critical situation where the historically marginal and migrant communities are considered outside the national concern (Sinha 2009). Therefore, at the present juncture, Gorkha and Madhesi movements have emerged with a significant momentum to end their plight of identity crisis along with their desire for socio-economic and political empowerment. In this crossroads, this particular study would analyse as to how these ethno-regional social movements in two different countries operate. It would also look into the various components of social movements such as ideology, leadership, organisation, strategies and support base and their respective goals. Lastly, a comparative study of Gorkhaland and Madhesi movement would be ascertained.

## **Review of Literature**

### **1.2. Review of Literature**

Social movements seeking separate state or autonomy for the Gorkhas in India and Madhesi in Nepal have existed over a long period of time. Both these movements have emerged intensely to address the problem of identity crisis and socio-economic and political upliftment, which is anticipated to be solved and achieved only through the creation of a distinct state or province for Gorkha and Madhesi communities in the concerned nations respectively. Ethnic factors play a pertinent role in mobilisation process of both the movements. This review will make an attempt to discuss the important concepts related with social movements, ethnicity and politics. It will also cover important aspects of Gorkha and Madhesi movement respectively. These themes would be dealt specifically under separate topics.

#### **1.2.1. Social Movements: Background**

Social movements emerged along with the rise of democratic representation in the United States of America and England in the later part of 18<sup>th</sup> century. Social movements are closely associated with democratic nations and they have also played a crucial part in the democratisation process of many societies. As a result they are often considered as ‘basic elements’ of ‘a living democracy’ (Marshall 2006:616). However, it does not mean that social movements are confined only to democratic countries but it is also witnessed in authoritarian and other forms of societies (Christiansen 2011:4). Social movements as such are universal in nature. However, Flynn (2011:27) is of the view that social movements are mostly successful in open and democratic nations where social mobility and social change are accepted.

Social movements became a field of scientific investigation only during the mid-nineteenth century. The Danish historian Lorenz von Stein was the first scholar to introduce the term ‘social movement’ into scholarly discussions in 1852 through the publication of his work ‘The History of the Social Movement in France from 1789 -1850’ (Tilly and Wood 2009:5). Stein studied the conditions that led to the emergence of eighteenth century revolutions in Europe. He claimed that social movements were the real concerted efforts on the part of economically disadvantaged masses against the oppressive ruling class. The oppressed group sought to transform the unequal and exploitative system into an equal one (Denisoff and Merton 1974:2).

Shah (2002:15) affirms that the politicians and scholars initially used the term social movement to refer to the creation of a new society through the upliftment of the exploited groups by changing their property relationships.

Social movements began particularly in Western Europe and North America after 1750's (Tilly and Wood 2009:3). The Industrial Revolution transformed the feudal society to a complex industrial society. It was a point of time when people started to migrate from rural farms to industrial urban areas in search of livelihood and job opportunities. The revolution quickly circulated the capital and dispersed the people across varying geographies and created drastic changes in socio-economic, political and environmental conditions (Flynn 2011:27).

The shift from traditional to modern societies ruptured the conventional social values and virtues. The human society was divided into two distinct groups namely the proletariat and the ruling class. The ruling class became powerful in every sphere and started to dominate the society. The level of poverty, inequality, injustices and lack of personal freedom increased among the masses. It was a period when the European societies witnessed major socio-economic and political upheavals (Shah 2012:15). People started to point at the political, economic and religious institutions for creating such undesirable conditions. As a consequence, the French revolution emerged to signal the discontents of the masses and their urge to establish a better society (Denisoff and Merton 1974: 1-2).

In the beginning social movements were viewed as complex and concrete phenomenon and were considered to be perfect field for ideographic studies and were initially studied by historians. Social sciences like history, psychology and political science started to study social movements quite early as compared to sociologists (Oommen 2011:1, Rao 2012:xv). The historians were concerned with factors like the life span of the movement, its institutionalisation, motives and traits of participants. They gave little priority to develop hypothesis and theories of social movements. Psychologists started to study social movements with the rise of Nazism in Germany and Fascism in Italy. They were interested to study the neurotic and psychotic personality traits of the leaders and participant of the movement. Their major drawback was they could understand the behavioural attributes of only the individuals and small groups. Moreover, Oommen argues that the immediate reason for joining

the movement is also related with the existing social conditions rather than confining it only to the psychological qualities of the leaders or followers.

The study of social movements entered into the sociological arena only recently because of the fact that the structural functionalism was the dominant theoretical approach in sociology until 1950's. Structural functionalism emphasized more on collective consensus and maintenance of status quo and social movements which comprise of conflicts and contradictions in the form of strikes, protests and demonstrations were seen as a threat to the social order (Oommen 2011:1-2, Shah 2012:14) and the participant of the movements were viewed as deviants.

After the 1950's the dominance of structural functionalism began to decline considerably due to its failure to provide answers to the newly emerging contradictions and dynamics of the society. Theoretical perspective like the Marxist approach provided a radical alternative to functionalism (Haralambos 2009:12). By 1960's people's attitude towards social movements began to change. Large number of people in colleges and educated people started to express sympathy towards the organised efforts of the masses who were demanding freedom, rights and economic upliftment (Goodwin and Jasper 2015:5).

Subsequently, the nature of movements has also undergone many changes. The early movements were mostly related with labour and their working conditions. Scholars studied the labour unions and working collectives then. However, after the Second World War the relevance of social movements have changed from labour and work concerns towards the issue of social identity and environment degradation. Various theories concerned with the study of social movement like the mass society, relative deprivation, structural strain, value-added, resource mobilization and new social movement started to develop gradually (Flynn 2011:27-28). Newer theories of social movements like the political process theory and frame analysis has also gained quite prominence in the analysis of movements. Oommen (2011:38) believes that the collective mobilization in the modern society takes places on three imperative issues namely identity, equity and security.

Oommen argues that historically social movements emerged as a unified effort on the part of the deprived groups to bring about social change (2008:180).

Sociologists began to study social movements by treating them as the response of the deprived social masses towards crises and their aspiration for creation of a better world (Oommen 2011:2). Similarly, Flynn (2011:27) points out that sociologists perceive social movements as 'power-oriented groups' rather than 'participation oriented movements'. In other words, sociologists consider social movements to be beneficial for the larger interest of the group rather than for the benefit of an individual member.

Oommen argues that sociologists who studied social movements in complex societies found change as the goal of the movement while the anthropologists who studied primitive traditional societies considered resistance as the goal of the movement (2011:8). Many scholars have also considered social movements as 'vehicles for change' or 'vehicles of social transformation' (Denisoff and Merton 1974:2, Oommen 2008:18). Emphasizing 'change' or 'social transformation' as the goal of social movement, M.S.A. Rao (2012:xvi) is of the opinion that change is achieved from social movements by engaging in conflict and contradiction unlike the changes that are brought about by imitative or emulative processes as in the case of Sanskritization which depends upon loyalty and obedience. He further argues that social movements are related to the processes of structure and change and when we study it, social processes including social activities, interactions, events and ideologies should be considered in one hand and an equal attention must also be given towards the cultural and social change.

### **1.2.2. Definitions of Social Movements**

There is a vast literature on social movements but there is no precise definition of the term. Various scholars of different disciplines have provided varying definitions. Some definitions are too broad and they also include phenomena which are at times not accepted as social movements (Crossly 2002:2). Social movements have also been defined by eminent scholars like Rudolf Heberle, Neil Smelser, John Wilson and Paul Wilkinson but their definitions are also not free of difficulties. At times the term is interchangeably used with organisation and union (Shah 2012:15). Therefore, it becomes very important for us to understand the conceptual definition of the term social movement.

Rao (2012:2) considers ‘social movement is an organised attempt on the part of a section of society to bring about either partial or total change in society through collective mobilization based on an ideology’. In order to define social movements Rao emphasize on drawing a line of difference between the non-movements and social movements. According to him social movements are collective actions and not individual actions. This collective action may or may not be organised formally but it should be able to awaken and mobilise people through an ideology in order to bring change or resist it in the society.

Porta and Diani (2006:21) consider social movements as a distinct social process, consisting of the mechanisms through which people engage in collective action:

- are involved in contending relations with clearly identified opponents;
- are linked by dense informal networks;
- share a distinct collective identity.

Wienclaw and Howson (2011:37) views social movements as collective behaviour and feature of modern society.

The Oxford Dictionary of Sociology define social movements, “as an organised effort by a significant number of people to change (or resist change in) some major aspect or aspects of society” (Marshall 2006:615). This explanation gives emphasis to three things namely the group of people, their organised effort and change that are crucial for the emergence of social movements. Von Stein who popularised the concept of social movement in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century defined it as “people joined together in order to change conditions in society”. According to him, people or the masses were the most important elements for bringing change. Von Stein pointed out that the basic properties of social movement include “perceived social problem, a proposed solution, some form of collective action, and some type of structural change” (Denisoff and Merton 1974:1-2). According to Darnovsky, Epstein and Flacks (Wienclaw and Howson 2011:39), social movements are “collective efforts by socially and politically subordinated people to challenge the conditions and assumptions of their lives . . . collective action becomes a ‘movement’ when participants refuse to accept the boundaries of established institutional rules and routinized roles.”

According to Herbert Blumer's definition it is 'only when an elementary collective action (crowd behaviour, mass action)... acquires organisation and form, body of customs and traditions, established leadership, an enduring division of labour, social rules and social values, in short – a culture, a social organisation, and a new scheme of life', it becomes a social movement' (Oommen 2011:7). Crossly (2002:3) points out that Blumer's definition treats social movement as a collective enterprise which develops due to some discontents and with an objective to build a new social order. The temporal collective actions like panics, mass hysteria should be separated from social movements because they do not emerge to rebuild a new social life. Lastly, social movements have a degree of continuity. It is also to be noted that Blumer's definition does not undergird the conservative and reactionary movements which seek to resist change and strives to maintain the status quo.

After analysing several definitions of social movements given by various sociologists like Neil Smelser, Sidney Tarrow, Eyerman and Jamison, Porta Della and Diana and others, Crossly holds that the question of stability or change surrounds the issue of social movements. Crossly believes that the human society is not static but a dynamic one, which is constantly on a flow. He sees social movements to be a key factor that propels the flow of the society and bring about social change and at the same time resists change in case of conservative movements (ibid).

Oommen (2011:11) after analysing the goals, means, scope and content of social movements discussed in his two edited volumes on social movements suggests the conceptualisation of social movement "as those purposive collective mobilizations, informed of an ideology to promote change or stability, using any means- violent or non-violent – and functioning within at least an elementary organisational framework." Most of the definitions of social movement consider it as a collective action having a formal or an informal organisation with an ideology which helps to collective mobilisation of people to either change or maintain the social order.



### 1.2.3. Characteristic and Components of Social Movements

Although scholars do not have a consensus over the definition of social movements but they do share some degree of agreement when it comes to the characteristics of social movements. According to Tilly and Wood the following are the basic features of any social movement:

- a. Campaigns: which implies to people's organised and sustained efforts of making certain collective claims on the authorities.
- b. Repertoires: Forming associations for certain specific purpose, organising meetings, rallies, demonstrations, petitions, distribution of pamphlets, interaction with the media etc.
- c. WUNC displays: this stands for worthiness, unity, number and commitment on the part of leaders and the supports of the movement (Christiansen 2011:5 cited in Tilly and Wood 2009:3-4)

According to (Wienclaw and Howson 2011:39) Tilly's identification of components of modern collective action includes:

- a. Groups that protest against things like laws, ideals or practices are mostly organized. Although the form of organization may vary, they are formed to attain some objectives
- b. Collective action mobilizes the resources like manpower, technology, means of communication, mass media etc. available to them in order to achieve their aims and objectives.
- c. Groups that are engaged in collective action share common interests like belief in environmental degradation, climate change, injustice and oppression of women, minorities or gay people.
- d. Collective action usually utilizes opportunity of any form to achieve its goals.

Other social scientists have stressed on several other features of social movements. M.S.A. Rao (2012:2) opines that most of the scholars agree on the viewpoint that social movements are sustained collective actions that have formal or informal organisations with an orientation for bringing or resisting change.

However, there is a disagreement among the scholars regarding the definition of social movement on the basis of ideology, organisational system and type of consequences. Rao considers ideology as an important element of social movement. On the basis of ideology he distinguishes social movements from the general movements. He admits that only social movements have an ideology which incites collective mobilization to bring partial or total change in the system. However, general movements only possess collective action and the idea of change but lacks ideology.

Oommen (2011:16) views mobilization as an active involvement and participation in medium of the goals pursued by the movement. He claims that the collective consciousness gets crystallised as the mobilization process proceeds further. According to him, the understanding of complex relationship between the nature of consciousness, mobilization and shaping of consciousness is an important matter to understand the social movements adequately.

According to Shah (2012:17) the most important components of social movements are objectives, ideology, programmes, leadership and organisation. These elements are interdependent and shape one another. Objectives of the movement may be narrow or broad which aims for bringing social transformation. Ideology provides direction to the course of the movement by preparing programmes and events. It also generates the sense of 'we-feeling' among the participants and keeps them united. Different programmes and strategies are engineered to mobilise the people. The participation of the people in the movement helps the movement to sustain longer. The movement may be initiated by a leader or at times the leadership may emerge with the development of the movement. Leadership is crucial for the articulation of the ideology, objectives, designing strategies, programmes and uniting the participants. These constituents of social movements are not static but they do change and evolve over time.

Oommen (2011:8-11) analyses the characteristics and components of social movements by examining the goals, means, scope and content of the movements. Firstly, the goal of the movement may be stability or change. Oommen is of the view that those sociologists who studied social movements in their own or others complex societies found change as their goal unlike the anthropologists who concluded the

goal of the movements to be stability and solidarity. Secondly, means can be either religious or secular. Religious means can be an attribute of primitive or tribal societies while secular means are used in the social movements of the modern societies. Abel considers means of acquiring the goals as the most distinguishing element of social movements. Similarly, the scope of the movement can be drawn by considering the spatial and societal features. The scope of the movement is considered to be higher in two conditions. They are when the movement has greater geographical coverage and when the movement attempts to transform the complex society. The content of the movement is classified as religious or rational on the basis of their respective influence over the movements. The religious contents are mostly popular in case of movements emerging in traditional societies and rational choices are generally prevalent in modern societies.

However, the religious means and content of movements is not limited only to traditional societies, at times even in the modern democratic societies religious goals and contents have been crucial in arising social movements. It should also be noted that in case of independent India two strict rules were implemented to handle the dissent primordial demands. The first one is the government would not tolerate the secessionist movement based on religion, ethnicity, language and culture and it was considered as illegitimate. Secondly, the different religious groups should not demand for any kind of political recognition. Although they are given the freedom to follow their customary laws, and demand protection of their culture and tradition but they cannot demand a separate state in India. Moreover, they are also not to demand separate electorate or proportional representation in the government bodies (Brass 2013:7).

#### **1.2.4. Types of Social Movements**

Various scholars have researched and written on social movements. Many of them have also classified social movements by using certain standards including their scope, contents, spatial aspects, strategies, goals, economic resources, and membership characteristics (Flynn 2013:28). On the basis of 'locus of change sought' and the amount of the change sought' David Aberle classified the movements into four types namely, transformative, reformative, redemptive and alternative movements. Transformative movements are the radical ones that seek to change the

structure completely or totally. Reformative movements work to bring about partial change in the social order. Redemptive movements are employed to bring about complete change in the individual's life. For example a change in the lifestyle of an alcoholic by joining the Alcoholics Anonymous group. Lastly, alternative movements do not seek to bring about change in the socio-political or economic spheres but work to bring a partial change in the lifestyle of an individual. It is characterised by counterculture values like giving up worldly pleasures and developing an unconventional culture (ibid:29-30).

Smelser differentiated between the norm oriented and value oriented movements in his strain theory (Oommen 2011:9). Norm oriented movements aim at bringing change in the system while the value oriented movements are directed to change the basic goals of the system (Morrison 1971 cited in Flynn 2011:27). Roy Burman in his analysis of tribal movements has categorised movements as proto-national or sub-national. When tribes transform from tribalism to nationalism it is said to be proto-nationalism. While the deepening of inequalities brought about by the development projects results in sub-national movements (Oommen 2011:9).

Social movements are also classified on the basis of the locus of the movement or on the basis of participants like the linguistic, religious, ethnic, sectarian, peasant, tribal, workers, women's, students movements and so forth. The locus helps us to recognise the participants of the movement. On the basis of spatial dimension movement can be categorised as national, regional and local. Considering the orientation for change Rao has classified three types of social movements. They are reformative, transformative and revolutionary changes. In case of reformative change there is change in values and social status of people without a change in the power structure or mode of production. In transformative change there is a change in the structure of power or dominance, in the relationship between super-ordination and sub-ordination while the mode of production remains the same. In case of revolutionary change there is a complete change in the economic system, relation of production and the power structure. It is also to be noted that all revolutionary changes are not violent in nature (Rao 2012:3, Shah 2012:27). Oommen argues that social movements do not have potential to completely eradicate the existing social order or concede to traditional systems but it offers a ground for conflux of old and new values and structures (1977:16).

Partha Nath Mukherji has categorised social movements into three types on the basis of quality of change they pursue. They are accumulative, alterative and transformative. Accumulative movements are those which work to bring intra-systemic changes while the alterative and transformative movements seek systemic changes. Mukherji has also classified movements on the basis of nature of change that they follow. The first type is the collective mobilisations directed to change or transform the structure is called social movements. Mobilisations equipped to bring broad institutional changes is termed as revolutionary movements. Lastly, the movements geared to bring change within the system are called quasi-movements. Oommen argues that Mukherji's typologies cannot contain movements which have stability as its goal (Oommen 2011:11-12).

Shah (2012:26-27) has classified the social movements on the basis of objectives and orientation towards change. He has divided the movements as revolt, rebellion, reform and revolution. Reform aims in bringing changes within the system. Rebellion is conceived to be an attack on the existing authority without any motive of usurping the power. Revolt aims to overthrow the authority by challenging it and revolution is an effort on the part of an organised group of people who tries to overthrow the government and replace the social structure with an alternative one.

Oommen (2011:15-19) has used the support base of the collectivities and the nature of the goals in the classification of social movements. He has systematically categorised three types of collectivity base or group formation. The biological or spatial group formation includes race, age, gender, regional and local groups. The primordial collectivities have roots in religion, language and caste affiliations while the civil collectivities are constituted by workers, peasants, students and professionals. Similarly, he also classified the nature of goals as symbolic and instrumental. Symbolic implies to changes related with status and privilege and instrumental goals include allocation of wealth and power. Social movements can have either symbolic or instrumental goals and at times a movement can have both instrumental and symbolic goals. The coherence of three types of collectivities, separately and in combination with two sets of goals gives total of nine types of social movements. However, this classification is not exclusive as the collectivities can overlap and can aspire for one for both types of goals.

Paul Wilkinson classified social movements into eight types on the basis of character, implication of commitment to change, constituency of the population, organizational mode and strategy (Karna 1998). Turner and Killians divided the social movement on the basis of orientation. They were value oriented, power oriented and particular oriented movements (Mukherji 2008). Oommen classifies social movements into three types on the basis of ideology, leadership and organisation. They are charismatic, ideological and organisational. The typology is based on the premise that when societies or communities are infected with strain or deprivation then social movements containing new ideology, organisation and leadership emerges (Rao 2012:27, Oommen 2011:13).

There are also attempts made by scholars to distinguish between the old and the New Social Movements in terms of their strategies, goals and membership. The old movements are seen to be confined in the industrial societies where lower classes joins together to fight for the issues related with their rights and wages. The NSMs are perceived to be post-class movements emergent in the post-modern or post-industrial societies where the movement is initiated by the middle class and the emphasis is laid on issues like environment, peace, gender and so forth (Frank and Fuentes 2012:42, Oommen 2008:233).

Andre Gunder Frank and Marta Fuentes have also distinguished between the political and social movements. According to them social movements do not aim at overtaking the state power but strive for more autonomy. They claim that political power lies with the state and social movements are directed only to bring social transformations alluding that only political movements seeks state power and aspires to bring political transformations (Frank and Fuentes 2012:45). Rao criticises Frank and Fuentes on the grounds that in the modern world political process are complex and interlinked. Thus, one cannot simply differentiate between social power and political power (2012:20).

#### **1.2.5. Theories of Social Movements**

T.K. Oommen (2011:2-5) has made an attempt to draw the explanation of collective action or social movement from the works of the founding fathers of sociology namely, Emile Durkheim, Max Weber and Karl Marx. Although none of the founding fathers have clearly dealt with the issue of collective action yet many

ideas related to it can be found in their writings. According to Oommen, the notion of collective action can be found in Durkheim's work on the 'Division of Labour in Society' (1893) and 'The Elementary Forms of Religious Life' (1915). Durkheim's notion of collective conscience and collective representation covers the idea of collective action. Collective conscience initiates collective action and collective representation brings the people together for bringing social change. Similarly, Weber believed collective action to be an outgrowth of dedication towards certain belief systems. Different kinds of belief may be found in the traditional, charismatic or bureaucratic systems.

Durkheim and Weber share the view that collectivism in modern times has been displaced by individualism due to structural changes and over emphasis on specialisation and rationality. Differing to their opinions, Marx divides the society into two classes on the basis of economy. These classes are presumed to be in constant conflict over their relationship to the means of production. The antagonistic interests and aspirations of the two classes also unite them for collective action respectively. Therefore, for Marx, modern collectivism can be attained unlike Durkheim and Weber. However, his deductions can be used more appropriately for analysing class antagonistic groups than the non-class groups like race, gender, nationalities etc. (ibid:5-6).

The early scholars considered social movements as a product of social structural conditions. The new set of thinkers emphasized on the individuals' alienation from the society and the failure of the society to integrate them as the main reason for the emergence of social movements. Some scholars have argued that urbanisation and industrialisation are the major cause of alienation and isolation. In their conception people join the social movement to transform the existing society (Christiansen 2011:146).

According to Shah (2012:21) social movements in most cases have been studied either in Marxian or non-Marxian frame of social analysis. The non-Marxist, particularly the functionalists like William Kornhauser, Robert Nisbet, Edward Shils and others have argued that the mass movements are the products of extremist and anti-democratic forces. They believe that social movements affect the effective functioning of the government. Therefore, the functionalists who emphasize in the

maintenance of status quo view social movements as dangerous and dysfunction in the civilised society. They do not stress on the economic structure of the society in their study of social movements but emphasize on political institutions and culture.

The Marxist approach enabled the scholars to study movements through the conception of class formation and class struggle but newer movements were not only based on economic differences and exploitation but were induced by socio-cultural factors as well. The Marxist perspective focuses on social movements that seek to bring revolutionary change in the society. They consider the economic differences and conflict of interests between the working class and the propertied class as one of the major cause of social movement. The propertied class also controls the other superstructure like religion, education, media, administration etc. and using these structural instruments they impose their ideology on the working class. The working class is not only exploited economically but also oppressed in the socio-cultural and political spheres. Under such circumstances the exploited group may resist or resorts to protest or collective action in the form of social movements to overthrow the dominant propertied group.

The Marxian scholars have also started to study the ethnic, religious and cultural movements apart from movements based on economic factors. The Marxist historians known as the 'Subaltern' scholars have also started to study social movements. They study the 'history from below', explore the 'history of the masses' or the exploited groups like the peasants, dalits, women etc. They criticise the conventional Marxists for excluding these social categories in their analysis. The Subaltern thinkers are knocked down for ignoring the structural factors and its role in shaping the consciousness of the people (ibid).

Social movement theory is a body of interdisciplinary approaches for studying social movements. It divides the theories of social movements into six types namely, new social movement theory, value-added theory, structural strain, relative deprivation theory, resource mobilization theory and mass society theory (Flynn 2011:102). Rao argues the theories of social movements like the relative deprivation, strain and revitalisation are primarily concerned with the genesis of movements (2012:4-6).



The relative deprivation scholars argue that people who feel deprived in some ways participates in the movement (Christiansen 2011:146). The concept 'relative deprivation' was used for the first time by American sociologists Samuel Stouffer from the University of Chicago. He used the concept in his book 'American Soldier' to study the psychology of American soldiers after the Second World War. He calculated their success on the basis of the standard of military units they served in comparison to that of their opponents. This theory gained prominence in the study of social movements too. Relative deprivation theory can be used to study socio-economic and political and organisational problems (Flynn:102).

Rao (2012:4-5) argues that the concept of relative deprivation developed in two different fields namely, social mobility and social conflict. Robert K. Merton and Runciman systematically developed the term in their study of reference group and social mobility. Karl Marx and Aberle have used the concept of relative deprivation to study the social conflict. Gurr clarified the relative deprivation theory by considering deprivation as a psychological factor rather than a structural factor. He emphasized that the structural factors only facilitated the necessary condition for movement but the perceived capabilities were the most important motivational factor that produced the sufficient condition for the emergence of a movement. He elucidated the theory in terms of expectations in connection with the perceived capabilities. The gap between the expectation and perceived capabilities created three values of deprivation which are related with economic condition, political power and social status.

The three kinds of deprivations according to Gurr are decremental, progressive and aspirational. Firstly, when the expectations remain stable and capabilities decline it is called decremental deprivation. Similarly, when the expectations increase and capabilities decrease it is called progressive deprivation. Lastly, when the expectations rise and capabilities remain the same it is called an aspirational deprivation (ibid). This theory helps us to understand the origin or the reason for the emergence of the movement and is important for bringing about reformative policies. However, the relative deprivation theory does not deal with the source of deprivation. Secondly, it looks down the human beings as mere creatures of societal determinism and undermines their creative potentials (Oommen 2011:20). It also covers only reformative movements and does not contain the revolutionary movements. Some

scholars attacks over the theory's over emphasis on psychological conditions alone and ignoring the structural situations (Shah 2012: 20-22).

Structural Strain Theory belongs to the larger body of strain theories. According to it the social structure promotes deviance and crime in the society. The social structures pressurises the human beings which compels them to act in deviant and criminal ways (Flynn 2011:122). Robert Merton in his work 'social Structure and Anomie' has clearly put forward his views as how deviance is created by culture and structure of society rather than 'pathological personalities'. Merton along with Albert Cohen, Richard Cloward and Lloyd Ohlin developed the cultural and sub-cultural theories of deviance (Haralambos 2009:413). Their contribution developed the structural theory.

Value-added theory or the strain theory was propounded by Neil Smelser. This theory viewed social movements from a structural functionalist lenses. Smelser argues that social movements emerge due to structural strains. According to him strain is an impairment of relationship between the parts of the system. The structural strain creates social disorders. As a consequence social movements emerge to fix these strains. The relative deprivation theory includes deprivation as a unit under it. However, the relative deprivation theory views conflict as a productive force of change while the strain theory sees conflict as harmful for social order and stability (Rao 2012:5). The structural strain theory emphasizes only on structural problems and strains as the reason behind the movement but does not consider the micro-level factors like individual's personal interest or dissatisfaction with the status quo.

Wallace developed the revitalisation theory. According to this theory social movements are collectively organised efforts of conscious people to create a better culture for themselves unlike the former theories which emphasize on deprivation and strain in the system. Revitalisation movement occurs only when members of the society feel that their culture is unsatisfactory (Oommen 2011:19).

The main contributors of 'Mass Society' theory are Alexis de Tocqueville, Emile Durkheim, Robert Nisbet, Herbert Blumer, William Kornhauser, Ferdinand Tonnies and Karl Mannheim. Mass society theory developed in the end of nineteenth century when the world witnessed the rise of media industry and socio-economic and political transformations were brought about by industrialisation, urbanisation and

changes in the political regimes. These changes alienated the masses from society at large. The theory advocates the power of mass media to transform the cultural norms and power relations and thereby maintain social order. It is also to be noted that this theory is not applicable to all the modern societies but it is more relevant in the societies that are fragmented and decentralised as they contain the vacuum created by declining religious and political organisations, union and voluntary associations (Flynn 2011).

Although the prominence of this theory has dwindled but scholars like Krishnan Kumar, Peter Berger, Robert Bellah and others continue to explore the link between the social relationships and cultural meanings found inside the large scale highly institutionalised societies where the traditional community cultural ties are absent (Marshall 2006:399).

The relative deprivation theory is also known as “solidarity theory” or “resource management approach”. It is one of the oldest and genuine sociological theories to study social movement which is widely applied till date. John D. McCarthy and Mayer Zald developed the resource mobilisation theory which offers a new insight to study social movements (Opp 2009:127). It was formulated to explain why the movements since 1950’s have evolved from classical movements which are characterised by local leadership, volunteer staff, collective actions, large number of participants, resources are given by the direct beneficiaries to a new kind of social movements which was characterised by professional leader, paid staff, informal organisation, resources are funded from outside the movement and do not require participation of the members. This theory helps us to understand how social movements use their resources both from inside and outside to achieve their goals (Jenkins 1983 cited in Flynn 2011:113).

This theory is used to study the reason behind the formation of social movements, their character and outcomes. Traditional social movement theories conceived that social movements emerged from the personal grievances arising from structural and social change. In contrast, resource mobilization theory views social movements arising from the “long-term changes in group resources, organization, and collective action opportunities” (Flynn 2011:114). It argues that social movements succeed with the effective mobilisation of the resources and development of political

opportunities for members. Resources are categorised as material and non-material types. Material resources include money, manpower, technology, technology, means of communication and mass media while the non-material resources comprise of loyalty, social relationships, personal connection, public attention etc. (Fuchs 2006 cited in Flynn 2011:115). The relative deprivation theory and mass society theory tries to give a broader explanation of movements. The resource mobilisation theory exclusively explains the institutional change movements (Jenkins 1983 cited in Flynn 2011:120)

According to Goodwin and Jasper (2015:5) McCarthy and Zald perceived social movement from an economic lens. They considered the organisation as the most important element of social movement. They argued that the social movement organisations functioned much like the business firms where it was responsible for accumulation of resources, hiring staff and sell off their ideologies to possible consumers. They considered organisation as a rational element of social movements. It was due to their emphasis on organisations mobilisation of time and money that the theory was called the resource mobilization theory. The critics point at the limited political and economic focus. The theory emphasizes organisation as rational and the motivation of the participants. Lastly, resource mobilization theory emphasizes on large scale movements and devalues the micro-level processes (Flynn 2011:119).

The resource mobilisation theorists developed the economic dimension of social movements. They claimed that for any movement to be successful resources like capital, manpower, technology were crucial. The new group of scholars developed the political process theory which argued that it was not only the resources that were important for the success of the movement but the opportunities to use the resources was most crucial (Christiansen 2011:146). Goodwin and Jasper (2015:6) claims that the political process theory gives the political dimension of social movements. The political process thinkers believe that social movements occur due to opportunities provided by the state. In this theory the state is not only seen as a target but also the adjudicator of people's resentment.

Gamson and Mayer (1996:276) argue that "opportunities are subject to interpretation and are often matters of controversy. Political opportunities are subject to framing processes and are often the source of internal movement disagreements

about appropriate action strategies” meaning there is no fixed opportunity and opportunities and the way to use it are interpreted by people.

The framing theory is derived from the work of Erving Goffman. According to Goffman people frame experiences in order to organise and understand the world around them. Framing theory of social movement attempts to understand the manner in which social movements and its participants create and use meaning, or how they frame events and ideas. Benford and Snow (2000:612-13) argues that “framing processes have come to be regarded, alongside resource mobilization and political opportunity processes, as a central dynamic in understanding the character and course of social movements”. Frame analysis stress on four major areas namely the creation and use of collective action frames, framing processes, opportunities and constraints, and the effect of framing on movement outcomes and other processes (ibid). The collective action frame plays an important role in collective mobilisation. The framing theory fetched the social constructionist theory into the study of social movements. It tries to address as how and why social movements grow and mobilise. The major drawback of this theory is that the meanings are very personal and can never be realized in a personal level (Christiansen 2011:154).

New Social Movements (NSM's) are used to study the social movements in the post-industrial society. This theory began after the 1950's in Europe particularly after the traditional social movement theories like relative deprivation and mass society theories went out of fashion. NSM's are different from the traditional social movements on the basis of strategies, goals and membership. The NSM's basically is a movement led by the middle class where they deal with issues relating to ecology, gender, peace etc. and have an objective of bringing a structural reformation. Critics of NSMs argue that social movements demanding environment, sexuality or peace protection were present even in traditional or industrial periods. Critics also challenge the theory for favouring liberal values and for rejecting the conservative ideas. The relevance of the theory is also undermined in the era of globalisation and transnational agencies (Flynn 2011).

### **1.2.6. Social Movements and the State**

Alain Touraine studied social movements in the three different types of societies. The first study was in the democratic and programmed country of the First world followed by the socialist totalitarian industrial societies of the Second world and lastly, the non-democratic industrialising societies of the Third world which were dependent on the foreign capitalists. He concluded that social movements can emerge and survive only democracies and programmed societies (Oommen 2008:193).

According to Ghanshyam Shah (2012:23) both the capitalist and communist states try to suppress the movements that challenge its authority and legitimacy. The state may deal with social movements in variety of ways, like contending it leniently in soft manner, negotiations through discussions and dialogues or react in a brutal manner by killing or arresting the activists. At time the state may also co-opt the leaders of the movement. The state is mostly gentle towards the reformist movements as compared to the movements seeking radical change or replacement of state power.

T.K. Oommen (2008:182-183) has drawn three visible relationships between states and social movements by considering three different kinds of states. Firstly, in authoritarian states social movements that are directed to challenge the status quo of the state are crushed or suppressed. In one party system politics social movements are oppressed but at times they are also sponsored to work for the benefit of the state authority to sustain the state power. Lastly, in countries with multi party system social movements are tolerated but those which endanger the very existence of the state are repressed.

Herbert Blumer classified the life cycle of a social movement into four stages namely, social ferment, popular excitement, formalization, and institutionalization (De la Porta & Diani 2006:150). His four stages of movement's lifecycle has been refined and renamed as emergence, coalescence, bureaucratisation and decline. In the final level, social movements may decline due to several reasons, one being the success of the movement. The other reasons for decline are repression and co-option. In both the cases the state plays a crucial role to pacify the movement. In case of repression the state uses any means including violence or militarisation to stop the movement while in case of co-option the state tries to destroy the movement by bribing the leaders or the leaders of the movement accepts offers made by the state. In

case of repression the movement is ended with the use of force while in case of co-optation the movement ceases not with force but with appeasements or favours.

According to Oommen (2008:16) social movements is mostly viewed as “anti-state” and “system breaking instrument” and the repressive measures of state on social movements have often compelled us to consider two of them as polar opposites. However, if states are to be seen as institutions then Oommen (2011:24-28) argues that the interaction between the institution and social movements are important for conditioning each other. He claims that if institutions do not produce social movements and if they do not react to them then institutions will perish structurally and culturally. Similarly, institutions are mechanisms through which movements can translate their ideology into reality.

### **1.2.7. Social Movements Studies in India**

According to Oommen (2011:34-36) social movements are conditioned by three factors namely the central institutional organisations (CIO), the perceived enemy of the exploited groups and the primary goals of the society. On the basis of this he has divided the social movements of 20<sup>th</sup> century India into three phases. The first phase of social movements begins from 1900 to 1947 where colonialism was the CIO, the British colonisers were the enemy and the goal was freedom from these external forces. The second phase starts with the independence of India where the nation becomes the CIO, nation-building becomes the goal and they fight against illiteracy, poverty, ill health, development of justice and so forth. This stage has been divided into two parts, the first part that is from 1947 to 1976 social movements stressed mostly on equality. In the second phase that is from 1976 to 1989 social movements were concerned with equality and identity.

The third level began from 1990's that is after the liberalisation of India. Here, the market became the CIO and the goal was economic growth and privilege to consumers. However, its impact was the economic 're-colonisation of India' by foreign capitals and the change in lifestyle and cultural patterns of Indians have affected the Indian culture and accepted the cultural invasion. This has often resulted in the riser of infrequent collective mobilisations that are yet to be crystallised against the facades of globalisation (ibid:37).

Singh (2003:64) argues that very few studies on social movements were taken up by Indian sociologists before the 1970's. Some of these rare studies include the work of A.R. Desai on Indian freedom movement, Stephen Fuch's study of messianic tribal movements in 1960's and T.K. Oommen's research in Rajasthan on the 'Gramdan Bhoodan' or the land gift movement in the 1970's. A.R. Desai used the Marxian approach of historical materialism to analyse the Indian national movement while Fuch and Oommen has emphasized on the role of values and ideologies in social movements. They have borrowed the Weberian conception of prophecy and charisma respectively in their analysis of social movements.

Apart from these studies other pioneer studies on Indian social movements includes Suresh Singh's case study of Birsa Munda movement in 1966, Alvi's work on the peasant movements in 1965, Kathleen Gough's study on the peasant movements of South India in 1968, Sunil Sen's investigation on the agrarian relations in Bengal in 1972, Partha Nath Mukerji researched on the Naxalite movement of North Bengal in the 1970's, Dhanagare's enquiry on the Telengana movement in 1974 and A.R. Desai's work on peasant movement in 1978. In India most of the pioneer studies on social movements began with the case study of peasant movements and majority of the scholars have used the Marxist framework to analyse the movements. Only Fuch and Oommen have used a Weberian perspective in their study of social movements (Rao 2012).

Singh (2003:65) argues that in 1974-75 the Centre for Study of Social Systems, Jawaharlal Nehru University organised series of seminars on the theoretical and methodological perspectives of social movements. The consequence of which was series of empirical studies on agrarian, tribal, revolutionary and religious movements. In 1976, M.S.A. Rao organised a workshop on social movements in the Department of Sociology at Delhi University. Several papers were presented on themes like conceptual problems, peasant movements, religious and sectarian movements, tribal movements, women movements, student movement and national movement. Later some of these papers were published in an anthology titled "Social Movements in India: Studies in Peasant, Backward Classes, Sectarian, Tribal and Women Movements" which was edited by M.S.A. Rao. These workshops immensely contributed in building the theoretical explanation of social structure and change and also developed the methodology to study social movements.



Towards the end of 1970's, the scholars gradually shifted their focus from the peasant movements to tribal and ethnic movements. K.S. Singh edited two volumes on tribal social movements in 1982 and 1983 respectively. In 1978, Myron Weiner took up a study on 'Sons of the Soil' movement by drawing a relationship between migration and ethnicity, Mary Katzenstein studied the Shiv Sena Party of Bombay and its relevance on ethnicity and equality in 1978, and Dipankar Gupta has extensively worked on the Shiv Sena movement of Bombay using a Structuralist Marxist approach in 1982. Shah has also edited a compendium entitled "Social Movements and the State". The book deals with various types of typologies of movements ranging from peasant, workers, tribal, dalit, women, religious, environmental and religious movements (Shah 2012).

According to Oommen various movements like gender, religious, tribal, rural-urban disparity and environmental movements emerged in independent India that aimed at equality and identity and some of the movements are often equated with the New Social Movements (NSM) of the West societies. However, Oommen finds it inappropriate to use the term NSM to these movements as their contexts varies from that of the western societies. He also argues that the contemporary social movements revolve around three important issues of identity, equity and security (2011:38).

He has also edited two volumes on "Social Movement", the first volume deals with the issues of identity while the second is concerned with the movements relating to equity and security. In the volume on equity and security themes on peasant movements have been contributed by scholars like Kathleen Gough, Partha Mukherji, T.K. Oommen, D.N. Dhanagare and others. S.M. Pandey along with Debashish Bhattacharjee and Supriya Roy touches upon the issues of Indian workers movements. In the section on women's movement Indu Agnihotri and Vina Mazumdar deals with the changes within the discourse of women's movement in India from 1970s to 1990s. In the same section Rajni Palriwala deals with the anti-dowry movement in Delhi. Philip Albatch and T.K. Oommen have covered the issues on student mobilisation and transformation taking place in the student's movements. Scholars like Vandana Shiva and Ranjit Dwivedi have analysed the ecological movements in India while T.K. Oommen has worked on the issues related to development projects and displacement (ibid).

### **1.2.8. Frame Analysis**

Various theories have been developed to study social movements. Initially, the scholars of social movement gave more importance to the question ‘why social movements occur?’ They claimed that movements emerged due to the harsh socio-economic and political conditions which alienated the members of the society. Such conceptions were articulated by mass society theory, structural strain theory, relative deprivation theory, revitalisation and so forth. Later the question shifted from why to ‘how do social movements succeed or fail?’ This led to the development of resource mobilisation theory which emphasized on the significance of the role of money and human resource in a social movement. Likewise, political process theory added that it was not only the resources that were important but an opportunity to employ them was equally necessary (Christiansen, 2011:146-147).

Graeme and Ian (2011:81) argue that the concept of framing analysis has been borrowed from the works of American sociologist Erving Goffman and British anthropologist Gregory Bateson. Frame basically means “the schemata of understanding” which helps us to “locate, perceive, identify and label occurrences within the life space and world at large”. Frames according to Goffman are organisation of experience or a belief system (Goffman, 1974:21, Opp, 2009:234, Ruggiero and Montagna, 2008:255).

This theory is basically a micro-sociological theory to understand how meanings are attributed to social interactions, events and actions by utilizing the observations, lived experiences and cognitive or psychological nature of the individuals. Frames are generally the characteristics of individual actors that give us the understanding of the situation or phenomena. The primary objective of this theory is to understand as how the interpretative schemata of individuals are transformed into collective frames in the form of social movements (Opp 2009:509).

It is also to be noted that these frames are developed by the activists and it works to link the interpretative frames of individuals and social movements (Benford 1997:418). Framing theory makes an attempt to examine as how social movements and the actors of social movement ‘creates and use meanings’ or ‘how events and ideas are framed’ The function of frame is to organise the experience and guide the action of an individual or collectives. Collective action frames in social movements

are used to bring people together and incite them to action. According to Benford and Snow (2000), “Collective action frames are action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate the activities and campaigns of a Social Movement Organization (SMO)”.

When individuals understand what is going on through their experience and cognition then they develop frames. The belief, interest, values of the individuals corresponds or is congruent with the activities, ideologies and processes of the social movement organizations. The three major task of collective framing are prognostic, diagnostic and motivational frames. These three collective frames primarily correspond to the reasons for the movement, the goals of the movement and the approaches and strategies used in the movements. This micro-sociological theory posits that the participants of the movement, strategies adopted by the movement, mobilization for addressing specific issues and problems are some important tools of social movements. It is also argued by scholars that framing analysis is more of a methodology to study the social movement (Graeme and Ian 2011:81 and Melucci 1986 and 1996 cited in Crossley 2009: 139).

### **1.2.9. Ethnicity**

The concept of ethnicity developed in the western nations and it started to get more attention in social sciences only after 1970's (Das 2005:203). Most of the theories have an inclination of being nation specific. The term ethnicity is derived from the Greek word *ethnikos/ethnos* meaning ‘people or nation’. The Greeks used the term mostly for foreigners and periphery groups. However, at present the term has also been to describe the majority or the native people as well. This leads to a contradiction in the application of the term whether it should be used systematically for everyone or just the natives or the migrants. As a consequence different scholars have used the concept in varied ways (Sabharwal 2006:5) and there is no universal accepted theory of ethnicity.

The term ethnic and ethnicity was for the first time used by Warner and Srole in their study of Yankee city in their work ‘The Social Systems of American Ethnic Groups’ published in the year 1945. Warner and Srole (1965:28) defined ethnic as “any individual who considers himself, or is considered to be, a member of a group with a foreign culture and participates in the activities of the group (1965:28 cited in

Sabharwal 2006:6). They have used the concept synonymous with the immigrant group. The major concern of their study was status, mobility and assimilation of ethnic groups into wider American society. Warner and Srole considered the ethnic groups as subordinate to the host society. They sub-divided the American society into three groups namely ethnic, racial and ethno racial. Ethnic possess varied cultural features which are considered by the host society as inferior. Racial groups differ on biology or physical appearance and possess characteristics that are regarded as inferior. Ethno-racial differs in both accounts. Cultural differences were not problematic as it could be changed, unlearned or lose its inferiority with the change in time. The racial features were permanent and its inferior nature could be changed only through the transformation in the evaluation system of the host society (ibid: 7).

According to Glazer and Moynihan, the pioneer Americans to study ethnicity have defined ethnic groups as “all the groups of the society characterised by a distinct sense of differences owing to culture and descent” (1975:4). The basic elements of ethnicity according to their definition are a sense of distinctiveness, a common culture and common origins. Glazer and Moynihan in their book ‘Beyond the Melting Pot – A Study of Ethnic Groups in New York’ (1963) defined ethnic groups “are forms of social life that are capable of renewing and transforming themselves.’ Sabharwal (2006:8) “These groups also do not and will not disappear”. However, the sudden shift of focus of ethnicity from assimilation to the dealing of multi-culturalism resulted in ethnic groups being regarded as exotic, marginal and minority groups. They were seen as interest groups and the rise of ethnic conflict. According to Banks (1996) ethnicity is purely an academic construct and does not lie in the actor. Giddens (2005:246) claims that ethnicity refers to “cultural practices and given outlook of a given community of people that set them apart from others”. Das (2005) argues that the first construction of ethnicity is differences and it is the difference that preconditions contact and communication between different groups and communities.

The concept of ethnicity in contemporary academia emphasize on the political usage of primordial identities. Urmila Phandis (1989) advocated ethnicity is a ‘portmanteau’ concept that expresses a certain distinct imagery and she contends that ethnicity is the expression of social clash which is found mostly in developing economies like South Asia. According to Paul Brass (1975) “if a group becomes ‘collectively conscious’ of its ‘objective differences’ with another within the same

society, and if that ‘collectively consciousness’ becomes ‘politically relevant’ in the sense that it pushes the group to be involved in political activities, we call it an ethnic group.” Brass advocates that objective factors of ethnicity constructs collective consciousness among the members of the society but studies have also revealed that objective factors of ethnicity are at times created by collective consciousness (Das 2005).

Glazer and Moynihan made a major contribution on understanding ethnicity through primordial or constructivism explanations. The primordial perspective holds that ethnicity is a constitutive and a permanent feature of human nature that is passed down from one generation to the next. It gives importance to emotions and affect in explaining ethnic identification. Edward Shils and Clifford Greetz are the most noted scholars associated with this perspective.

Shils used the term primordial to account for the affective ties that bind some primary groups particularly the family together. Shils in discussing the family in the context of social integration, argued that such attachments were “not merely to the other family members as persons, but as a possessors of certain, especially ‘significant relational’ qualities, which could only be described as primordial. The attachment of another member of one’s kinship group is not just a function of interaction . . . It is because a certain ineffable significance is attributed to the tie of blood.” (1957:42).

Greetz (1973) argues that ethnicity is an attachment derived from the assumed givens of social existence. These are region and kin connection and include communities based on shared religion, language and social practises. “These congruities of blood, speech, customs and so on are seen to have an ineffable and at time overpowering coerciveness in and of themselves.” Greetz argues that one is bound to a community of fellow believers “as a result not merely of personal affection, practical necessity, common interest or incurred obligations, but at least in great virtue of some accountable, absolute import attributed to self” (Greetz: 259-60).

Das (2005) argues that outline of objective features of ethnicity developed by Greetz which will correspond in the Indian framework are tribe, language, religious community, regional group and nation. Niharrjan Ray argues that caste is also an important element of ethnicity in India but it is also important to note that a particular caste becomes an ethnic group when it attempts to get out of culturally accepted ways

of cooperation, division of labour and consensus. However, Indian historian, Romila Thapar (1996) argues that the inception of Buddhism as a religion objecting the rigid Hindu conception of caste is a stance where caste can be considered as an ethnic group. Many scholars have criticised the essentialist and culturally deterministic character of Primordialism. They argue ethnicity or gender are products of human interaction and are socially constructed. The fundamental drawback of primordial explanation was its inability to account for the variability of ethnic conflict as well as the shifting nature of ethnic boundaries on various contexts and situations. Constructivists argue that there is nothing about ethnicity. Ethnicity was a product of specific historical circumstances (Glazer and Moynihan 1975). While the importance on family and fellow being is binding a group was acknowledged, Glazer and Moynihan advocated that this was not a comprehensive understanding of ethnicity.

Barth (1969) argued that a common culture should be seen as an implication or result of an ethnic group organisation and not its constitutive basis. He argued that if objectively identifiable cultural traits were adopted in the process of distinguishing ethnic groups it would be able to account for the persistence of groups whose attribute change over time. He thus claimed “we can assume no one-to-one relationship between ethnic units and cultural similarities and differences.” the features which were taken into consideration were not the sum of objective differences but only those which the actors themselves regard as significant – some cultural features are used by actors as signals and emblems of differences, others are ignored.” Thus, the importance in understanding ethnicity should be the boundary that defines a social group rather than its cultural attributes. Such boundaries are created and maintained by the subjective identification of group members, based on presumption that they are all “playing the same game, and it is the act of playing the game, not how it is played, that matter.” Thus, cultural distinction through critical to ethnic mobilisation, were not necessary condition of it (1969:14).

However, Barth’s theory did not provide a lens to study the ethnic political identities. Gupta (1991: 579) argues that in order to understand the ethnic movements “it is not sufficient to understand ethnic boundaries and the intercalation of diacritical minutiae which... believe, hyper-symbolically demarcate one ethnic group from another. What one needs is to figure out how ethnic boundary maintenance becomes suddenly politicised.”

### **1.2.10.Ethnicity and Politics**

India and Nepal are multicultural complex societies and analysing ethnicity is quite challenging endeavour. Manor (1996) argues that ethnicity in India means different things as individuals have a wide array of identities such as caste identities, religious identities, identification with clan and lineages and also identification through language, class, party, urban/rural national, regional, sub-regional and local identities and at times tribal identities. This ethnic aspect of Indian society can be used to understand ethnicity in Nepal too. The frequent shift of people's political and social preoccupations represents the flexibility of ethnic identities.

Horowitz (1985:291) observes as how a political party in a society divides the society in ethnic lines. His study on ethnic party becomes very much relevant in explaining the nature of politics and parties in India and Nepal. Horowitz (1985:291) in his seminal text *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, he relies on Giovanni Sartori's argument that political parties "both presuppose and produce", "reflect and affect" to claim that "party and society act on each other".

The objective features of ethnicity are clearly observable and in many case our birth determine our belonging to particular ethnic membership. Apart from the observable objective factors of ethnicity the linguistic and religious aspects of ethnicity are readily apparent (Das 2005). In case of India after independence the states were created on the basis of language and the approach has divided the entire country in terms of ethnic indicator of language (Singh 2009). Oommen (1990) believes that language has more legitimacy than religion and he promotes the idea that language should be used as the basis for administrative restructuring. He views if religion get prominence in administration then in case of multicultural nation like India, Hinduism with a largest number of followers would be a dominating ideology in administration and it may result in oppression of other religious groups.

Ethnicity is always based on we and they difference. The sense of speaking the same language, following same religion or belonging to the same region helps in developing a form of homogeneity and demarcates oneself from others (Das 2005). Vanaik expresses sub-national identities are also on an incline and it is based on caste, regionalism, language etc. (Gupta 1996). Ethnic identity does not possess any predetermined profile it only through confrontation with other groups that ethnic

identity develops a specific form. The ethnic groups are politicised when it develops a certain contact or communication with the rival groups. The use of symbols, language, religion, myths, signs, as its specific features by one ethnic group will obviously have political significance (Das 2005). Various ethnic groups like Gorkhas of West Bengal, Bodos of Assam have been demanding separate state on the basis of their linguistic and cultural differences (Singh 2009).

In case of democratic states elections are perceived to be the means of social change (Das 2005). The popularity of majority based on ethnic identity has also challenged the position of the minorities. As a response to this kind of political development minorities are also gearing up politically on the basis of religion, language or region (Taylor and Mohammad 1997). The instance of Shiva Sena attack on the south Indians in Bombay and the politics of 'son of the soil' presents the politics of ethnicity. The case of Hindu communalists attacking Bangladeshi immigrant Muslims in Assam also presents the politicisation of religion and region over resources (Gupta 1996).

Vanaik (1990) argues that it is not the language but religion which plays a vital role in terms of politics. He also cites the formation of Pakistan on the basis of religion (cited in Gupta 1996). Gail Omvedt argued that the rise of Hindu religious ideology in Indian politics was due to the failure of secular and socialist forces (Gupta 1996). Phandis (1989) claims that mass politics will be characterised by more ethnic elements in future.

Subba (2001) in his book 'Politics of Culture: A Study of Three Kirata Communities in the Eastern Himalayas' argues that ethnic movements emerged in the eastern Himalayas particularly in the eastern part of Nepal, Sikkim and Darjeeling simultaneously during the early 1990's. The United Nations declared 1993 as the 'Year of Indigenous Peoples' and at the same time Mandal Commission implemented the Other Backward Classes (OBC) reservation in India. Simultaneously, the first Jan Andolan movement began in Nepal. As a result, various sub-communities of the larger Gorkha community started to demand for their rights and privileges. The socio-cultural similarity in the three different parts of eastern Himalayas witnessed a massive movement for socio-political recognition and privileges. Various Gorkha communities like Subba, Manger, Gurung, Rai etc. started to organise vigorously and



in search of their 'lost identities' by stressing on the primordial ethnic elements. In eastern Himalayas the politics of culture is such that if it emerges in one part, all other part of the region also gets affected.

### **1.2.11. Borders**

Borderland studies were initially undertaken by anthropologists, political scientists, economists, historians and geographers. Schendel (2005) argues that social scientists have given very limited interests in the study of borders as many borders are areas of contestation and conflict. The states through the creation of borders exercise control and authority over the people and resources. Schendel is of the view that borders not only acts as a barrier between states but is also a barrier for academic researches. There are 313 land borders between different countries but the increasing number of border have not really contributed towards the cross-border trade, movement of people, communication and co-operation between people (ibid).

Most of the borderland studies and theories developed from Europe, America and Africa. Traditionally, most of the studies related to borders are state-centric emphasizing on sovereignty and security, and border was seen as 'legal borderline between states and the frontier of cultural contestation'. The formation of European Union (EU) in 1993 has resulted in withering away of internal borders among its member nations but the external borders are becoming more rigid and visible.<sup>1</sup>. However, in Asia the study of borders is poorly represented (Schendel, 2005:365).

The significance of borders seems to be on a decline with the opening up of borders notably due to globalization at the same time the number of conflicts taking place with regard to borders are also on an incline. However, it is to be noted that border studies is gradually becoming popular after expansion of international markets, globalization, and cosmopolitanism among other factors. This has given a way for the sociologists, ethnologists and scholars of culture to study the borders. Presently, people have started to study the borderland communities, transnationalism, trans-

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<sup>1</sup>“Creating and Crossing Border: The State, Future and Quality of Border Studies”, Published by Centre for Border Studies, University of Glamorgan.

culture, illegal cross-border migration etc., but studies on rigid and impervious borders have been least studied by scholars (ibid).

In present times interdisciplinary institutions like the Association for Borderland Studies (ABS) have also been formed to study borders. They have opened up opportunities for scholars, government officials and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO's) studying borders in America, Europe, Africa and Asia. Centre for Border Studies has been newly established to study the borders through the European perspective. The Glamorgan Centre also deals with the study of borders through historical and cultural contexts and much emphasis is given to comparative approaches (1).

Schendel (2005) argues that borders are formed in two major ways. One way is through the natural calamity like a major earthquake in which the movement of tectonic plates split open fissures and separates one region from another. Secondly, borders are also formed when international political tectonic plates move and create international borders.

#### **1.2.12. Indo-Nepal Open Border**

Apart from the internal geographical differences and cultural dissimilarities, in the international context Nepal shares her international boundaries with China in the north and with India in her west, south and eastern sides. The total land border area of Nepal is 2962 kms of which it shares 1690 kms of with India and 1236 kms with China (Bhattarai 2008). The border between Nepal and China is a closed one while her border with India is an open one. Infact, it is the only open border in South Asia. Nepal being a landlocked country is heavily dependent on India for import and export transactions.

Article VII of the Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship signed on 31<sup>st</sup> July 1950, between the Government of India and Nepal in particular provides a legal sanction to India and Nepal to enter into open border engagements. The international border of Nepal touches five Indian states namely, Uttaranchal, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Sikkim and part of Darjeeling district of West Bengal. The main entry border points in Nepal are mostly located in the Terai region.

The open border policy is an exemplar of regional co-operation between India and Nepal that has existed much before the integration of any global or regional economies. The movement or 'different scapes' as conceptualised by Arun Appadurai in the discourse of globalisation, had begun four decade earlier between these two South Asian economies. It has promoted the free flow of humans, ideas, goods, technologies and capital to and from in both the sides. It has benefitted both the nations at large. At the same time the open border has also been a channel from which illegal transactions takes place, human trafficking particularly of women and children is carried out, prostitution rackets are run, smuggling takes place, criminals cross the borders and find a haven and there is also the fear of penetration of terrorists and anti-national forces in both the sides (Pant 2000).

The open border for the communities living therein has proved to be an important means for commercial transactions of goods and services. The socio-cultural, historical and linguistic moorings of Madhesis and Indian Gorkhas extend beyond their national boundaries. The existence of socio-cultural ties of these groups beyond borders is many times perceived negatively by the other communities in both the nations. The Madhesis and Gorkhas are suspected of crossing the frontiers on the basis of the open border policy. They are often offended as immigrants across the borders and doubted of their nationality and citizenship. Concurrently, these two communities which are assertive of experiencing 'identity crises' have responded to their problems through organised social movements. They are eagerly demanding the formation of separate autonomous states in Nepal and India for the proper recognition of their identity and existence.

### **1.3. Rationale of the Study**

Gorkhas were encouraged to migrate to Darjeeling hills by the British East India Company mostly from eastern Nepal in the pre-independence era and similarly, the Madhesis were prompted to move towards the Terai region of Nepal from the adjoining Indian states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar by the Rana rulers in the years between 1860 to 1951 (Sinha 2009:368). As a consequence large number of Gorkhas crossed their borders from Nepal and came to India and multitude of Madhesis from India crossed their borders towards Nepal primarily for economic reasons and to develop the sparsely populated regions across their borders. At present the very

reference of the historical migration distresses the identity of the two communities and bothers their political condition.

Gorkhas and Madhesis are considered by their compatriots to represent and guard the cultural fonts of Nepal and India respectively. They are often tagged as ‘immigrants’ in their own country. Both the Gorkhas and Madhesis are viewed as suspects in India and Nepal respectively and this has been in an apparent motion for at least six decades now. Their identity and citizenship are often questioned as they are linguistically and culturally closer to the communities living across the borders (Sinha 2009). The only existing open border policy in South Asia, between India and Nepal is also responsible for generating identity disarray among the Gorkhas and the Madhesis (Khawas 2009). Lately, the European nations are opening their borders and they are benefitting in many ways. The open border between India and Nepal has created a lot of opportunities and at the same time created a chaotic situation for the Gorkhas and Madhesi population.

Both the groups feel that they are subjugated and do not have an adequate power to voice their problems in the governance. As a result Gorkhas and Madhesis have started to feel insecure about their existence and identity in India and Nepal respectively. Consequently, the identity crisis and economic underdevelopment of Gorkhas and Madhesis has resulted in the emergence of Gorkha and Madhesi movement. The Gorkhas and Madhesis have started to demand recognition of their identity and administrative autonomy or separate state in India and Nepal respectively.

Darjeeling district of West Bengal in India is inhabited mostly by Nepali speaking population and they have been demanding separate administrative set up since 1907 and at present they are clamorously demanding a separate state of Gorkhaland. In the other hand the Madhesi community of Terai, Nepal whose lingua franca is Maithili, Bhojpuri, Awadhi and Hindi have been demanding an autonomous political set up for them particularly after the end of Rana regime since 1950’s and they are demanding more actively at present.

Despite a very close socio-cultural, historical and geo-political connectivity between India and Nepal, the Gorkha community of India and the Madhesi community of Nepal faces a severe political identity crisis. Through the ongoing

social movements in Darjeeling hills and Terai region of Nepal, Gorkhas and Madhesis aspires the formation of Gorkhaland and Madesh Pradesh which they believe would solve the problem related with their identity and economic underdevelopment.

Some believe that the mainstream Indian political and social organisations like the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) which upholds the ideology of *Akhand Bharat* (undivided India) which is closely connected with the principle of *Hindutva* (Hindu ideology) is backing the Madhesi movement. Nepal being the only Hindu kingdom in the world has compelled some scholars to conceptualise that the social and political groups of India preaching the notion of *Akhand Bharat* is mobilising the Madhesi movement to merge Nepal with India and attain their larger goal of Undivided India. Some scholars argues that the palace might have instigated the violence in Terai and there are others who claim that the political drive of the Madhesi movement is being guided and controlled by the intelligence agencies of the Government of India (Sinha 2009).

On the other hand the Gorkhaland movement is perceived by some to have been influenced by the concept of Greater Nepal. The prime objective of Greater Nepal is to extend the present political boundaries of Nepal which would include some of the Indian territories covering from Sutlej to Tista. This area covers about 15,000 km and includes Darjeeling district of present day West Bengal too. These areas were controlled by the Gurkhas for few years before it was ceded to the East India Company after the defeat of Gurkhas in the Anglo-Nepalese War of 1814-16. The Gorkha and the Madhesi movement on such grounds are believed to have linkages with the larger political designs in India, and Nepal. However, the Gorkha and Madhesi movement receive a very little academic attention in India and Nepal. This study would give relevance to the identity issue of the Gorkhas and Madhesis and also highlight the problems faced by the South Asian borderland communities in the nation building exercise by studying the case of these two groups.

Gorkha and Madhesi movements exhibit the visibility and vitality of ethnic identity. Ethnic identity is employed to draw association or disassociation from the group. Ethnicity plays an important role in the socio-economic and political domain of India and Nepal. In case of both Gorkhaland and Madhesi movement ethnicity

plays an instrumental and impelling force in mobilising the idea of autonomy and identity among the masses. The objective factor of ethnicity like language, culture and region along with historical evidences are widely used in both the movements.

The study would be conducted using Erving Goffman's conceptualisation of frames and Snow and Bedford's theoretical approach of diagnostic, prognostic and motivational framing process of social movement and social change through which a comparative analysis of Gorkha and Madhesi movement would be made by focusing on the reasons for social movement, the articulated solution or strategies used in the movement and anticipated solution by the supporters of the movement and the state respectively.

Comparative study of Gorkha and Madhesi movement helped to understand how the historically migrant Gorkha and Madhesi community are responding towards the nation-building process in India and Nepal in contemporary times. The study also helped to analyse as to what are the problems and aspirations of the two borderland communities to end their plight. Lastly, the study helps us to uncover as to what extent is the politics of India and Nepal influencing the two movements.

#### **1.4. Analytical Framework**

This research has been based on the following analytical framework:

##### **1.4.1. Research Question**

The comparative study on Gorkha and Madhesi movement was undertaken with a special focus on:

- What were the sources or reasons for the emergence of the movements?
- What were the major problems related with identity?
- Why were both the Gorkhas and Madhesis demanding autonomy?
- What were the major strategies used by political groups to achieve their demands
- How did the state react to the movements?
- What was the level of violence that incurred in the agitation of the movements?
- What were the results of movements?

### **1.4.2. Objectives of the Study**

The main objectives of the study are:

- To analyse the historical and the present socio-economic and political condition of the borderland communities comprising of the Gorkhas of Darjeeling hills and Madhesis of Terai region of Nepal.
- To unveil the consequences of Gorkha and Madhesi movements on the socio-cultural, economic and political sphere of the Himalayan borderland region across India and Nepal.
- To understand the political aspirations of borderland communities with reference to the Gorkhas and Madhesis.
- To understand the dynamics of cross border ethnic politics with the help of these two movements.

### **1.4.3. Research Design**

In this study the framing process of social movements has been used to study and compare the two movements. Framing denotes “schemata of interpretation” which enables the researcher “to locate, perceive, identify and label” occurrences taking place within the life space and world at large (Goffman, 1974:21). Snow (1986) advocates that the human beings in their minds possess several frameworks or mediators that exist between the reality and one’s perception. These frameworks are complex in nature and vary from people to people in different situations. These frameworks are shaped by cultural values, beliefs and experiences. Out of many existing frameworks human beings utilises the primary framework or the pre-existing knowledge or viewpoint that individuals uses to make sense of the reality and guide their actions. It is also to be noted that this framework may change in course of time with more accumulated experience and understanding.

On the part of the Social Movement Organisations (SMO’s) the core framing task involves diagnostic frame which focuses on the reason for the emergence of movement followed by prognostic frame which refers to the expected solution or goal of the movement and the motivational frame which deals with the strategies used in the movement. This study makes an attempt to explore the frames used by people with regard to Gorkhaland and Madhesi movements and also analyse the frames used

by the concerned SMO's and thereby make a comparison between these two movements.

Both primary and secondary sources of information have been used in the study. Primary data was collected using both open and closed ended questions through the interview schedule method from the following areas:

- a. Darjeeling district <sup>2</sup>: The three sub-hill divisions of Darjeeling district namely, Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong was selected as the study area. Major part of the fieldwork was conducted in Darjeeling sub-division as it has been the epicentre of Gorkhaland movement from the very inception of the movement since 1907. Fieldwork was undertaken particularly in Singamari area as the Gorkha Jan Mukti Morch (GJMM) party that is leading the present Gorkhaland movement has its head office there. Darjeeling is also home to all the head offices of political parties demanding Gorkhaland. It is also one of the major borderland which shares international border with Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and China. Fieldwork was also conducted in Chongtong tea garden primarily to collect the perspectives of tea garden workers and rural area. It is one of the biggest teagardens in the region.
- b. Jhapa, Sunsari and Morang districts: These areas are located in the southern plains of Eastern Nepal and share an open border with India. Fieldwork was conducted in Kakkirvitta and Birtamode in Jhapa, at Dharan in Sunsari district and at Biratnagar in Morang district. Kakkirvitta is one of the important border town of Nepal and an important centre for cross border trade and transaction. Biratnagar is the headquarter of Morang district and it was chosen as a study area because it is one of the largest cities in Nepal after Kathmandu. It is considered to be one of the most ethnically diverse region of Nepal and home to large number of Madhesis. Biratnagar has also been the hometown of many influential political leaders of Nepal including the Koirala family and the major political parties which are demanding autonomy in Terai are based here. Fieldwork was also conducted in the capital city of Kathmandu when the Madeshi movement protests started to shift towards the national capital.

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<sup>2</sup> During the time of fieldwork Kalimpong was still a sub-division under Darjeeling district. It became a district only in March 2017.



Fieldwork in the research area was conducted in different intervals from January 2015 to June 2016.

The secondary source of data was generated from books, journals, academic articles, newspapers, magazines, archives and audio video files which were accessible through university libraries, research centres and internet. The secondary sources of data in English and Nepali languages were analysed. In the data analysis part of the study, the primary data was compared with the secondary data with an attempt to justify or challenge the existing field view and book view of the two movements as well.

#### **1.4.4. Methodology**

In the present study various methods of social science research was used to collect data. It was somewhat difficult to find respondents who would prefer to talk about movements freely and it was more difficult in case of Madhesi movement as the study was carried in a completely new environment and the movement was taking place then. Therefore, snow ball sampling technique was employed to select the respondents. Data was collected using an interview schedule which incorporated both open and close ended questions. Both qualitative and quantitative data was collected using a semi structured interview schedule. The inclusion of both qualitative and quantitative data benefitted the study in highlighting both the issues relating to calculations and incalculable variables like culture, level of interest towards the movement etc. It helped in dealing with the numeric as well as the emotional aspect of the study. This facilitated in gathering a lot of information and open ended interview schedule allowed the respondents to discuss on other issues which were beneficial for the study. Semi structured interview schedule also served in grasping the information from the respondents which the researcher otherwise was unaware of.

Key informants such as the political leaders, supporters, activists and members of the civil society residing in Darjeeling hills and eastern Terai of Nepal in Jhapa, Morang, Sunsari districts and also in Kathmandu were interviewed to understand the issue of Gorkhaland and Madhesi movement respectively. Group discussions of interested political and social groups with regard to Gorkha and Madhesi movement were also conducted to accumulate data. All the important variables like age, gender, income, education qualifications, political participation etc was considered while

selecting the sample. This was helpful in gauging the viewpoints of respondents of varying ages and backgrounds. Questionnaires were also sent through internet via popular communication mediums like facebook, gmail or whatsapp. Telephonic and online interviews were also conducted in case of the respondents being unavailable for face to face interview. Interview was conducted in English, Nepali and Hindi according to the preference of the respondents.

## **1.5. Chapterisation**

### **Chapter 1: Introduction**

The first chapter portrays the background of the study with an emphasis on theoretical and conceptual analysis of social movements, ethnicity and identity politics with special reference to Gorkhaland and Madhesi movements.

### **Chapter 2: Book and the field view of Gorkhaland Movement**

In the second chapter the growth and development of Gorkhaland movement has been analysed in depth. This chapter also examined and analysed the book and the field view of the Gorkhaland movement.

### **Chapter 3: Book and the field view of Madhesi Movement**

The third chapter has dealt the Madhesi movement in an extensive manner. The book view and the field view of Madhesi movement has been meditated in detail and discussed in this chapter.

### **Chapter 4: Politics of Culture – Comparison between Gorkhaland and Madhesi Movement**

In chapter four comparative analyses between Gorkhaland and Madhesi movement was carried out. The issue of construction and reproduction of identity in everyday life of Gorkhas and Madhesis is discussed in this chapter.

## **Chapter 5: Understanding Gorkha and Madhesi Movement through Framing Process**

In this chapter the Gorkha and Madhesi movements has been compared in three coherent stages of the framing process of social movements namely the diagnostic, prognostic and motivational frames.

## **Chapter 6: Conclusion**

Chapter six concludes the study with an analysis of the consequences and prospects of Gorkha and Madhesi movements. It discusses as how the two cross border ethnic movements affect the socio-cultural, economic and political atmosphere in Darjeeling hills in India and in the Terai region of Nepal.

### **1.6. Limitations of the Study**

This study has also certain limitations or shortcomings. When the research fieldwork for this study was undertaken then both the movements were ongoing. Many selected respondents did not want to talk freely about the issue, they feared to respond anything related with these movements as they were considered to be a very sensitive case. Many times the fieldwork was interrupted due to the strikes called by the participants of the movement.

Moreover, the samples selected in this study do not represent the entire population. The Gorkhas are spread all over India and similarly Madhesis are also found in almost all the southern plain district of Nepal. However, in this study Gorkhas living in the Darjeeling district and the newly formed Kalimpong district (which was earlier a sub-division within the Darjeeling district) were selected as the samples for Gorkhaland movement. While on the other hand, in Nepal the Madhesis of the three eastern Terai districts namely, Jhapa, Morang and Sunsari were only taken into consideration.

As this study deals with the social movements that were old, ongoing and active, they are dynamic and ever changing in nature. The leadership, ideology, strategies are also seemingly changing day after day. Therefore, the present study may not be able to capture and express the concrete and complete course of these

movements but the course of these movements in a very particular period within the larger history and time frame of these movements has been enquired.

## Chapter 2

### Book View and Field View of Gorkhaland Movement

#### 2.1. Origin of the term Darjeeling

Various scholars, civil servants, travellers and local inhabitants have varying viewpoints regarding the meaning of the term 'Darjeeling'. Many of them believe that the term is derived from a Tibetan word '*Dorje-Ling*'. *Dorje* means Hindu God Indra's thunderbolt or sceptre and *Ling* refers to the place. Thus, Darjeeling in Tibetan language means 'the land of the mystic thunderbolts'. Earl of Ronaldsay argued that the term Darjeeling must have been derived from the name of the Buddhist priest Dorjee Rinzing who had established the monastery in the Observatory Hill which was destroyed during the Gorkha invasion in 1788 and later shifted to Bhutia Busty. Similarly, Rahul Sanskrityayan believes that the term 'Darjeeling' is taken from the name of a monastery called 'Dorje-Ling' meaning 'vajra dvipa'. According to A.L. Waddle the term Darjeeling is closely related to the cave of mystic thunderbolts on the Observatory Hill. Another interpretation explains the term to have been derived from a Sanskrit word '*Durjaya-Linga*' meaning 'Siva of inconceivable prowess, who rules the Himalayas' (O'Malley 1999:1, Sen 1989 cited in Das and Bhuimali 2011:24-25).

Most of the interpretations of the terminology have a close linkage with the Buddhist and Hindu priest, deities and shrines. The Observatory hill which is also usually referred as the *Mahakal Dara* by the locals is still one of the most important and popular religious centre of worship among the Hindus and Buddhists of the region. It is situated just above the present day South Field College and people are often seen praying, bowing towards it from the Mall road below the holy cave. Chatterji (2007:81-82) claims that most of the hill stations in India before the advent of the British were religious pilgrimage sites such as Kedarnath, Badrinath and Mount Abu. She argues that Darjeeling was also one major Buddhist and Hindu religious centre while Kalimpong, another hill sub-division of Darjeeling district was traditionally "an old trading town on the Tibetan trade route".

## 2.2. Geography and Demography of Darjeeling District

Darjeeling district is located in the northern most region of West Bengal state in India. Among all the frontier districts of the nation the political boundary of this district is highly complicated (Mitra 1954 cited in Das and Bhuimali 2011:25). It has Tibetan Autonomous region of China in the north, Nepal in the east, Bhutan in the west and Bangladesh in the south. Darjeeling shares an international border of 145 kilometers with Nepal, 52 kilometers with Bhutan and 26 kilometers with Bangladesh and shares 165 kilometers border with the Indian state of Sikkim (Bomzan 2008:1).

The region lies between 26° 31` and 27° 13` north latitude and between 87° 59` and 88° 53` east longitude. It ranges from an altitude of 300 to 12,000 feet above the sea level and it has Terai or the lowlands in the lower parts and mountains in the upper north. The hills ascend from the plains at 300 feet above the sea level and rises up to 6000 to 10,000 feet high (Hunter 1974 cited in Das and Bhuimali 2011:25). The highest hilltops of the region include Phalut which is located at 3,596 meters followed by Sandakphu 3,323 meters and Tanglu 3063 meters. All of these hills share an international border with the Ilam district of Nepal.

Darjeeling district constitute mostly of Himalayan foothills while the southernmost region under Siliguri comprise of plains (Gulia 2007:9-111). The district has a total area of 3015 square kilometres (Bomjan 2008:1) whose shape looks like an irregular triangle (O'Malley 1999:1-2). The district is divided into four sub-divisions with three located in the hills and one in the plains. The three hill sub-divisions namely Darjeeling Sardar, Kalimpong and Kurseong together they cover an area of 2157 square kilometres (Lama and Sarkar 1986 cited in Das and Bhuimali 2011:25) while Siliguri covers an area of 858 square kilometers. Darjeeling Sardar is the headquarter of the district (Sarkar 2013:6). It is also to be noted that in the month of March 2017 Kalimpong was declared as a separate district of West Bengal. Therefore, Kalimpong sub-division which was administered under Darjeeling district was upgraded to district in West Bengal. Similarly, Mirik municipality under Darjeeling district was promoted to a sub-division under Darjeeling district.

According to 2011 Census Survey of India the total population of Darjeeling district is 18,46,823 with 9,37,259 males and 09,564 females (Darjeeling District Census Handbook 2011:13). The population of the district is heterogeneous and due

to this reason O'Malley (1999:41) has expressed that the place was also referred as the "Babel of tribes and nations". In a population of about one million in the hilly districts of Kalimpong and Darjeeling Nepalis account to almost ninety per cent while they count about three lakhs in the plains where the total population is about eight lakhs. The ethnic composition of population of the hills and plains are mirror opposites (Ghosh 2009:10).

In the hills of Darjeeling and Kalimpong, the Nepalis caste and community constitute the majority population. The Nepalis comprise of Chettri, Bahun, Kami, Damai, Sarki, Mangar, Gurungs, Rai, Subba, Dewan, Tamang, Sunwar, Thami, Bhujel, Newars etc. (Pempahishey 2013:23). Apart from the Nepalis other communities like Bhutias, Lepchas, Marwaris, Bengalis, Biharis, Muslims and others are also found in the hills. In case of plains the Bengalis, Adivasis such as Koches, Meches, Dhimals and other business communities forms the major section of the population. The 2011 Census Handbook of Darjeeling district which also included Kalimpong the recently created new district has 12 Community Development Blocks out of which eight are in the hills and four are located in the plains. 60.6 per cent population of the district live in rural areas and 76.8 per cent of the total population of the district are dependent on tea and cinchona plantations (Darjeeling District Census Handbook 2011:25-26).

### **2.3. Evolution of Darjeeling**

The history of Darjeeling is mostly found in treaties, travelogues and penned accounts of scholars and civil servants like Hooker, Edgar, O'Malley, Dozey, Dash, Risley and others. All of them have clearly pointed out that Darjeeling was initially a part of Sikkim. The history of the region is marked by frequent wars between Sikkim, Nepal, Bhutan and the East India Company. According to Dash (2011:37) the Gorkhas of Nepal were expanding their territory and they started to enter eastwards into the kingdom of Sikkim since 1780's. Soon the Gorkhas occupied almost every fort, monastery and administrative units in Sikkim and expanded their territory upto the south and west of river Tista (Kar 2012:12), which comprised of three sub-divisions of the present day Darjeeling district namely, Darjeeling, Kurseong and Siliguri (Bomjan 2008:1).

The Gorkhas were also expanding their territory in the far western southern regions. They had conquered Kumaon and Garhwal in 1893 and 1894 respectively. The British administration was not happy with the Gorkha conquests as it was severely disturbing their entire northern frontiers (O'Malley 1999:19). Lord Hastings considering the severity of the situation with the fear of being pushed out of India by the Gorkhas declared a war against them from five sides of their frontiers. Nepal was finally defeated by General Ochterlony in 1815 (Pradhan 2009:153, Subba 2008:53).

After the war, the Treaty of Segauli was signed between the British and the Nepalese (Bomjan 2008:1). According to the terms and conditions of the treaty the defeated Nepalese had to surrender the entire land tract between Mechi to river Tista to the British East India Company, the area covering 4,000 square miles which the Nepalese had formerly annexed from Sikkim (Chatterji 2006:211). The British through the Treaty of Titalya in 1917, restored the annexed areas to the Raja of Sikkim and 'guaranteed his sovereignty'. Through this Sikkim was made a buffer state between Nepal and Bhutan (Dash 2011:37). Under this treaty the Raja was to refer to arbitration of the British government for any war between Sikkim and Nepal or any other neighbouring country. By signing all these agreements the British gained superior power over the kingdom of Sikkim (O'Malley:19).

In 1829, ten years from the signing of the treaty there was a conflict in the border between Sikkim and Nepal. This was referred to the British Governor General. Captain Lloyd and J.W. Grant, the commercial resident of Malda were sent to solve the problem. Lloyd visited the "old Goorka station called Dorjeling" in February 1829 and stayed there for six days. It was through this visit that he was attracted with the climatic condition and location of Darjeeling hills. Lloyd and Grant wrote to Lord William Bentick regarding the strategic benefits of the frontier region particularly for establishing a sanitarium and for controlling the entrance between Nepal and Bhutan. Captain Herbert who was the Surveyor-General was directed to study the feasibility the region for starting these projects. His positive feedback about the region was approved by the Board of Directors. Soon, Lloyd was deputed to open negotiation with the Raja of Sikkim. On 1<sup>st</sup> February 1835, Darjeeling was ceded by the Raja of Sikkim to the British through the deed of grant (ibid 1999:20-21).



Darjeeling as a part of Sikkim was “entirely under forest and practically inhabited” (Dash 2011:49). In 1836, General Lloyd and Dr. Chapman came to Darjeeling to study the region. During their visit they found that there were “only few huts which were recently erected by the Raja of Sikkim” (O’Malley 1999:21) and it was estimated to have been inhabited by “100 souls” (ibid: 35). Chatterji (2006:212) supports the argument that in 1835 when Darjeeling covering an area of 357.4 square kilometers was ceded to the British it was “covered with forest and barely 20 resident families”.

Local scholars and leaders like Kumar Pradhan, S.W. Ladenla, I.B. Rai, R.B. Rai among others do not accept the above mentioned viewpoint. Pradhan argues that the 100 souls was the population of the present day Observatory hills and does not include the entire district. Ladenla talks of the ruins of monastery which was destroyed by Gorkhas when they made an inroad to Darjeeling in 1788. The monastery must have been built for performing the religious rituals of an adequate number of worshippers. R.B. Rai the leader of the Communist Party of Revolutionary Marxist (CPRM) is of the opinion that the British wanted to acquire Darjeeling from the king of Sikkim by showing the region to be was a remote, inhabited and unsuitable place for revenue generation (Bomjan 2008:4-5).

According to Chatterji (2006:210) Darjeeling “is the creation of nineteenth century”. By now it has a recorded history of almost two centuries. The region since then has witnessed various socio-economic and political transformations. The period after the cession of Darjeeling in 1835, marks the beginning of British rule in the region. In 1836, General Lloyd and Dr. Chapman were commissioned to develop Darjeeling. They started off with road construction from Darjeeling to Siliguri via Pankhabari. Two hotels, one at Kurseong and another one at Darjeeling were built for the visitors. Almost thirty private houses were set up by 1840. The Sikkimese king had banned his subjects from going to Darjeeling to help the British in establishing the new settlement. The region was practically uninhabited and one of the major problem faced by the administration was they could not attract the native settlers. In 1839, Dr. Campbell, the member of the Indian Medical Service was sent to Darjeeling as the Superintendent of the new colony. He took every effort and encouraged the people to reclaim the forest lands and settle down in Darjeeling. The population of

Darjeeling increased from 100 in 1839 to 10,000 by 1849. Most of the settlers came from the neighbouring states of Sikkim, Bhutan and Nepal (O'Malley 1999:22).

Dr. Campbell played a crucial role in developing the hill town. By 1952 almost 70 European houses were built with better road connectivity, market, jail, Hill Corps and a sanatorium for the sick people. He started a simple institution of justice and prohibited the system of forced labour which was very much prevalent in the states of Sikkim, Bhutan and Nepal then. He also introduced the experimental cultivation of tea, coffee and other European fruits and vegetables. Under his supervision the administration was successful in collecting annual revenue of 50,000 rupees (ibid:23). The Raja of Sikkim was given a grant of 3,000 rupees initially and it was later increased to 6,000 by 1846 (Kar 2012:17).

The relationship between the British and Sikkimese authority was satisfactory but with the introduction of a free institutions in Darjeeling made it a significant region. The Sikkimese Prime Minister Namguay was unhappy with these developments in Darjeeling and infected with jealousy. As a consequence, he created trouble for the British subjects by kidnapping them and sold them into slavery. Peak was reached when Dr. Campbell and the British botanist Dalton Hooker were kidnapped in Sikkim in November 1849. This compelled the British administration to attack Sikkim and annex the Terai region in 1850. The annual grant to the Raja of Sikkim was also cancelled. Siliguri covering an area of 640 square miles was ceded by the British. This annexation was beneficial for the British as it brought their boundaries with Nepal in its west, Bhutan in the east and also connected Darjeeling with their southern districts of Jalpaiguri and Purnea (O'Malley 1999:23-25).

Since 1856 the tea cultivation was started in Darjeeling hills in an extensive and commercial scale. The first tea gardens came up in Alubari and Lebong. By 1870 there were 56 tea gardens in the region (Dash 2011:113). By 1874 there were 113 tea gardens in Darjeeling district and according to the Census of 1901 two third of the inhabitants of the district were engaged in tea plantation (Chatterji 2006:212). In 1864, cinchona plantation was started in an extensive manner in Rangbi valley and it was gradually extended to Riyang valley. In 1887 the plantation was started in Sittong and Mangpu. By 1947 there were 13,507 people residing in cinchona plantations (Dash 2011:140,144).

During the early 1860's, the Bhutanese were creating lot of problems in the British frontiers on the eastern side. They were involved in killing innocent people and captivating them. As a consequence the English attacked and took over the Bhutanese fort of Duars in January 1865. Kalimpong and Duars which were part of Bhutan were ceded by the British for a subsidy. In 1866, Kalimpong was added into the Darjeeling district and the present district of Darjeeling came into existence. It was from this moment onwards that the march of progress and civilization began in the region (O'Malley 1999:27).

Darjeeling also witnessed a massive development in the field of education during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Christian missionaries played a crucial role in fostering educational institutions in the district. Many schools were set up in the hill towns for educating the children of Europeans and Anglo-Indians. Some of the important schools for them were Loreto Convent founded in 1846, St. Paul's School which was shifted to Darjeeling from Calcutta in 1864, St. Joseph's School established in 1888, Mount Hermon, Goethals Memorial School, Dr. Graham's Homes among the others. Schools were also started for the local students. The Darjeeling Government High School was established in around 1860 and a Tibetan Boarding School was started in 1874 (O'Malley 1999). The Scottish missionary William MacFarlane, a Scottish missionary started vernacular education in the hills in 1869 (Dash 2011:265) and opened schools across the district. The introduction of formal education brought developments in the field of literature, mass media, politics and socio-cultural institutions.

Gilander Arbuthnot and Company under the stewardship of Franklin Prestage started the construction of the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway in 1881. The primary objective of railway was transportation of tea and timber to the ports (Lama 2007). In 1897, the first hydropower plant of Asia was constructed by Kilburn and Company in Sidrapong in Darjeeling (Bomjan 2008:37). The region also witnessed development in the field of health care, theatre, entertainment, parks and botanical gardens and sports like cricket, football, polo, horse race etc. Darjeeling by the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century had received all the urban amenities. There were schools which were based on British models, electricity, roads, public latrines and urinals, municipality, armed police force, railways, post and telegraph and so forth. Darjeeling became the sanctuaries for the British and it replicated the European town settlement (Sarkar 2006).

#### **2.4. Development of Gorkha Society in Darjeeling**

Gorkhas or Indian Nepalis who were settled in Darjeeling district started to press for education by the beginning of the twentieth century. They perceived that their community could develop and prosper only if they were educated. In the process they started to develop the Nepali language through the publication of newspapers, journals, books, establishment of libraries, associations, debating societies, theatres, plays and so forth (Chalmers 2009). The writing culture had developed among the Gorkhas in the latter half of the eighteenth century. The first writings were in the form of *Sawais* and *Lahiris*. *Sawais* were narrative poetic composition in a particular folk metrical rhythm” written by the soldiers about wars and their life. These soldiers were recruited into the British Army after the Anglo-Gorkha war of 1815 and they were mostly stationed in Assam. The *Lahiris* were popular songs which represented waves of feelings or emotions and were penned by the Indian Nepalis working in the tea gardens since 1856. Unlike in Nepal or Kashi, in Darjeeling the Nepali writing was not started by high caste Brahmans but it was developed by the mongoloids who were either soldiers or labourers (Rai 1994:152).

During the twentieth century formal education, socio-cultural institutions and civil society started to develop in Darjeeling hills. This period marked the beginning of development in the field of Nepali literature. Many books, newspapers, journals started being published in Darjeeling. The *Gorkhe Khabar Khagat* and *Chandrika* the popular weekly Nepali journals edited by Gangaprasad Pradhan and Parasmani Pradhan respectively started to be published and circulated among the masses. By the beginning of twentieth century many members of the hill society were learning to read and write. The hill community started to become self aware, sophisticated and was concerned at its perceived backwardness in comparison to other Indian groups. The literate section of society appealed for inclusion of Nepali language in schools and universities and in 1907, the representatives of the Hill People demanded for separation of Darjeeling district and Dooars from the province of Bengal. The elite section of the hill society started building a new form of society and sought to reshape the models of authority (Chalmers 2009). Darjeeling started to emerge as the centre of socio-politico consciousness for the Nepalis.

In 1918, Calcutta University recognised Nepali as a vernacular subject and the schools also started to teach Nepali by 1919. In the early 1920's, Parasmani Pradhan was appointed as the Nepali teacher in Scottish Universities Mission Institution in Kalimpong. After two years he was promoted to the post of Sub Inspector of Schools of Darjeeling hills. Similarly, Dharanidhar Koirala and Suryavikram Jnnawli also joined the Darjeeling Government High School to teach Nepali. The endeavour to promote the Nepali language brought *SuDaPa* (Suryavikram, Dharanidhar and Parasmani) together. It was under the direction of the trio that Nepali Sahitya Sammelan was also formed in 1924. Parasmani Pradhan had published more than thirty books and translated fifteen books by 1940's. The advancement of Nepali language and education was one way of broader struggle for recognition of the Gorkha community and culture (Chalmers 2009).

Libraries were seen as the cornerstone for the formation of a civil society. It was also the place for organising debates and discussions. The Nepalis were inspired by British Planter's Association and their debating culture for bringing social reforms. Considering such significance of libraries the first Gorkha Library was established on 8<sup>th</sup> June 1913, at Kurseong. This library was initially a reading club that was set up in the house of a Lepcha named J. Paval with the help of his friends. In 1919, the new building of the Gorkha library was constructed with the financial help from the local philanthropist Sardar Bahadur Lama and the Kurseong Municipality. Chandrika, the local weekly also campaigned for fundraising of the library. British civil servant H. Quinton chaired the inauguration ceremony of the library that was initiated by a Lepcha and in the program a Nepali and a Bhutia boy wearing their traditional attires presented him with songs, garland of flowers and silk scarf. This gesture was an expression of inclusiveness among the Lepchas, Bhutias and the Nepalis to promote the first Gorkha library (Chalmers 2009:129-131).

Darjeeling also started to emphasize on theatres and dramas with a view of imparting social message in the form of entertainment and educating the wider general masses. In 1909, the Gorkha National Theatrical Company staged the first modern Nepali play *Atalbahadur* written by Pahalmansingh Swanr in the Darjeeling Hindu Public Hall. In 1908, the Children Amusement Association (CAA) was founded and in 1916 this association was clubbed with the Himalayan Amusement Association and it was called the Himalayan and Children Amusement Association.

Cultural and charitable organisation known as the Gorkha Dukha Nivarak Sammelan (GDNS) was also established in Darjeeling in 1932 by Dhanvir Mukhiya. The poor and the destitute were to benefit from this organisation. GDNS became a centre for Nepali theatrical production and a major foundation of Nepalis in India (Chalmers 2009:130).

According to Subba (1992:27) Nepali language was most commonly used by the three hill communities namely the Bhutia, Lepcha and Nepalis for communication and this fundamental language laid the foundation of hill ethnicity. The Nepalis started to demand for Nepali as a medium of instruction in schools since the early 1920's, the government appointed a committee to review their demand and this was opposed by S.W. Ladenla and Dr. Yenshing Lepcha. This resulted in an internal faction between the three hill communities. In order to resolve the internal problem of the three communities and to reunite them, S.W. Ladenla formed the Hill People's Social Union on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1934. The union aimed at maintaining the fraternal relationship among the three hill communities and also aspired to promote their social development. On 9<sup>th</sup> February 1935, the union started a monthly magazine called the 'Nebula', the term which was constructed by taking the first initials of the three hill communities namely the Nepalis, Bhutias and the Lepchas. The magazine was intended to strengthen the sense of unity and fraternity among these three hill communities and also to make Nepali language as the medium of communication among them. Since then the Nepalis, Bhutias and Lepchas accepted the common ethnic term "Gorkha" and accepted "Nepali" as their language (Samanta 2000:83).

Gorkha society is a caste based society. There are various caste categories within it. The Sharmas are the Brahmins, Chettris are the Kshatriyas while groups like Pradhans, Limbus, Gurungs, Tamangs, Rais, Yolmos, Thapas are considered to be the Vaishyas. Kami, Damais and Sarkis form the last caste in the order. However, it is also to be noted that along with the Gorkhas other communities like the Lepchas who are considered to be original aborigines of Darjeeling hills along with Bhutias, Sherpas and other communities lives in Darjeeling district. These groups have been given the status of Schedule Tribes by the Government of India and groups like the Tamangs and Subbas or Limbus have also been given the same status. These ST groups along with the Schedule Caste groups like Damai, Kami and Sarki also enjoy reservation rights according to the Indian Constitution. Groups like Rais, Thapas,

Pradhans, Dewans are given the Other Backwards Classes status and they also do benefit from the reservation policy of the government.

Below the Caste structure of the Nepalis has been given:

<u>Status</u>	<u>Caste</u>	<u>Traditional Occupation</u>	
High	Brahman	Upadhyaya	Priesthood
		Jaisi	Agriculture
	Chhetri	Thakuri (Jharra)	Warriors
		Chhetri (Non-Jharra)	
Middle	Newar, Rai, Limbu, Tamang, Yakha, Gurung, Mangar, Jogi, Bhujel, Sunwar, Yolmu etc.	Mainly agriculturists, except Newars who are in business.	
Low	Sunar	Gold smithy	
	Kami	Iron smithy	
	Sarki	Cobbling	
	Damai	Music	

Figure 2.1. Caste Structure of Gorkha Society (Subba 1985:74-75).

The hill caste structure of Nepal can be equated with that of Darjeeling with few exceptions. Some of the caste groups have changed their titles for instance the Brahmans are called Sharmas, Newars are called Pradhans, Limbus as Subbas, Yakhas as Dewans, Kamis as Biswakarmas and so forth.

The second difference among the Nepalis of Nepal and Darjeeling is the attire. The Nepalis of Darjeeling or those living in India are hardly seen wearing their traditional dress the 'daura suruwal' and 'chaubandi cholo' or 'pharia' unlike those in Nepal. The intonation is also different. The Nepalis of Nepal have long and twisting intonation while those from Darjeeling have intonation close to English or Hindi.

These socio-cultural developments and alterations have occurred over a long span of time (Subba 1985:74-75).

However, it is to be noted that in Nepal different caste groups inhabit in specific areas and also have the name of the place named after it. The same is also found in Darjeeling like there is Limbu Busty, Bhotey goan, Lepcha busty but at present people from other caste are also living there side by side. The caste system in Nepal is orthodox and rigid while it is flexible in Darjeeling. When the population began to grow in Darjeeling in the second half of the nineteenth century then many Nepalese came from Nepal to Darjeeling to work in tea gardens, army and other construction sectors. They began to live and work side by side since the very beginning under the Colonial British rule. Therefore, the caste distance is not followed visibly in the region. There were cases of *anuloma* and *pratiloma*, the marriage between high and low caste brides and grooms. In this regard the society was quite flexible and accommodative.

## **2.5. Evolution of Gorkhaland Movement: Historical Context**

Most of the written documents trace the origin of the Gorkhaland movement in the colonial era. In 1906, the British government decided to enforce reforms in India known as the Minto Morley Reforms. Under this provision the government wanted to engage more locals in the legislative affairs. Consequently in 1907, representatives of the hill people comprising of prominent Lepcha, Bhutia and Nepali leaders submitted a memorandum to the British administration demanding a separate administrative set up for Darjeeling hills outside Bengal (Bomjan 2008: 76-77, Bagchi 2012:23, Pempahishey 2013:6, Sarkar 2013:43). Although their plea was dismissed, the submission of the memorial is regarded as the genesis of Gorkhaland movement (Shrestha 2013:21). Again in the year 1909, the leaders of the Hill People submitted a memorandum to the Government with a demand for setting up separate arrangements for Darjeeling (Samanta 2000).

The leaders or representative of hill people who were demanding a separate administrative unit for Darjeeling turned into a concrete body known as the Hillmen's Association, to place their demand more effectively (Bomjan 2008:79). On 8<sup>th</sup> November 1917, the Hillmen Association comprising of the leaders of the hill people again submitted a memorandum to the Chief Secretary, Government of Bengal and



the Viceroy (Bomjan 2008:77, GJMM Report 2009:4). This was done a year before the Montagu Chelmsford Report was prepared which commanded reforms in the self-governing institutions of the country. This time the hill leaders proposed separation of Darjeeling district along with Dooars region of Jalpaiguri district and requested for a distinct local government for them. In the memorial the leaders conveyed the accidental inclusion of Darjeeling district into Bengal and also expressed differences between the hill and plain communities in terms of their educational qualifications, socio-cultural, economic, historical, racial, regional and linguistic attributes. Unfortunately their demands were unheard.

According to Bagchi (2012) Hillmen's Association was an organisation which was dominated by the tea planters and they put forward the historical, ethnic and cultural differences between the Gorkhas and the Bengalis. In March 1920 the Hillmen's Association jointly with Darjeeling Planter's Association and the European Association held a meeting to collectively fight for separation of Darjeeling and Dooars from Bengal (Subba 1992). Samanta (2000) advocates the Hillmen's Association was assaying a rupture between the hills and the plains and in this regard the Kalimpong Samity led by Sardar Bahadur Bhindal Dewan and People's Association of Darjeeling headed by Parasmani Pradhan submitted a memorandum in 1920, opposing the exclusion of Darjeeling district from the Reforms of 1919, which was perceived to result in further backwardness of the region. Dalbahadur Giri who had set up the Congress party in 1918 in Darjeeling hills also opposed the demand of the Hillmen's Association (Bagchi 2012, Bomjan 2008:79). These groups believed in the constitutional reforms and preferred to stay within Bengal (Pempahishey 2013:6-7).

The relationship between the three hill communities began to degenerate in the early 1920's when the Nepalis of Darjeeling began to demand for Nepali as a medium of instruction in schools. The Bhutias and Lepchas felt excluded and they opposed this demand of the Nepalis. The Nepalis were basically making such demands because in 1920, the Indian National Congress in its Nagpur Session had declared that in the independent India the new provinces would be formed on the basis of language. The Government set up a commission to analyse the demand of the Nepalis and in 1927, Nepali was made the medium of instruction in the schools. The problem between the Nepalis, Bhutias and Lepchas was sorted out with the formation of Hill

People's Social Union in December 1934 under the leadership of S.W. Ladenla. It was at this point that the Lepchas, Bhutias and the Nepalis reaffirmed their unity and accepted 'Gorkha' as their common ethnicity and 'Nepali' as their mother tongue (Samanta 2000).

In 1930, the Hillmen's Association along with Gurkha Officer's Association and Gurkha Library submitted a joint memorandum to Sir Samuel Hoare, Secretary for State for India, demanding separate administration for Darjeeling district. Their plea was not given any attention and became futile. In between 1930 to 1932, three Round Table Conferences were held in London. The Government of India (GoI) Act 1935 was based on the discussions of these conferences (Bomjan 2008). According to this Act, Darjeeling district was made an 'Excluded Area' and finally made 'Partially Excluded Area' in 1936 (Pempahishey 2013).

Historically, Darjeeling was a under the general regulation system of administration from 1861 till 1870. However, due to the backward regional identity of the hill people Darjeeling was notified as 'Non-Regulation District' and included in the category of 'Backward Tract' through the Act of 1870 and the region was again made a 'Schedule District' through the Act of 1874. Again in 1919, the 'Schedule District' was renamed as 'Backward Tract'. In 1930's the Simon Commission recommended to use the term 'Excluded Area' or 'Partially Excluded Area' instead of 'Backward Tract'. Accordingly, through the GoI Act 1936, Darjeeling district was brought under the 'Partially Excluded Areas'. Under the above mentioned varying legal arrangements, the regulations which were meant for Bengal Province was not applicable in Darjeeling district. Separate regulations were made by the Governor General for Darjeeling district. The GoI Act 1935, called for representative government in the provincial levels and in 1937, Provincial Assembly elections were held in Bengal and Darjeeling also participated in the elections by sending an elected member to the Assembly. Since then Darjeeling district lost its exclusive administrative system and was included in the Bengal Province (ibid).

In October 1934, the Hillmen's Association with a last hope submitted a memorandum to Sir Samuel Hoare and Sir Anderson the then Governor of Bengal where they emphasized that "the district of Darjeeling should be totally excluded from Bengal by creation of an Independent Administrative Unit with an administrator at the

head of the area assisted by an Executive Council representative of all interest in the area and the areas should be placed directly under the Central Government, the Governor of Bengal acting as an agent to the Governor-General. No Legislation passed by the Central Government should apply to the areas unless certified by the Administrator in consultation with his Executive Council (Bomjan 2008:80). In between the years 1907 to 1935, the demand for separate administrative unit for Darjeeling and Dooars was placed by the hill elites and till then their demands were not taken by any political party.

The first ever elections in Darjeeling was held in the year 1937, where Darjeeling had to send a representative in the Bengal Assembly (Pempahishey 2013). There were four contestants from Darjeeling namely, Sonam Wangfel Ladenla, Gyantshering Sitling, Rai Sahib Hari Prasad Pradhan and Damber Singh Gurung. The first three candidates were in favour of separate administrative set up for Darjeeling district and Dooars. They were also the members of Hillmen's Association and signatories of different memorandums which the association had submitted to the government. Ladenla was the first Nepali speaking Superintendent of Police and he was also an ambassador to Lhasa in the British government, Rai Sahib was a renowned personality in Darjeeling during those days, Gyantshering Sitling was a well known social activist and D.S. Gurung was the first Nepali advocate. Unfortunately, Ladenla passed away before the elections. The first ever elections was won by D.S. Gurung. After the death of Ladenla and with the start of electoral process in the hills the unity of hill leaders for demanding separate administrative unit was crushed (Bomjan 2008).

Sarkar (2012) argues that the British colonisers in order to enjoy and exploit the resources of the region introduced the feeling of differences between the inhabitants of the district. They differentiated between the hill and plain people, their cultures and created a kind of animosity between these groups. He is of the opinion that the hill communities were encouraged by the British administration to demand for separate administrative set up by forging an idea of differences. The hill people of Darjeeling therefore, started to 'wall off' from the others of the plains and 'wall in' under the British administration, unwittingly supporting their colonial rule.

In March 1943, the Hillmen's Association was no longer active. Therefore, this association was renamed as All India Nepali, Bhutia and Lepcha Association. Rupnarayan Sinha was made the Secretary of the new association. Unfortunately, Sinha who was a busy lawyer could not give much attention to it. Gradually, the members of the group started to disengage from it. On May 1943, the association was renamed as All India Gorkha League (AIGL) and Damber Singh Gurung was made its president. It is also to be noted that AIGL was founded by Thakur Chandan Singh in Dehradun in February 1924. Its objective was to engage the Gorkhas living across India to engage in the national movement and to integrate the Gorkhas in the national mainstream. AIGL soon spread across the country in the states of North West Frontier to Assam and from Bengal to Bombay (Bomjan 2008).

On 1<sup>st</sup> February 1944, Damber Singh Gurung submitted a memorandum to the Viceroy Wavell directing the protection of the minorities in the future federation of India and recognizing the Gorkhas as a community in India (Subba 1992). Just before independence Rupnarayan Sinha came up with the idea of separating Darjeeling district from Bengal under the Chief Commissioner's Province. However, it was opposed by AIGL. The last Bengal Provincial elections under the British took place in 1946 and this time two seats, one for general constituency and another for labour constituency was given to Darjeeling. Damber Singh Gurung with the support from Congress won the general constituency seat and Ratanlal Brahmin popularly known as *Maila Bajey* won in the labour constituency (Bomjan 2008). During the time of independence, AIGL proposed two alternatives for Darjeeling district. The first one was to join Darjeeling along with Dooars with Assam and create a separate province and second was forming a new province by joining the districts of Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri with the states of Cooch Behar and Sikkim. While the Darjeeling district committee of Communist Party of India (CPI) in 1947 under the leadership of Ratanlal Brahmin and Ganeshlal Subba demanded Gorkhasthan, an independent nation comprising of Nepal, Darjeeling and southern Sikkim (Samanta 2000).

The demands placed by both AIGL and CPI were not given any heed. Sadly, Damber Singh Gurung, the legislator who was also the signatory of the Indian Constitution along with Aribahadur Gurung as representatives of Indian Nepalis passed away in April 1948. After his death, AIGL under the leadership of Randhir Shah placed a demand for Uttarkhand Pradesh, a federal Indian state comprising of

Darjeeling district, Sikkim, Jalpaiguri and Cooch Behar. Unfortunately, this plea was also unaccepted by the then Home Minister Sardar Ballavbhai Patel. After independence the first generation leadership of AIGL faded away and the party was led by Deo Prakash Rai from 1952 to 1980. He was the first Gorkha to occupy the post of a Cabinet Minister in West Bengal Assembly in 1967. He was twice made the Cabinet Minister of the state and by then the demand of separate administrative set up had transformed into the demand of autonomous council. He did not demand the council in vigorous manner but was more into pleasing the state leadership. The leaders of Darjeeling hills from 1950's to 1980's were fighting for two issues namely the autonomous status for Darjeeling district and Dooars and recognition of Nepali language as one of the official languages of India (Bomjan 2008).

The most organised and violent demand for Gorkhaland was made by the Kalimpong based organisation called Pranta Parishad and the Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF) led by Subash Ghishing, a Darjeeling based political party in the early 1980's. The GNLF soon took over the demand of Gorkhaland exclusively due to the weak organisational structure of Pranta Parishad. The GNLF began the movement for Gorkhaland with the declaration of eleven point agendas in a meeting held at Ghoom on 13<sup>th</sup> March 1986. Some of the agendas included hoisting Black Flag on 13<sup>th</sup> April 1986, as a mark of discrimination against the Indian Nepalis, burning the report of the State Reorganisation Committee as an expression of protest for non-incorporation of Nepali as the official language of India which prohibited the formation of state for the Indian Nepalis and merged Darjeeling hills with West Bengal. The activists also declared that in their next demonstration they would burn the Article 7 of the Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship 1950, which troubled the identity issue of the Indian Nepalis as the Treaty did not differentiate between the Indian Nepalis and the citizens of Nepal in a precise manner. One of the agenda also stressed on boycotting the Parliamentary and State Assembly elections and so forth (Subba 1992, Ganguly 2005).

According to Ganguly (2005) in order to strengthen the movement 72 hours strike was called in Darjeeling by the GNLF from 12<sup>th</sup> May till 14<sup>th</sup> May 1986. The GNLF organised a meeting in Kurseong on 24<sup>th</sup> May 1986 with a motive to burn the Article 7 of the Indo-Nepal Treaty of 1950. It was here that the police fired guns and took lives of five demonstrators. In response to this event the GNLF activists attacked

the police station in Kalimpong. In the dispute between the activists and police, fourteen lives were taken which included 13 activists and one policeman.

Subba (1992:123) argues that massive violence broke out from 1986 to 1988 in Darjeeling hills including the Terai and Dooars. There were frequent fights between the GNLF activists, the police, Central Reserve Police Forces (CRPF) and the Communist cadres. According to Samanta (2000) as the movement turned violent houses of both the GNLF and Communists were burnt down, government buildings were destroyed, police raid, opening and ambush killing became very common. The tourism and tea industry, the main economic backbone of the region came to a standstill and the local people were badly affected by the strike of forty days.

Subba (1992) opines that the CPI (M) led government of West Bengal was blaming the Congress for backing the Gorkhaland movement while the Congress was charging the Left led government for enticing regionalism in the hills. The CPI (M) termed the movement 'anti-national' and the Congress under Rajiv Gandhi announced that it was not in favour of division of Bengal. The Congress party of West Bengal blamed the then Chief Minister of Sikkim Nar Bahadur Bhandari for secretly financing the movement and pointed at Dawa Narbula, the Congress leader of Darjeeling for fetching the cadres for the movement.

The worsening condition of Darjeeling hills along with the circulation of information that Ghishing had send letters seeking help from the king of Nepal and Heads of other nations like America, United Kingdom, China, France and others compelled Buta Singh the then Home Minister of India to invite GNLF for a dialogue. Finally dialogues between the Centre, State and GNLF started to take place from September 1987 and continued for another ten months. It was on 10<sup>th</sup> July 1988 that GNLF accepted the proposal to accept the hill council plan for Darjeeling. Finally on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 1988, a tripartite agreement was signed between the GNLF, West Bengal Government and the Centre and Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC) an autonomous hill council was granted to Darjeeling hills. Under this agreement the GNLF withdrew the demand for Gorkhaland, abandoned all insurgent activities and the all the unauthorized weapons were surrendered to the state. DGHC had to render full co-operation to the state government for the socio-economic, cultural and

educational development of the Gorkhas residing in the Darjeeling district of West Bengal (Subba 1992; Ganguly 2005).

Sundas (2011) claims that as the DGHC did not have any executive powers for job recruitments there was an emerging crisis of job opportunities in Darjeeling hills. As the public started to get discontent the problems between the DGHC and West Bengal government began to emerge. As a consequence on 28<sup>th</sup> July 1997, Ghishing made a public announcement where he anticipated for opening a dialogue with the Centre for the separate state of Gorkhaland (Ganguly 2005). In course of time Ghishing became a tyrant and the masses started to feel betrayed. Moreover, the misuse of DGHC funds by the GNLFCouncillors created animosity among the public.

In 2000, the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) which was in power at the centre created three new states of Jharkhand, Uttaranchal and Chhattisgarh. The declaration of these new states obliged the GNLFC to restart the Gorkhaland movement. The GNLFC demanded the inclusion of DGHC under the Sixth Schedule of the Indian constitution from early 2005. On 5<sup>th</sup> December 2005, the Centre and the State agreed to grant the Sixth Schedule status to the DGHC but it had to be passed through an amendment of the Article 244 (2) of the Constitution before it was passed by the Parliament. The Parliamentary Standing Committee headed by Sushma Swaraj of BJP was dealing with the issue of Sixth Schedule for DGHC. While analysing the prospects of the Schedule for DGHC there was a growing resentment among the public against the implementation of the bill in Darjeeling hills. The main reason behind the discontent among the people was that the Sixth Schedule was basically designed for North Eastern states where the majority of the population were tribes and Darjeeling had a tribal population of 35 per cent only. The non-tribals feared that the implementation of the bill would be beneficial only for them. As a consequence the Standing Committee halted the amendment process of the bill (Bagchi 2012:89).

## **2.6. The Field view of Gorkhaland Movement under Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha: 2007 onwards**

Subash Ghishing who is often treated as the “Father of Gorkhaland Movement” had been administering the autonomous DGHC since 1988. The Communist Party of India (Marxist) was in power in the state then and Ghishing was then fighting for granting

Sixth Schedule status for Darjeeling. The DGHC elections were due in 2004 which was cancelled and Ghishing was appointed as the caretaker of the council until it was upgraded to Sixth Schedule area. There were political debates with regard to the issue of Sixth Schedule. This special administrative provision of the Indian Government was made particularly for the tribal states of North East India where majority of the population are tribes. People who were not tribes in their caste category started to become confused as they began to think that with the application of the new clause they would be deprived of many privileges like selling and buying of land which would be permissible only to the tribals. Therefore, the discontent group started to oppose Ghishing and the GNLF.

At the same time, Prashant Tamang a local boy from Darjeeling who was then serving in the West Bengal police department had participated in the Indian Idol, a singing reality show in Sony TV. When he was shown in the national entertainment television Gorkhas all across India and beyond started to support him through SMS' as the rule of the game was whosoever, received the highest number of votes would be declared the winner of the show. At that point of time some fans of Prashant Tamang communicated with Ghishing for some financial help to the local singer. But Ghishing was not interested to support him as he was in Thailand then. This caused among the masses a feeling of a dislike for their leader Ghishing. At this juncture Bimal Gurung who was earlier an aide of Ghishing and often referred as a henchman or right hand of Ghishing came forward to support the singer boy.

The boy received so much support from the Gorkhas across the world that he eventually won the show. Rallies were held in Darjeeling and other places inhabited by the Gorkhas. Gorkhas living in foreign countries including people from Nepal started to support the Gorkha singer in a massive way. The coming of Gorkhas together for making the Indian Idol from their own community showcased the unity and strength of Gorkhas. This group which was mobilised for making the Indian Idol was capitalised by Bimal Gurung to spearhead the movement for separate statehood. After Prashant Tamang was declared the Indian Idol the very next day Nitin, a Delhi based Radio Jockey of 93.5 Red FM commented in Hindi that "*Nepaliko Indian Idol baba diya ab Hamara ghar, Mahalla ka Chowkidari Kaun Karega*" meaning "Nepali has been made an Indian Idol now who would guard our houses and establishments" (Bomjan 2008:167). . This comment pierced the emotional sentiment of the Gorkhas



and their identity in an enormous manner. Gorkhas perceived themselves to be more than '*chowkidars*' or guards. The status and class of guard is not very much acceptable to the modern educated Gorkhas they are seeking to be at par with people of other communities in almost every field. RJ Nitesh's comment was opposed nation-wide by the Nepali speaking Indians and the RJ had to apologise for making such statements. But this comment became a political tool for GJMM to argue as how the mainland Indian treats the Gorkhas.

After Prashant Tamang won the Sony TV reality show, his victory rallies were organised in many places by his fans. In Siliguri also the Nepalis had organised a victory rally. As the Tamang fans rally was proceeding from Darjeeling Moore towards Venus Moore there was a clash between the Nepalis and Bengalese. One of the informants, who was an eye witness of that incident told that a group of Nepali boys moved out of the rally and went towards a momo vendor. There they had verbal fight with other fellow customers who were Bengalese. This group of Nepali youths called other Nepali participants of the rally and the ethnic clash between the Nepalese and the Bengalese began in Siliguri resulting in anti-Nepali outburst in the area. The Nepalis who were living in Siliguri then had a tough time as they were minority there, they were attacked in many places and many out of fear of the aggressive forces did not come outside their homes for several days. Many hill students who were studying in Siliguri were escorted by the police to their homes in the hills.

Soon, on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2007, a new political party Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha was formed by Bimal Gurung in Darjeeling. His very first speech in the taxi stand of Darjeeling was on Gorkhaland and revival of its demand. In the speech he personified Gorkhaland as 'Äma' the Mother who was captured by the Bengal Government and imprisoned in the Writers Building in Kolkata. Bimal Gurung promised the public that he would shot himself on his forehead if Gorkhaland would not be achieved by 10<sup>th</sup> March 2010. He was able to influence lot many people and motivate them to join his party, as most of the people were dissatisfied with Ghishing's administration and his attitude. In the beginning almost all the hills came forward to support Gurung. Gradually Ghishing was chased from Darjeeling in the early months of 2008 and made to live in the plains of Jalpaiguri and Siliguri. Hatred towards Ghishing's has been so much that even when his wife died, her dead body was not allowed to enter

the hills for cremation. GJMM soon became very powerful and the demand for Gorkhaland re-spearheaded for the second time but this time it was under Gurung.

GJMM also started to recruit young boys and girls into their self organised trained group called the Gorkhaland Personnel's (GLP). They were given arm training by the retired army officers affiliated to the GJMM. Colonel Ramesh Alley was a major figure in organising and training these youths. The GLP main training centre was located in Tribeni, a place where Tista and Rangeet confluence in the area between the Darjeeling - Kalimpong district (formerly sub-divisional areas) and Sikkim border. At Tribeni, Subash Ghishing during the DGHC period had established a huge tourist centre and this building was used by the GJMM to train their youths. Some of the respondents who had formerly served in the GLP told that they were also posted in Jamuney to work in the cowshed's owned by the GJMM supremo. They also told that they were asked to collect fodder for the livestock and punished when they failed to perform their duties. The punishment was mostly whipping in the back side of the body.

GLP for GJMM was their trained youths for doing social services and also to maintain law and order in the society. But this trained group was later viewed by the state to be GJMM youths who were given guerrilla warfare trainings and was considered it to be detrimental. The GLP was employed most effectively during the annual '*Krishi Mela*' or the fair for farmers held in the autumn or winter seasons. Few respondents did talk about the bossy and rude attitude of GLP. These trained youths were strict over lovers or unmarried couples. They did not allow the young unmarried lovers to misbehave in parks and other public places. They also raided food stalls and restaurants to stop the illegal selling of alcohol.

The officially revealed proposed map of Gorkhaland by GJMM includes Darjeeling, Kurseong, Kalimpong, Siliguri and Bhaktinagar in Darjeeling district and few areas of Dooars under Jalpaiguri district are also included. Areas like Malbazar, Chalsa, Nagrakot, Banarhat, Birpara, Madarhat, Jaigaon, Kalchini and Kumar Gram have also been cited in the proposed map of Gorkhaland by the GJMM.



Figure 2.2. Proposed Map of Gorkhaland

(Source:<https://mygorkhaland.wordpress.com/2008/05/23/proposed-map-of-gorkhaland/> accessed on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2016)

The party and the movement led by GJMM was said to be Gandhain and democratic in nature. People started to sit for hunger fasts for Gorkhaland. Initially the movement was very peaceful. People from different communities and religions started to perform prayers and other rituals for Gorkhaland. CPI (M) party was ruling West Bengal then and the government on seeing the growing demand of Gorkhaland decided to upgrade the powers and functions of DGHC. However, this was completely unaccepted by GJMM. ‘Padyatra’ or the long distance rallies was organised by GJMM as a part of the movement. These rallies began from hills and gradually entered the plains of Jalpaiguri district where Nepali population was living. GJMM was basically trying to mobilise the Nepalis living in the plains of Dooars and also trying to demarcate the region that was to be the proposed area for the state of Gorkhaland. The strategy used by the GJMM in their first round of the movement was wearing traditional clothes. The males were advised to wear their traditional Nepali attire “*daura suruwal*” and “*dhaka topi*” while the female folks were to dress in “*choubondi cholo*” or “*fariya*” while visiting market places. Even the college students who used to attend college in casual dresses were told to attend the colleges in traditional clothes. Those who did not comply with the order was painted black face

and treated like an anti-Gorkhaland foe. This was done to express and inform the tourists visiting the region that the Gorkhas are different from the rest of Bengal. Many people did follow the orders while there were many who disliked and opposed this idea. The Bharatiya Gorkha Parisangh (BGP) was against this idea of GJMM. The BGP argued that the union as well as the state government had not put a ban on the traditional attire of Nepalis but the need was for critical political representation of the Gorkhas and the need for a separate state.

The next strategy was replacing the word West Bengal by Gorkhaland in sign boards as seen in the highways, public properties and buildings including in the signboards of private business enterprise, hotels, schools and others. Along with the changing of signboards the vehicle number plates was changed from WB representing West Bengal to GL meaning Gorkhaland. All the vehicles plying in the region was told to change their vehicle number plates. The drivers did change the number plates but in Siliguri and also in Sikkim those vehicles with GL numbers were not allowed to ply. Therefore, the drivers had two number plates with them. GL number plate was used within Darjeeling and WB outside the region.

On 8<sup>th</sup> February 2011, as GJMM cadres along with Bimal Gurung was taking forward a foot rally towards Jaigaon from Gorubathan, there was a clash between the GJMM forces and the supporters of Akhil Bharat Adivasi Parishad (ABAP). GJMM forces wanted to penetrate the plains of Jalpaiguri but the ABAP a political organisation of the plain Adivasi tribal communities opposed their entry in their land. In the tussle, the police armed forces shot three Gorkha activists in a point zero range. This resulted in 9 days indefinite strike in Darjeeling hills. During this time the repercussion was the government guest houses and the public vehicles were burnt. The Left front government was being challenged and criticised from both the ends of North and South Bengal. In this period the Mamta led TMC seemed to be highly supportive of Bimal Gurung and Gorkhaland.

In the month of April 2008, the Gorkha retired army personals organised a peaceful rally in Siliguri. When the ex-servicemen were proceeding with their programme, a clash broke out between Nepalis and Bengalese. This ethnic clash was quite bloody in nature and lot many retired army personals involved in organising the rally were injured by the opposition forces, the armed forces and the police. This

called for another set of protests and destruction of government properties in the hilly region of Darjeeling. The Nepali Bengali ethnic tension was in the motion during that period.

As a part of the movement the GJMM following the Gandhism wanted to achieve “*Swaraj*” or “Self Rule” by non-cooperating with the state government. As a part of the movement the party had also announced that the people from Gorkhaland will not be paying electricity bills, telephone bills, motor vehicle taxes and others to the West Bengal government. These tactics was used by GJMM in the very first phase of the movement. The CPI (M) government of West Bengal then tried to console the leaders of the movement by expanding the roles and responsibilities of DGHC but it was not accepted in any amount by the GJMM.

In 2009, General Assembly elections were held and GJMM supported BJP as this party supported the idea of federalism and had created three separate states earlier. During the campaigning period BJP Member of the Parliament (MP) candidate Mr. Jaswant Singh visited Darjeeling along with the famous Bollywood Actress Mrs. Hima Malini. Singh who had earlier served in the Indian army opened his speech with “*Jai Jai Maa Kaali, AAyo Gorkhali*” meaning “Praise to Goddesses Kali, Here Comes the Gorkhali” a famous slogan used by the Gorkha regiment of the Indian army. Gorkhas who are world renowned for their bravery and warfare skills was made proud and delightful by the MP candidate. He supported the idea of Gorkhaland and his support for this idea made the public look determined in supporting him. BJP won the Lok Sabha seat from Darjeeling in 2009 and there was high hopes among the Gorkhas that their MP would fetch them Gorkhaland. Unfortunately, BJP could not gain power in the Centre. This was a major setback for the GJMM in demanding Gorkhaland movement.

In 2010, a very unfortunate incident occurred in Darjeeling. On 21<sup>st</sup> May 2010, Madan Tamang the President of the Akhil Bharatiya Gorkha League (ABGL) was allegedly murdered by the GJMM party members in an open daylight. Tamang has in his own interview said that he was a critique of any person or party who was selling the name of Gorkhaland and looking for chair in the political world. He along with his party members had assembled at Club Stand to see over the preparation of their next day’s programme which happened to be their foundation day. GJMM at the

same time had organised a procession with regard to Gorkhaland. Tamang was murdered in an open day light. Since Tamang was the only vocal opposition to GJMM, it was alleged that GJMM top leaders had hand in this murder. The reason behind this became much more promising when Madan Tamang's video interview was circulated widely after his death. Before his death Tamang had got an information from some source that Bimal Gurung and his GJMM was about to accept the autonomous interim package like the DGHC and settled down the issue of Gorkhaland by accepting it. He had promised to tell this secret of the GJMM to the public on the foundation day but he was killed before he could tell his last words to the public. This murder case where the top leaders of the GJMM have been booked later on in 2013 became handy for the state government to play an instrumental role for curbing the Gorkhaland movement.

The state legislative elections were to be held in 2011 and the CPI (M) government which was in power in Bengal since the 1970's was facing a tough challenge from Ms. Mamta Banerjee, who was earlier a Congress leader and a Cabinet Minister under the Unified Progressive Alliance (UPA) government but then had started her own political party, the Trinamool Congress (TMC). At that point of time the state government was facing political problems in Nandigram for acquiring the public land for setting up Salim Group of Chemical Industries in the Special Economic Zone (SEZ), there was tensions in Singur for construction of Tata Motors factory for making Nano cars in the agricultural plot and in Darjeeling for Gorkhaland. Insurgency and violence was gradually breaking up in these areas. State under the CPI (M) government had deployed police and armed forces in these areas. In Nandigram 14 civilians was shot dead by these state forces while three Gorkhaland activist were shot dead in zero range point in Shibusu in 2011 by these state deployed armed forces. In Singur, a teenager was burnt and many cases of rape was reported which were carried out by these defence forces. Ms. Banerjee and her party TMC mobilised the people with their motto "*Ma, Mati, Manush*" meaning 'Mother, Earth and People' and was soon the consoling face in these sensitive regions. She was also soft enough towards the leaders of GJMM including Bimal Gurung. It was accepted by the public that Ms. Banerjee and Gurung were almost like an elder sister and a younger brother which was locally referred as "*Didi Bhai*". Initially, they shared a very cordial fraternal relationship.

In April 2011, the state Bidhan Sabha elections were held and TMC party made a historic record by defeating the Communist party that had been ruling Bengal for over 30 years. GJMM's three MLA candidates from three hill sub-divisions of Darjeeling became victorious in the elections and joined the TMC ruling bench in the state legislature. Gorkhaland movement was initiated by the GJMM in 2007 while the CPI (M) was in power but with the coming of Banerjee in the state the movement lost its momentum as the ruling party of Darjeeling GJMM was earlier in support of TMC which was an anti-Communist political party.

Banerjee, the new Chief Minister (CM) of the state during her election campaigns had promised to solve the problems of Nandigram, Singur and Darjeeling after coming into power. When she became the CM she did give heed to these sensitive regions and tried to pacify by bringing '*Poriborton*' or development under TMC banner. She promised to turn the Maoist affected regions of Bengal into '*Jungle Mahal*' meaning palace in the forest, Kolkata into London and Darjeeling into Switzerland. People of Darjeeling hills became excited and had hopes that she would deliver justice to the Gorkhas by supporting the creation of Gorkhaland. When TMC came into power GJMM was called for discussions by the state and centre as well and at the end all the three parties came to an agreement of formation of new autonomous body with extended powers and functions.

On 18<sup>th</sup> August 2011, Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA) agreement was signed between the Centre, State and Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha. It was a semi-autonomous administrative body that replaced the DGHC. Some argued that Bimal Gurung was sold out but he and his party had the response that GTA was a temporal administrative arrangement, state within a state and first stepping stone towards the formation of Gorkhaland as it was clearly written in the GTA Pact that GJMM was accepting GTA as an interim body without dropping the demand of Gorkhaland unlike the former Gorkha leader Subash Ghising and GNLFF.

The relationship between the state and GJMM was good and friendly in the initial days. Mamta Banerjee became the most frequent Darjeeling visiting CM of Bengal. In the meanwhile GTA elections were held and out of 45 seats elections were conducted in 17 constituencies while in other 28 booths GJMM won without an opposition. GJMM took over the GTA and Bimal Gurung was made the Chairman of

the new autonomous council. GTA started to function and the funds were sent by the Centre and the state governments. Funds were flowing and the GJMM was flourishing politically and economically as well. They laid many foundation stones of model schools, super special hospitals, water kingdom, tourist spots and others. On 31<sup>st</sup> July 2013, the Telengana state formation bill was passed in the parliament. Protests for the formation of Gorkhaland started in Darjeeling hills and this time it began with an indefinite strike. Tea gardens, tourism industry, colleges, school, offices, banks, markets, everything came to a standstill. It was reported that a total of 44 days strikes were summoned by the GJMM.

As this movement began from August 2013, it affected the daily wage earners in towns and tea gardens, students who were writing their university board examinations, students who wanted to pursue higher education from other states, unhealthy and sick people and many more. The civil servants were in a big dilemma too. The state government ordered the government servants to go for the work while it was opposed by the GJMM. The salaries of civil servants were given on the basis of their attendance in their offices.

In the form of strongest protest all the '*sabhasads*' or the elected representatives of GTA along with its Chairman Bimal Gurung resigned from GTA. GJMM organised rallies and protest meetings. Gorkhaland Joint Action Committee (G-JAC) for achieving a separate state was formed by GJMM and other political parties of the hills like ABGL, CPRM also joined it. A collective fight of hill political was seen as an important tool for achieving Gorkhaland. Enos Das Pradhan the former working president of Bharatiya Gorkha Parisangh was made its Chairman. After having few rounds of meeting ABGL moved out of the group as they had problems with the GJMM. It was believed that the GJMM had their hands in the murder of Madan Tamang the president of ABGL. Later on G-JAC was made dysfunctional and due to the expressive pressure from the state GJMM ended the movement.

The TMC government tried to suppress the movement by arresting the top leaders of GJMM on the charges of Madan Tamang murder case. The charge sheet had names of Bimal Gurung, his wife Asha Gurung, Roshan Giri, Harka Bahadur Chettri and so on. The government tried to dismiss the movement by arresting these leaders. Binoy Tamang, an important GJMM leader, one of the founders of the party



hailing from Darjeeling town was arrested from Sikkim and sent to prison in Jalpaiguri. This event halted the aggressive mood of GJMM and compelled them to reconcile with the state government. Coupled with the arrest of Binoy Tamang the state ordered that the GTA audit would be conducted to see whether the funds sent were being used properly or not. As a result, GJMM was forced to stay and work in harmony with the state. Therefore, Bimal Gurung the Chief of GTA again reassured the state government to function GTA peacefully was retook the oath of the GTA Chief in the later course of the movement. He was re-co-opted and his GTA ministers joined along with him.

When Telengana was created GJMM activists were all willing to go for any amount of indefinite strike. They had purchased the required food items and commodities required in everyday prior to the strikes. It was a kind of a planned act. The Gorkhaland activists informed that when others who have their identity of their own are getting separate states why isn't the Gorkha who have dire identity crisis given one such state. They felt the deprivation and were willing to support the movement to any height and achieve the statehood. But with the increasing pressure from the state GJMM had to halt the movement and keep itself busy for the upcoming General Elections in 2014.

In the month of October 2013 Dr. Mahendra P. Lama, a well known economics professor from Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), who had also been the Founding Vice Chancellor of Sikkim University (SU) in 2007 started his protest rallies for Gorkhaland on foot from Siliguri to Darjeeling. He was an icon in the hills because he was a professor of an internationally acclaimed university and had also occupied several high rank posts of the central government. He came forward and formed his (Darjeeling Dooars United Development Foundation (DDUDF) and the goals of this apolitical body was to form Gorkhaland. Many people felt that he would reach all sections of the Gorkha society and may be the new leading figure of the movement. He was supported by CPRM and several apolitical bodies. Unfortunately, in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections he contested as an independent candidate and secured only 55,000 votes. Lack of funds was considered to be his failure to reach the masses.

GJMM at that time had backed the BJP candidate S.S. Ahluwalia. The Congress led UPA government then was facing lot of criticisms for several corruption

charges related to 2G, coal, Commonwealth games, purchase of arms and ammunitions. BJP on the other hand was gaining lot of popularity and Narendra Modi was the new face to lead this party. Modi during the elections campaign came to Siliguri and stated “the dreams of Gorkhas are his dreams too”. By then he had influenced the whole of nation with his verbal proficiency and oral creativity and Darjeeling was in love with him particularly for his statement and the dream of the Gorkhas was Gorkhaland. S.S. Ahluwalia backed by GJMM won the elections and he became the next BJP MP of Darjeeling. In the state BJP had won three seats out of 43 seats. This was the second time that GJMM had backed the BJP candidate and made them victorious.

BJP forming the government was an important event for the Gorkhas. When Modi took his oath to serve as a descent PM of India Bimal Gurung the chief was also invited for the program and the dinner party. The relationship of GJMM was getting better with the centre. As they became closer GJMM sent their delegates to meet the top brass leaders at the centre to discuss about the formation of Gorkhaland. Time and again Bimal Gurung in his speeches reminded the people that Modi would give a surprising gift very soon. The gift was anticipated as Gorkhaland.

During this time, TMC which was in power in West Bengal started to form tribal development boards for the GTA region. At first Lepcha followed by Bhutia, Sherpa, Subba, Tamang boards were formed by the TMC government. Dissatisfied and anti-Gurung people from these communities joined the TMC and started to function. Very soon boards for all the communities along with religious, linguistic and minority boards were founded in Darjeeling. GJMM saw this is a tool of the Bengal government to derail the Gorkhaland movement by crushing the very idea of Gorkha homogeneity. The Gorkha community has several caste groups and historically these groups were separate entities with own culture, custom, beliefs, language, dialect and so on but with the process of unification of Nepal under Prithivi Narayan Shah, all these groups lost their distinct traditional cultures and values and became Hindus and was compelled to accept Nepali as their mother tongue. GJMM felt that TMC was trying to break the integrity of Gorkha identity and reduce the community into many smaller traditional groups.

Both GJMM and TMC backed by the Tribal Development Board members then started to work for the reservation rights of the tribals. 11 tribal group names were listed by both GJMM and TMC and sent to the union ministry for granting Schedule Tribe (ST) status to these groups. GJMM felt that if all the 11 Gorkha communities would be granted tribal status then Gorkhaland would be very near to be achieved. The TMC supporters as well as the tribal board members saw it from the perspective of development. However, the central ministry has not yet come up with their reports and findings.

The Nepali speaking community in India is referred as Gorkhas among themselves but in different situations and contexts the term Gorkha has varied meanings among different section of people. Internationally Gorkhas are the brave war mercenaries from Nepal serving in the British Army. To a Nepali from Nepal it is the name of a western district in their country and some relate it to the former Shah rulers who came from Gorkha and unified Nepal. Gorkha to a Nepali speaking Indian is their identity and their dream is to form a separate state of Gorkhaland in India but outside West Bengal.

In September 2015, Dr. Harka Bahadur Chettri the spokesperson of GJMM resigned from the party when Bimal Gurung asked them to resign from their MLA post in protest of Gorkhaland. During this time Bimal Gurung had promised not to enter his home until Gorkhaland is achieved. So, he was in his 'padhyatra' or the foot rally for Gorkhaland. Trilok Dewan the MLA from Darjeeling resigned from the post and party as well, Dr. Rohit Sharma gave heed to his party chief and stepped down from the post and remained with GJMM while Harka Bahadur Chettri resigned from GJMM and remained as the Kalimpong MLA.

In 2016, state Legislative Assembly elections Dr. Harka Bahadur Chettri formed his party Jan Andolan Party (JAP) in Kalimpong. All the former intellectuals who were supporting JAP joined Chettri. Anmol Prasad and Amar Lama along with Dr. Mahendra P. Lama joined JAP. Chettri contested the elections but was defeated by his GJMM rival Mrs. Sarita Rai and both were teachers of St. George school at Pedong in Kalimpong. In his election GNLF had supported TMC and JAP contested from Kalimpong constituency and supported TMC in Darjeeling and Kurseong. GJMM considered GNLF and JAP as puppets of TMC and called them the betrayers

of Gorkhaland. Although the political situation was hot in the hills but in this phase murders and conflicts hardly took place unlike in the former period. GJMM won all the three seats from hills and TMC again formed the government in the state. It was also noted that this time the TMC supporters had increased in the hills and GJMM had won the elections by a small margin only. By this time the relationship between TMC and GJMM had been cold and contradictory. GJMM stated that their demand for Gorkhaland would be fought in the centre and not with the state. So, they focused more on the centre as they believed that Gorkhaland can be formed only if it is passed by the majority of parliamentarians.

GJMM was of the hope that by 2019 BJP would form Gorkhaland but in the mean time it was observed that the state BJP was against Gorkhaland. BJP in the center was also numb about the issue of Gorkhaland. Whenever the GJMM delegates visited the center they were told that a high level commission would be set up to study the Gorkhaland issue but till date not a single study has been undertaken. BJP seemed to focus more on capturing power in West Bengal than in the issue of Gorkhaland.

In the month of April 2017 municipality elections were held where GJMM came to power in Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong sub-division but TMC came to power in Mirik sub-division. This indicated the downfall of GJMM and rise of TMC in the hills. In May 2017, the official facebook page of the CM of Bengal Mamata Banerjee stated that Bengali would be made a compulsory subject across Bengal. This statement was criticised by the GJMM. At this point of time the 5 year GTA term was coming to an end. Coming under pressure and criticism from both her hill party members and GJMM, Mamata Banerjee restated that Bengali would not be a compulsory paper but an optional in the hills. But by time GJMM and its activists including other political parties of the hills were against the TMC. A new agitation was started by organising an infinite strike from 15<sup>th</sup> June 2017 till 25<sup>th</sup> September 2017. The hill political parties along with apolitical bodies formed the Gorkhaland Movement Co-ordination Committee. This committee kept meeting for almost four times but they could not come with any concrete plan.

Gorkhas living in various parts of the world started to organise rallies in favour of Gorkhaland. On 30<sup>th</sup> July 2017 a global rally for Gorkhaland was formed and rallies were organised in USA, UK, Australia, Hong Kong, Israel and others.

Within India major rallies were taken out in New Delhi, Kolkata, Bangalore, Chennai and other north eastern states. The state in order to curb the movement again reopened the Madan Tamang murder case and planned to conduct the GTA audit. In the course of the movement clashes occurred between the police armed forces and GJMM supporters. One police personal and twelve activists lost their lives in the movement.

In the course of the movement bombs were also exploded by the activists this made the state government declare Bimal Gurung along with other top GJMM leaders for Unlawful Prevention (Activities) Act. As a resulted all the GJMM leaders dispersed and Gurung is said to be hiding in the jungles. In the meantime the state government pacified the GJMM leaders Binoy Tamang and Anit Thapa by making them the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of GTA 2. These leaders who were under Gurung have now joined hands with the state and the major councillors of the region have all joined them. It seems Gurung has lost his vigour and support in the hills. State seems to have doused the Gorkhaland movement again.

## **2.7. The Field Findings**

The earlier part of this chapter has dealt with the secondary sources of data on Gorkhaland movement. In this section the primary data which was collected from the fieldwork that was conducted at Darjeeling district has been highlighted.

Fieldwork work for this particular study was primarily conducted in two regions of Darjeeling sub-divisions. The first one was conducted in Singamari which was almost 3 kilometers away from the main town of Darjeeling. It falls within the Darjeeling municipality area and the Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha (GJMM) party head office is located here. The data was collected during the months of September and December 2014. 125 respondents were interviewed in this phase of the field survey. The second fieldwork was conducted in Chongtong Tea Garden which is almost 25 kilometers away from the main town of Darjeeling. It falls under the Bijanbari-Pulbazar Block and is under Chongtong Gram Panchayat. The area is well known as the 'Red Belt' of Darjeeling, as the powerful Communists political base had its majority here and clashed sharply with the Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF) in the mid 1980's and gradually uprooted by GJMM after 2007. This area was chosen because it is one of the biggest tea garden in Darjeeling hills. Here a total of 105 respondents were interviewed in the months of April to June 2015. A total of 230

respondents were interviewed for the present study. Thus, for this study a sample population was 230 respondents. The socio-economic profile along with the political orientation of the respondents was recorded. The collected data has been discussed in the following section.

Out of the 230 respondents 75 respondents (i.e. 32.60%) were female and 165 (71.73%) were male respondents. It was noted that the male respondents were much eager to discuss the issues of politics in both the study area. While the women restrained from talking about the politics or many responded that they were uninterested in politics. The age group of the respondents varied from between 18 years to 82 years. 186 (80.86) interviewees was in the age group between 18 to 60 years and 44 (19.13%) of them were above the age group of 60. 212 respondents (92.17) had attended schools and colleges while 18 respondents (7.82%) were unable to read and write. Nepali was the lingua franca of the study area and all the 230 respondents could speak the language. Nepali was the mother tongue of 191 (83.04%) respondents while 12 (5.21%) considered Tibetan as their mother tongue. 19 (8.26%) members accepted Hindi as their mother tongue and 8 (3.47%) respondents were Bengalis. There were also few Lepcha respondents but they only knew few Lepcha words and could not communicate in their native language. In terms of religion, 163 respondents (70.86%) were Hindus, 45 informants (19.56%) were Buddhists, 17 (7.39%) of them were Christians and 5 (2.17%) were Muslims.

Although there was a religious plurality it was noticed that the people following different religions shared special festive gifts and food during special occasions. For an example in Chongtong tea garden the Hindu respondents gifted delicious sweets, cakes, soft drinks, liquors, meats of pig, chicken, goat or fish to those who were non-hindu neighbours and family friends during the Hindu festival of Dusshera locally known as 'Dasai'. Similarly, Christians were seen distributing similar gifts to their close Hindu and Muslim friends during Christmas time. Although there was religious differences the people were quite flexible with regard to religion.

In terms of academic level the educational qualification of the respondents was high. 211 (91.73%) respondents were literates and 19 (8.26%) were non-literates and had not gone to the school. 86 (37.39%) respondents comprised of students and unemployed members. The students were represented by 27 (11.73%) respondents

and 62 (26.95%) interviewees were unemployed. It is also to be noted that out of the 62 unemployed respondents 54 (87.09%) were literates. The students and unemployed have not been included in the income group. The remaining 144 (61.30%) respondents were employed or engaged in professions, business and personal economic activities like that generated income for them. Out of this 144 people 78 respondents (54.16%) earned less than Rs. 10,000 per month, 39 (27.08%) of them earned in between Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 20,000 per month and 27 (18.75%) of them earned more than Rs. 20,000 per month. The lowest recorded income was Rs. 3,168 per month of a worker in a tea garden and the highest income was Rs. 92,000 per month of a civil servant. 38 respondents (28.38%) were government civil servants.

Concerning the economic properties and wealth, the people in Singmari in Darjeeling town most of the inhabitants had concrete cemented homes and had land documents issued by the Land Revenue department of the state. While most of the houses of the people solely dependent on tea industry for livelihood had mud houses with tin roofs. Almost everyone had a cottage garden in Chongtong tea garden but it was not visible in Singamari in Darjeeling as the process of urbanisation had also increased the value rate of the land in the town area. None of the tea garden dwellers had land rights as the land was given to the tea industrialists on lease by the state. Jan Andolan Party (JAP) which was formed in 2016 by Dr. Harkabahadur Chettri, former spokesperson of GJMM and MLA came forward with the demand of land rights to the people living in tea gardens and cinchona area in 2016 state Legislative Council election campaign.

Although the tea garden inhabitants did not have land documents they owned tract of land where they practised livestock or agriculture. Cows, poultry and local chicken, pig, goat were domesticated and orange, papaya, cardamom, turmeric, spinaches, cabbages, cauliflowers, raddish, broom and other cash crop vegetables and items were grown in the fields. In case of Darjeeling many people were engaged in tourism sector. Some were drivers of hotels, tour and travels companies, some worked as cooks, hotel maintenance staff, few owned tea stalls, restaurants and some were vendors.

In one way or the other almost all the urban inhabitants was related and dependent on the tourism industry of Darjeeling. It was roughly calculated that more

than 20 lakhs tourist visits Darjeeling in one tourist seasons and at a minimum cost one tourist spends one thousand rupees per day. The sum of money accumulated through tourism was very crucial for sustaining the economy of the town area. It was also seen that there are many good schools in Darjeeling town and many town inhabitants had opened paying guests and hostels for schools and hostels. One of my respondent stated that she kept 40 paying guest students and each paid the monthly fees of 3,500. Her total monthly income was 1,40,000 and at times she boasted that her monthly income was much higher than the government officers. While in the rural belts people were dependent on tea gardens, livestock, sale of cash crops and commodities grown in the fields and also on the money sent by the migrated kin. The frequent strikes called by GJMM did affect both set of respondents both in town and village in a big manner.

It was also seen that the parents were very much eager about the education of the children. The same community earlier had an idiom phrase of “*Padhi lekhi k kaam, holo joti maam*” meaning “we won’t get anything by studying but by ploughing one gets to eat the food”. The old idea vanishing and the new idea that education is the weapon for success was accepted and strongly felt by the people. Even the person working in a tea garden with a daily wage of Rs. 132 was sending his child to a English medium nursery school. The number of students in the government primary and high school was also on a decline. People believed that the government schools education was not good while the private schools was believed to deliver good education, knowledge, wisdom and confidence among the children. Thus, the private educational institutions were mushrooming gradually both in Chongtong tea garden and Darjeeling town.

Most of the people living in the tea garden worked in tea gardens and many were also serving in the army. It was also surprising to be informed that from almost every family one had migrated to either gulf countries or Indian metropolitan cities for job opportunities. It was also noticed that most of the youths were possessing motor bikes and were very much fashionable. Most of them could converse in basic English, play guitars and other musical instruments, played games like football and cricket.



Looking into the family structure of the samples, 184 respondents (80%) had more than 5 members in the family. Most of them were nuclear families and joint family accounted to 24 (10.43%). The rate of divorce was also low. Out of the total 32 individuals (13.91%) respondents had lost their family members in the Gorkhaland agitation of the past and 14 females (6.08%) respondents had been widowed then. 26 respondents (11.30%) had relatives in Nepal and 12 (5.21%) had married from Nepal. They communicated with their cousins and relatives across the borders and at times both the families visited their kith and kins across the Indo-Nepal border. Those who did not have relatives in Nepal did visit the bordering business towns of Pashupati, Kakkiravitta, Birtamod, Dharan and Kathmandu for business purpose, particularly eye medication, religious purpose or vacations. It was also surprising to see that few respondents had their family members working in Nepal. It was also stated by the respondents that people did not prefer to work in Nepal because the money valuation of Indian and Nepalese currency is not equal. Moreover, after the ten years Maoist revolution in Nepal many people from Darjeeling who were doing business, working in different sectors and few who had opened schools there were compelled to shut their business and livelihood activities. Majority of the respondents felt proud to be an Indian and differentiated themselves from the Nepalese of Nepal and considered them to be backward in terms of education, fashion, music and so on.

In terms of political awareness all the respondents knew their political leaders and their activities. 203 (88.26%) respondents supported the formation of Gorkhaland while 27 (11.79%) argued that Gorkhaland under the present political leaders was undesirable and unimaginable. 115 (50%) of the respondents told that they had voted for BJP in the general elections with a hope that they would create Gorkhaland. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 2014 campaign statement "The dream of Gorkhas is also my dream" delivered at Siliguri had greatly affected the political emotions and affiliations of the respondents.

It was found that all the respondents had talked or discussed with other people regarding Gorkhaland. It was found that the study samples from Chongtong tea garden were much more vocal about the issue of Gorkhaland and directly supported Bimal Gurung. It was also noticed that most of the youths who had been living in the region considered Bimal Gurung to be their hero. They felt he alone can understand the problems of the tea gardens because he too was from the neighbouring tea garden.

But in case of Darjeeling town there were people who did not prefer Bimal Gurung and his party.

Apart from the basic socio-economic profile of these respondents, their political opinions and judgements were also accumulated. 172 informants (74.78%) believed that the present Gorkhaland movement was due to the identity crisis, lack of political representation and economic underdevelopment of the region. 36 of them (15.65%) felt that the reason for Gorkhaland was due to identity issue and 22 respondents (9.56%) believed that the Gorkhaland movement was because of economic underdevelopment.

63 (27.39%) interviewees said that they were questioned about their identity and in most cases mistaken as the citizen of Nepal mostly outside their place of origin within and outside India. 167 (72.60%) respondents had not been targeted personally for their identity but they too had felt the crisis of identity at times when some of the state political leaders like Deepak Ghosh talked about verifying the Indian Census of 1931 and accordingly grant Indian citizenship to only those who lived in the region before 1931. Many respondents pointed at the Bollywood and media projections of Nepalis and felt the crisis of identity. It was also noticed that the question of identity is raised mostly to the people who had visited to other states like Delhi, Bangalore, Kolkata and others primarily for job opportunities and education.

218 (94.78%) of the informants claimed that the state used violent and brutal methods to deal with the issue of Gorkhaland during the 1980's while 12 (5.21%) respondents argued that the state was trying to pacify the violent movement by using the Central Reserve Police Forces (CRPF). While 196 (85.21%) of the respondents believed that the present Trinamool Congress (TMC) led West Bengal government was against the demand of Gorkhaland and used armed forces to suppress the movement. Most of them cited the case of police firing at Shibshu, Dooars in February 2011 where 3 Gorkhaland activists were shot dead in a zero range firing. The leaders of the movement were also constantly charged on legal grounds and arrested when they demanded Gorkhaland. Several top leaders of Gorkhaland movement were put behind the bars when they demanded Gorkhaland in 2013 after Telengana was declared the 29<sup>th</sup> state of India. So, they felt that the state government was restrictive towards the activists. Another 34 (14.78%) interviewees considered the

present state government to be less violent as compared to the Left Front. They believed the present state government was honest towards Darjeeling region and her people. The Chief Minister often visits the region and grants many developmental projects for the region.

158 (68.69%) informants viewed that the strategies used by Bimal Gurung and his GJMM was satisfactory for achieving Gorkhaland. They believed that GJMM led Gorkhaland movement had revamped the former Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Autonomous Council (DGAHC) and accepted the interim autonomous council the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA). GJMM was capable of including the term Gorkhaland in the name of the autonomous council and at the same time this council was accepted from the state and centre governments without dropping the demand of Gorkhaland unlike the DGHC. This set of respondents felt the GJMM was working towards attaining the separate state by supporting the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) in the General Assembly Elections. The party had successfully elected two BJP candidates Jaswant Singh and S.S. Alhulwalia as the Member of the Parliaments in 2009 and 2014 Parliament elections respectively. They believe that the fate Gorkhaland was in the hands of BJP, the party in power at the centre. 72 (31.30%) respondents argued that the present leaders of GJMM are also misusing the public funds for personal gains and they view these leaders as incompetent, corrupt and fooling the public with the issue of Gorkhaland. They feel that the present leadership has made the issue of Gorkhaland as their begging bowl and were not happy with the leadership of the movement.

177 (76.95%) respondents were not happy with the performance of the GTA under GJMM. Some claimed that the autonomous body did not have sufficient powers to create job opportunities and recruitments, some argued that GTA was an unconstitutional body while some said it was the major source for creating divisions among the political parties of the hills to collectively demand Gorkhaland. Some viewed GTA to be beneficial only for those people who were in power and those who were related to these powerful figures, the common mass was not benefitting from it. The road conditions, the water problems, the infrastructural developments related with parking, public constructions including the tea and tourism industry were in a bad condition. 53 (23.04%) samples felt that the GTA was acceptable because it had provided contractual jobs to at least more than 5,000 local people. They also claimed

that the development of the region could be done easily through the local autonomous body without relying on the state government located far away in Kolkata, provided the state sanctions funds properly.

213 (92.60%) respondents advocated that the Gorkhaland movement would continue until a separate state was created for Gorkhaland. The exact time was however not known to them but they claimed that it may take 10 years or 100 years but the movement was had the tendency to continue either under the present GJMM party or parties succeeding it. However, 17 (7.39%) samples viewed that the movement would fade away if the people were given jobs, houses, identity and citizenship security or the movement may die up due to the when the entire public would get annoyed and lose their hopes with the political parties demanding for Gorkhaland.

Pondering upon the field view it may be argued that the reason for the emergence of the movement is primary because of identity issue and underdevelopment of the region. The misconception of Indian Nepalis as Nepalese nationals by the fellow Indians along with the high rate of unemployment, lack of colleges and higher institutions of learning, industries and infrastructural development has been regarded as the major cause of Gorkhaland. The people of the region face identity crisis mostly after crossing the regional borders and also through various media and political sectors.

BJP in his political manifesto supports the formation of new states and while it was in power in 2000 it had created three new states. With a great hope the simple strategy of GJMM was to support the BJP and in return get favour from the same in the creation of Gorkhaland. The party has supported the BJP continually with two successfully victories for them in the Parliament elections in 2009 and 2014.

The state is seen to be a major obstacle of the movement. The West Bengal government is seen to be abrasive towards the movement and tends to crush it in any condition either through co-option or use of force and coercion. GJMM is capable of generating mass support as they have a good organisational set up in the tea gardens and peripheral regions where the majority of population inhabits. Overall the GJMM led Gorkhaland movement is making progress in their demand for a separate statehood. They have successfully revamped the old autonomous council which was

founded by dropping the agenda of Gorkhaland. They are now administering the new autonomous body called the GTA without dropping the demand of Gorkhaland. In the near future majority of the respondents claimed that the Gorkhaland movement would continue.

## Chapter 3

### Book View and Field View of Madhesi Movement

#### 3.1. Geographical Divisions and Demography: Nepal's Madesh or Terai

Nepal is a landlocked Himalayan state between India and China. It is located between the latitude 26°22` North to 30°27` North and longitude between 80°04` East to 88°12` East. It has a total area of 147181 sq. kms with a population of about 26 million (CBS 2011). Nepal is roughly rectangular in shape and on an average extends about 885 kms from east to west and about 193 kms north to south (Bhattarai 2008:9). The country can be divided into three distinct geographical realms based on elevation and ecology. These three discrete regions are separated by dissimilar landforms that run parallel to one another from west to east. The northernmost area comprises of mountains, the middle region contains the hills and the southern part represents the Terai or the lowlands. These topographies are inhabited by different human groups with varying population density and socio-cultural practises.

In the northern region, the uppermost part of Nepal has '*Bhot*', the mountain or alpine zone. This area is sparsely populated with about 1.6 million people. Tribes like Bhotiyas and Sherpas who are similar to Tibetans in terms of socio-cultural, racial and linguistic patterns mostly inhabit in this region. In the middle region '*Pahars*', hills and valleys are found. This region is largely inhabited by *Parbatiyas* or *Paharis* meaning hill dwellers comprising of hill Hindu caste groups such as Bahuns, Chettris, Kami, Damais and Sarkis along with Newars, Tamangs, Gurungs, Mangars, Rais, Limbus, and so forth. The groups living in the middle or the central region are also culturally identified as Nepalis or Gorkhas (Pradhan 1991:5). These groups speak languages and dialects which are of Indo-Aryan and Tibeto-Burman forms. The high caste hill Hindu communities like the Bahun, Chettris and Newars have been dominant and influential in terms of polity. Nepali national character is typically based on the cultural values of these groups particularly their Nepali language, Hindu religion and dress (*daura suruwal* and *topi* for men and *chaubandi cholo* for women).

Further down, south from the middle region there is a continuous low marshy stretch of fertile plains popularly known as '*Madesh*' or '*Terai*'. The present study is concerned with the Madhesi movement taking place in this part of Nepal. Although

the term 'Madesh' and 'Terai' are used alternatively, some scholars have argued about the differences of these two terms. Terai refers to a strip of fertile lowland in between the Himalayan foothills and the Indian Gangetic plains, stretching west to east from southern Nepal and extends upto India and Bhutan (Miklian 2008:3). It includes the Siwalik range and the Himalayan foothills which may or may not be clubbed with Madesh on all occasions. Thus, Terai in case of Nepal is to be understood as a geographical marker, a sovereign political territory of the country that separates the hills from the plains. The term Madesh is basically derived from a Sanskrit the word 'Madhyadesh' a geographical area that stretches from the foothills of Siwalik to the Vidyachal mountain in southern part of central India. However, Madesh in a narrow sense in present day Nepal refers only to the eastern and western Terai regions. Madesh particularly after the Madhesi movement of 2007 has gained a socio-political connotation. Despite these arguments Madhesis have always been related with people living in the plains with distinct language, culture and comprise of various Hindu caste groups, indigenous ethnic groups and Muslims. Although the indigenous groups like Tharu and Muslims do not prefer to be referred as Madhesis but most of the hill people relates Madhesis with the people living in the plain region (Shah 2006 cited in Bennett et al. 2013:95-96, Shah 2006 cited in Sha 2013:355).

In Terai, twenty districts of the total seventy five are administered and 46 per cent of the total population lives here. Geographically, Terai constitute 23% of Nepal's total land area which covers a land of 34,019 square kilometers. The region is home to various groups like the plain Hindu caste group commonly known as Madhesis, Muslims, indigenous ethnic groups like Tharus, Satars, Koches, Meches, Rajbhansis, Dhimals etc., and the hill communities who migrated to the region mostly after 1960's, after the implementation of the resettlement program of the government (Pradhan 1991). Together they form the total population of about 13.3 million (CBS 2011). Maithili, Bhojpuri, Awadhi, Hindi, Tharu and Urdu languages are mostly spoken by different groups of the Terai. Various indigenous groups speak their own distinct languages. The Madhesis share close socio-cultural and linguistic ties with the north Indian society (Whelpton 2005:14).

Terai is rich in terms of agricultural and forest resources as compared to hills and mountain regions. It also has an easy access to the Indian markets in the southern part (Regmi 1995:2). Terai is often referred to as the 'bread basket of Nepal' with

main industries and major border transit points with India (Bennett et al 2013:95). The important borders entry points are located in Nepalgunj, Bhairawa, Birgunj, Biratnagar and Kakirbhitta. Prior to 1950's, the area was thinly populated, covered with dense forest and widely afflicted with malaria. However, with the eradication of malaria, government resettlement policy, development in transport communication systems and industrialisation, the region is now inhabited by almost half of the country's total population.

### **3.2. Who is a Madhesi?**

The definition of Madhesi is highly contested. The general conception is the Madhesis are the dwellers of Madesh or the southern plains of Nepal. However, all the inhabitants of the plains do not prefer to be called as Madhesis. Many ethnic indigenous tribes like the Tharus, Satars, Koches Meches and others including the Muslims inhabit in the lowlands. These ethnic tribes particularly the Tharus from mid and far western Terai and Muslims do not prefer the term Madhesi to describe them. The indigenous tribals considers themselves as the original inhabitants of the region and views Madhesis as migrants from India. The term Madhesi 'has come to have an ethnic meaning'. It refers to the plain dwellers who are of an Indian and a Hindu origin. The hill people settled in the plains, tribal groups and Muslims are not included in this group (Gellner 2007).

Frederick Gaige, one of the pioneer scholars who studied the lowlands of Nepal in the mid 1970's claims that the term Madhesi refers to the people living in the plains who 'speak the plain languages as their mother tongue or first language, whether they were born or live in the plains or hills'(Bennett et. al., 2013:95). The plain languages include Maithili, Bhojpuri, Awadhi, Urdu, Hindi, Bengali and the languages of the tribal groups. The Madhesi and Pahadis concepts are generally understood as opposites. Pahadi refers to hill people and the language spoken in the hilly areas of Nepal such as Nepali, Newar, Rai, Gurung, Mangar and others.

Gaige (1975:115) has discussed about the predominant language spoken in the Terai of Nepal. He argues that there were two groups which had a different and an opposite view about the language mostly spoken in Terai. The first proponents were the Nepali speaking people and they were of the understanding that Hindi was spoken nowhere in the Terai. However, their adversarial argued that about four million Terai



inhabitants spoke in Hindi. This view was propounded by the leader of the Nepali Terai Congress leader Vedananda Jha. He is regarded as the first Madhesi leader to have demanded for an autonomous Madesh. When this controversy was emerging with regard to the language the Census of Nepal was not yet issued to the public. It was in 1958 that the Census figures were made available to the public and it stated that 3 per cent population spoke Hindi in Terai. In 1952/54 Census of Nepal 29 per cent of Terai population spoke plain languages as mother tongue. These language were Maithili, Bhojpuri, or Bengali or plain tribal languages like Tharu, Rajbhansi, or Satar. 63 per cent, the largest number of Terai population was allotted in the category of no recognised language group and placed under the titles mid-western Terai dialects, Morang Pradesh dialects, eastern Terai dialects and so forth. According to the 1961 Census report of Nepal 51 per cent of the population considered Nepali as their mother tongue (ibid:15).

### **3.2.1. Caste Structure of Madhesis**

Gaige (1975: 17-22) argues that the everyday life of the Terai population is regulated by the rituals of caste system. The caste system practices of Nepal's Terai and the Indian states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar are co-relative. Various caste groups are categorized on the basis of occupation hierarchy and the notion of purity and pollution is followed in terms of dining and marriage. The high caste groups do not eat or marry with the low caste categories. During 1967-68, fifty nine caste groups were identified in Terai. The number of Hindu castes among the Madhesis are more in number than those found in the hills. It is for this reason that the socio-economic system of Terai is much more complex as compared to the hills, more specialized number occupational caste groups inhabits in Terai.

The Brahmans occupies the highest position in the caste strata. The next in the hierarchy is the defence caste group of the Rajputs or the Thakurs. The Lohars are the blacksmiths, the Charmars the leather workers and Sonars the goldsmiths. The goldsmiths in hills are known as Sunars and they are categorized in the low strata while the Sonars of the plains are considered to be high caste among the caste groups related with craft. Gharti is one of the plain castes who were historically slaves. The tribal groups were also absorbed within the caste fold of Hindu social order during the process of unification of Nepal. Those tribes which were mostly Hinduised were

given better positions in the caste hierarchy than those which were Hindu in a minimal way. Historically, Terai was fully a part of the north Indian cultural sphere but the migration of hill caste and communities into the region is gradually fuelling socio-cultural changes.

There was 88 per cent Hindus in Nepal according to the 1961 Census of Nepal. The figures are almost the same in the hills and plains. However, there exist some similarities and differences when it comes to the plain and hill forms of Hinduism. Both the hill and plain Hindus worship common gods and goddesses, common religious festivals, mutual myths, religious stories and legends. Both the regional groups cherish in the fact that the King of Nepal is a Hindu and the only Hindu head of the nation in the world. Lastly, both plain and hill Hindu Brahmins derive their teachings and rituals from the body of Sanskrit literature. On the other hand their differences lie in nature of religious practice. The plain Hindu are much more rigid in their religious orientation. They follow the orthodox form of Hinduism, do not consume even the chicken meat and mutton and strictly maintain condemn inter-caste marriage. The Hinduism followed in the hills is quite flexible as compared to the rigid type practiced in the plains (ibid: 12-13).

### **3.3. Historical Background of Nepal with reference to Madesh**

The history of Nepal can be divided into four distinct parts. These divisions are based on time period under different rulers and political systems. These discrete historical phases can be classified as:

- (i) Shah period (1769 -1846)
- (ii) Rana period (1846 – 1951)

After the end of Rana rule in 1951, Nepal experimented with democratic form of governance but it was short lived. King Mahendra usurped emergency powers, banned all political parties and adopted partyless Panchayat system over democracy in 1960. (Millard 2008:286). The period between 1951 and 1960 has not categorised as one specific phase but briefly discussed in the concluding section under Rana rule.

- (iii) Panchayat period (1960 – 1990) and
- (iv) Parliamentary democracy since 1991.

### **3.3.1. Shah period (1769 -1846)**

Nepal as a nation in its present form came into existence in the late Eighteenth century. Before its formation, the region was divided into several independent principalities and kingdoms administered by local or tribal chiefs (Whelpton 2005). In 1559, Drabya Shah, an heir of the royal family of Lamjung principality took control over Gorkha, a small hill kingdom in the western part of Nepal by defeating the local tribal chief and thus established the Shah Dynasty. The Shah progenitor immediately started the process of territorial expansion from there onwards. In course of another two hundred years, his successor Prithivi Narayan Shah conquered most of the principalities of the vicinity and unified them into a single nation (Regmi 1995:4).

Prithivi Narayan Shah was enthroned in April 1743. In 1769, after twenty five years of tireless planning and sustained attempts he became victorious in conquering the three major principalities of Nepal valley namely, Patan, Kathmandu and Bhadgau. After taking over the valley, he shifted his capital from Gorkha to Kathmandu and laid the foundation of the modern Kingdom of Nepal (Pradhan 1991:114).

In between the years 1768 to 1814, the Gorkha Empire brought most of the principalities of the region under its control. Its area extended from Tista in the east and Satluj in the west. It covered over 60 principalities including the Terai region of Indo-Gangetic plains. These constitutive provinces of Nepal were diverse in terms of geography, ethnicity, language, culture and religion. In order to maintain consensus and harmony in a culturally plural country, Prithivi Narayan Shah and his successors applied four major principles. These rules were as follows:

- (a) The king would possess supreme authority and power over the nation and the nationals,
- (b) Hinduism was accepted as the national religion,
- (c) Caste system was made effective to fulfill the requirements of the division of labour and to integrate the heterogeneous society under one framework of social stratification and
- (d) Nepali was recognised as the official language of the nation (Sharma 1992).

The implementation of such administrative policy can be termed as the process of 'Hinduisation' and 'Nepalisation'. However, Tilouine (2009:294) is of the view that

the principalities which were seized by the Gorkhas were already organised in Hindu caste system and had Hindu rulers. Pradhan (1991:11) recounts that Jayasthiti Malla had introduced “a well organised caste system with a definite Brahminical predominance” in the Kathmandu valley much before the advent of Gorkhas or the Shah Kings.

Hinduisation and Nepalisation were primarily sanctioned to create a sense of national identity and maintain integrity. This trend was followed even in the regimes succeeding the Shahs. The groups which did not profess Hinduism or the non-Nepali speakers failed to qualify the criteria of citizenry. They were either to accept Hinduism as their religion and use Nepali language or else they would remain excluded and marginalised. They were not given any alternatives.

The Anglo-Gorkha war of 1814 – 16 broke out due to the border dispute between the East India Company and the Gorkhas. The defeat of the Gorkhas in the war marked the end of further territorial expansion of Nepal. The war ended with the signing of the Treaty of Sugauli on 4<sup>th</sup> March 1816, which resulted in an enormous loss of Gorkha territories (Pradhan 1991:156). According to the truce, Nepal was to surrender all the territories from east to west, the present day border areas between India and Nepal. Entire Terai was ceded and a British representative was commissioned in the court of Kathmandu (Whelpton 2005:42). The treaty also fixed the boundary of Nepal with Mechi river in the east and Mahakali in the west (Regmi 1995:12).

As the first condition of the agreement most part of Nepal’s exuberant Terai or the southern plains was ceded to the British. An area of 64,000 sq. kms was given to the British East India Company. The Terai was covered with thick dense forest, infected with malaria and the Nepalese courtiers held the land assignment in the Terai to whom the British did not want to pay pensions to them. Therefore, on 8<sup>th</sup> December 1816, they returned the central and eastern Terai region to Nepal. Present districts of Jhapa, Morang, Sunsari, Rajbiraj, Dhanusa, Mohatary, Sarlahi, Rautahat, Bara, Parsa, Parasi, Rupendehi and Kapibastu were returned. However, the western Terai was not returned as it was already gifted to Oudh (Whelpton 2005:43, Pant 2000:37).

In 1857, the ‘First War of Independence’ broke out in the Indian subcontinent to end the alien British domination. During the war the British were rendered support

by the Ranas who were ruling Nepal then. As a tribute for the subservient service, the British returned the Terai districts between Oudh and Nepal to the Ranas which they had earlier ceded from the Shahs in the war of 1814-16. Thus, the present political boundary of Nepal was finally drawn only in 1860 with the inclusion of the western Terai region (Pradhan 1991). Present districts of Banke, Bardia, Kailali and Kanchanpur were restored to Nepal then (Pant 2000:37).

### **3.3.2. Rana period (1846 – 1951)**

In 1846, Jang Bahadur, the commander of the armed force killed important courtiers of the palace. He then seized the position and power of the Prime Minister and adopted the title of Rana. After this incident the succeeding Prime Ministers were to be hereditarily appointed from among the Ranas.

The Rana oligarchy lasted for 104 years till 1951. During the Rana rule the Shah rulers became the nominal heads and they were treated as the reincarnation of Hindu god Vishnu. In 1854, Jang Bahadur's '*Mulki Ain*' or law code was institutionalised to assimilate different communities of Nepal by including them in the Hindu caste hierarchy of hill order. It forcibly brought all the hill and plain ethnicities under the fabric of Hindu caste framework (Riaz and Basu 2010:37). Harka Gurung (1997) has viewed the promulgation of the code as the extreme form of Hinduisation process in the history of Nepal (cited in Millard 2009). The hill Hindus occupied the higher position in the hierarchy while the alcohol and buff consuming Newar castes of Kathmandu valley and Indian caste of the plains were placed in the lower strata (Tilouine 2009). The law code also transformed the status of the territorial tribe group *Jats* (Tribes) into the social group of *Jati* (caste). All the groups were graded in the five layer hierarchy on the basis of pure and impure caste groups (Hofer cited in Millard 2008:287).

During the Rana rule the country was kept in isolation, outsiders were not allowed to enter Nepal. Development was impeded and the voice of the opposition groups was kept under control by maintaining a good relationship with the British East India Company (Lawoti 2007:93). The Ranas had the upper hand in the resources of the nation. They monopolised the national forests and lands as their own private property (Maharjan 2004:278). They played a crucial role in transforming the malaria infected Terai jungles into fertile agricultural regions. The farmers from the hills of

Nepal were reluctant to settle and work in the disease affected, hot and humid land. So, the rulers invited the agricultural farmers from the North Indian states. They came willingly and settled in the Terai as agriculturalists.

The Rana rulers knew that education would weaken their power and control over the nation. So, they were not really in favour of developing the field of education (Whelpton 2005). Before 1950, there were only 310 primary schools and middle schools, 11 high schools and 2 colleges. In the early 1950's the literacy rate was 5 per cent and among the males it was 10 per cent while among the women it was only 1 per cent (Riaz and Basu 2007). However, the institutions of higher learning were feasible only for the affluent class. The Rana autocracy was extractive in nature with a complete lack of representative politics and without any privileges to its citizens. They had ruled the nation like fiefs with a total control over the public (Jha 2014).

The autocratic Rana rule finally came to an end on 13<sup>th</sup> November 1951, with a strong opposition from the alliance formed by the modern Nepalese intellectuals, the Nepali Congress activists and the royal Shah family of Nepal. Their alliance was further supported by the newly independent India. Nepal became a parliamentary democratic nation in 1951 and the first parliamentary election was held in 1959. Nepali Congress won the elections and formed the government under the leadership of B.P. Koirala. Unfortunately, it came to an abrupt end when King Mahendra removed Koirala from the post of a prime minister after he served for eighteen months (Whelpton 2005).

The king did not accept the western model of democracy as a viable option for Nepal then. He then opted for 'third model of democracy' which was being implemented by Ayub Khan in Pakistan, Nasser in Egypt, and Sukarno in Indonesia. Third model of democracy was in way, retreat to legitimise and continuity of the traditional tyrannical rule in the name of democracy (Upreti 2008).

Although democratisation process began in Nepal after the end of Rana rule, it was functional only for a year and a half after which Partyless Panchayat System was introduced in Nepal. This phase only retrieved the shift of autocratic powers from the Ranas to the traditional monarchs.

### 3.3.3. Panchayat period (1960 – 1990)

In 1960, King Mahendra took over the emergency powers and banned all the political parties. He anticipated that the democratic system was not capable of improving law and order of the country. In pursuit of bringing improvement and saving his people and the country he introduced the partyless Panchayat system. It was introduced with a view that 'grassroots democracy suited to the soil' but this also led the way for the King Mahendra to close the door for democracy (Jha 2014). In 1962, the king promulgated the Panchayat Constitution. It centralised power to the palace and promoted monoculture nationalism. He declared Nepal as a nation represented by Hindu religion, Nepali language with a dress code of *Daura Suruwal* which was a distinct feature of the Parbatiya or the hill culture (Lawoti 2007). The policy to impart education only in Nepali medium was introduced by king Mahendra. The communities which were non-Hindus, those could not speak Nepali and those did not wear the attires prescribed by the regime were not trusted to support monarchy and considered as 'second class citizens' (Jha 2014:172).

The 30 years of Panchayat system became operational with a motive to develop the nation and to end exploitation of any form. An emphasis was given to promote education across nation along with a stress on development in transport and communication system. Tribhuvan University was established in 1959 and many private schools were opened up. The new constitution declared all Nepalese equal before the law and promoted the abolition of untouchability in 1963. Print and electronic media also started to emerge and develop during this period. The literacy rate increased from 5 per cent to 39 per cent by 1990's and the road connectivity increased from 276 kms to 7,330 kms (Whelpton 2005).

On 6<sup>th</sup> April 1979, the students in urban areas started a protest demonstration demanding the end of Panchayat system and introduction of democracy. On 2<sup>nd</sup> May, a referendum was carried out to calculate the percentage of citizens for and against the Panchayat system. The result was the majority of 54.7 per cent voted for retaining the system (Riaz and Basu 2007). After the referendum adult franchise was introduced in 1980 but the political parties were still prohibited. However, after the referendum the political parties had started to operate in a clandestine manner. The ethnic and caste

mobilisation had begun in Nepal by 1980's as the government had enlisted certain ethnic and caste groups to gain support for the Panchayat system (Whelpton 2005).

The early 1990's proved the downfall of many autocratic powers across the world. It was an indication of the victory of democracy over autocracy. Subsequently, on 18<sup>th</sup> February 1990, the First People's Movement or '*Jan Andolan I*' was launched collectively by the Nepali Congress and other Communist parties to end the absolute monarchy through restoration of democracy and multi-party system. People from all sections of the society took on the streets and started to demand for shift of power from palace to parliament. Finally, King Birendra lifted the ban on political parties in April 1990. The new constitution was written by the members nominated by the king and the leaders of Nepali Congress and the Left parties (Jha 2014).

Gellner (2008) claims that in between 1960 till 1990 Nepal engaged in a process of nation formation by particularly emphasizing on development of the nation. However, after the 1990's the different marginalised groups began to demand their rights through their distinct ethnic identities. Gellner thus states that the period after 1990 in Nepal has been the period of ethnic formation.

#### **3.3.4. Parliamentary democracy after 1990**

Since the 1990's Nepal has witnessed many political transitions and transformations. A constitution was promulgated by the political leaders appointed by the King. It declared Nepal as a multicultural and multi lingual country but Hindu religion was to be the official religion of the state.

The democratic Nepal witnessed very unstable governments. At first the Congress government stayed in power for three years and the subsequent governments kept changing, failing to sustain their power and position even for a year's time. Twelve governments were formed in the years between 1990 to 2002 (Lawoti 2007).

Amidst constant failure of the elected government and political instability the Maoists launched the 'Peoples War' on 13<sup>th</sup> February 1996. They demanded democratic, secular, republic of Nepal with a constitution written by an elected Constituent Assembly including the demand for the removal of monarchy and abrogation of treaties signed with India. They also sought to federate the country on



the basis of ethnicity for proportionate representation and put an end on caste discrimination (Whelpton 2005). Ethnic activism heightened with the People's War. The issue of federalism on the basis of ethnicity invigorated different marginalised sections like Tharus, Madhesis, Dalits, Muslims and women to raise their issues more vocally (Hangen 2005).

Peace talks were held between the government and the Maoists for two rounds in June to November in 2001 and again in January to August in 2003. Unfortunately, they could not arrive at peaceful solution (Lawoti 2007). People's War continued, Maoists strengthened their support mostly from rural bases and continued to attack the government offices, police outposts, banks and called frequent bandhs which created a big political tension in the nation.

In 2001, King Birendra Shah and his family members were killed in the Royal Palace Massacre. After the massacre King Gyanendra Shah became the next king of Nepal and he soon dismissed the Parliament in 2002 for failing to conduct elections and took up the political power. In 2005, King Gyanendra took full control of the state and imprisoned the political leaders and declared emergency in the state. This resulted in coming together of seven parties of Nepal and the Communists to collectively demand the restoration of Parliament that was dissolved in 2002.

In the month of November 2005, 12 Point Understanding was signed between the Seven Party Alliance and the Maoist to end the monarchy. In 2006 the second People's Movement or the '*Jan Andolan II*' began to end the direct and autocratic rule of monarchy with a demand for democracy. The movement soon spread across the nation extending to the periphery areas as well and it lasted for nineteen days (Hangen 2005). The consequence was monarchy was pushed to a suspended state. The ten year long People's War came to an end on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2006 with the signing of Comprehensive Peace Accord.

On 11<sup>th</sup> June 2008 King Gyanendra handed over the crown and sceptre to the Government of Nepal signalling the complete end of monarchy in Nepal, giving way for multi-party democracy to prevail thereafter (Jha 2014). After that the eight parties formed an interim parliament and an interim government. Election for the first constituent assembly to draft a new constitution was held in 2008. The Maoists won the elections with an overwhelming majority. Unfortunately, they could not complete

the constitution on stipulated time. Second constituent assembly election was conducted again in 2013. In the second term the CPN (UML) – Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist Leninist) and Congress formed the government. The second constituent assembly finally completed and promulgated the Constitution on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2015.

Although Nepal boasts of having the world's most consensual constitution that was passed by more than 80% of the Constituent Assembly members, the Madesh based Constituent Assembly members did not sign the constitution. Madhesis along with other disgruntled groups were observing black day when the constitution was being promulgated. These groups are continuously demanding for federal states along with their appropriate representations and reservations in the administrative structure of the country.

The history of Nepal since its very beginning has emphasized on Hindu religion, Nepali language and the hill Nepalese dress code. Despite of being a heterogeneous country only the cultural artefacts relating to Nepalese Hindu hill society have been identified as the major national signs and symbols. The other groups which do not affiliate to these symbols have been marginalised and treated as secondary citizens throughout the history. Their 'public sphere' was very much contested and limited.

The introduction of democracy in 1950's was although short lived in Nepal but it did give a platform for the Madhesis to express their aspiration for autonomy or self governance for the first time. The Partyless Panchayat System since 1960's to 1990 again calmed down the federal aspiration of the Madhesis. The period after 1990's saw the emergence of First People's Movement which successfully restored democracy and multi party political system. The democratisation process resulted in the massive growth of ethnic and identity movements across the state with varied demands ranging from regional autonomy, recognition of the languages to protection of the diverse cultural and religious traditions and so forth. Under such a condition no elected government could function efficiently and the Maoists started their revolution from 1996 for another ten years.

Democracy in Nepal was reinstated only after the king was stepped down from power due to the Second People's Movement which also brought the eight Nepalese

political parties together including the Maoists came forward to prepare a parliament and a constitution. However, the day after the interim parliament promulgated the issue of federalism was given less importance as a consequence the Madhesi Janadhikari Forum led by Upendra Yadav protested the constitution by burning it. This marked the true beginning of the Madhesi movement.

### **3.4. Evolution of Madhesi Movement**

The history of Nepal has been the history of hegemony of the Shah and Rana rulers. In both the systems the Hindu religion, Nepali language and Nepali hill culture became the hallmark of the Nepali nation and nationality. The groups which were unconnected to those ethics had to live a life of lower citizen in the frame of socio-cultural, economic and political hierarchy.

The year 1951, marked the end of Rana oligarchy and subsequently democracy was introduced in Nepal. Prior to this period, the power of the state was centralised in the palace and in the dictum of prime ministers under the Shah and the Rana rulers respectively. They had incessantly used the religious and cultural elements to exercise control over the state. In case of both the regimes, Hindu religion was identified as the national religion. The political elites particularly the king was identified as the reincarnate of Lord Vishnu. The rulers established consensus and control over the population by utilising such religious sanctity. They also organised various Hindu religious functions and celebrations for the masses which made them cognitively submissive and tolerant towards the sacred sovereign.

Durkheim's claim of religion as a major force of solidarity in simple traditional societies was equally construed in the heterogeneous Nepali society. However, for religiously and linguistically different groups it was not through collective conscience but through coercion and compulsion of the state. The value of socio-cultural tolerance essential for maintaining integrity in a plural society were simply ignored and disregarded. Groups who were non-Hindus were unfit to be accepted as genuine Nepalese.

Similarly, Nepali language along with the *Pahari* dress code of *Daura Suruwal* was forcibly institutionalised to yield homogeneity and harmony. These were the socio-cultural traits of dominant Hindu caste groups of the hills. Such enactments

and policies did cause resentment among the groups who were non-Hindus, those who did not use Nepali language or wear the traditional Nepali attire. Such groups under the traditional authorities were sidelined to the margins and were at disadvantaged position. They were treated as second class citizens of the state.

Democracy as a modern political virtue swayed in to alter the century old hegemonic rule of the monarchs and oligarchs. It gave the oppressed and the marginalised groups the courage to aspire for a nation which was to be egalitarian and representative in nature. It came as hope for them to idealise a state in which everybody could find a proper and proportionate representation.

Among the many relegated ethnicities and indigenous groups, the Madhesi who inhabit dominantly in the southern strip of Nepal's Terai constitute the second largest population in Nepal. They are racially, linguistically and culturally different from the Nepalese of hill origin. They maintain a close resemblance and relationship with the socio-cultural landscape of North India. This category of the repressed group started to campaign their representation and participation in the nation building process since the instauration of democracy in Nepal.

Empirically, the evolution of Madhesi movement can be analysed in three chronological phases. Their movement for the first time began immediately after the end of Rana autocracy, when democracy was introduced in 1951 for the first time in Nepal. However, it soon came to end when the king withheld democracy for partyless Panchayat system for another thirty years. The Madhesi movement also did not find any medium to express their resentment under the new system for another thirty years.

The second phase of the movement began with the reinstallation of democracy and multi-party system in 1990. It was during this period that they vehemently came forward and expressed their inequalities and injustices. They also started to demand for autonomous Madhes. At the same time the Maoist revolution began and seized the central attention of the government and the international community for another one decade. The Madhesi movement was again sidelined.

The third phase of the movement began in 2007, immediately, a day after the implementation of the Interim Constitution by the nominated Interim government to facilitate the Constituent Assembly (Kantha 2010:156). This movement had on the

part of bigger national political parties emerged unexpectedly with a concrete goal, means, content and scope. The movement gained the most articulation and attention at an international level after the declaration of the new federal provinces by the Constituent Assembly in the month of August 2015. The movement grew more vigorous after the promulgation of the Constitution in September 2015. The Terai region has been on a strike by the Madhesi parties since 16<sup>th</sup> August 2015, stressing the demand of separate autonomous province for Terai.

### **3.4.1. The First Phase of Madhesi Movement**

The Madhesis of Nepal for the first time found a medium to voice their subjugation in the early 1950's, with the advent of democracy. Vedanand Jha, a leader from Terai came forward to address the historical oppression of the Madhesis and the need for their upliftment. He was unsure about the Nepali Congress (NC) conviction to effectively consider the issues and demands of Terai and its people. Therefore, he started a political party the Nepal Terai Congress (NTC). The significant role of political parties in South Asia particularly in Nepal has been viewed by Maharjan as necessary for the establishment of 'national authority, identity, legitimacy and compliance' (2004:277). It was with the similar intention, particularly for identity and legitimate authority to rule Madesh themselves that Jha had formed the NTC.

The major demands of NTC were regional autonomy of Terai, recognition of Hindi as the official language in the region and adequate representation of Madhesis in the civil services (Jha 2014:168, ICG 2007:5). The primary reason behind this was after the restoration of the country from the Ranas, the citizenship rights to the inhabitants of Terai were tightened and they were not given basic rights of citizenship. They were made the 'stateless people of Indian origin' (Brown 1996:78). Therefore, the Madhesis wanted an autonomous Terai in the southern plains of Nepal.

In addition, until 1958, only those who could speak Nepali or any other hilly language of Nepal like Newari, Magar or Gurung etc. could enter Kathmandu freely. The groups which could not speak in these languages like the Madhesis whose lingua franca was Hindi had to obtain passport in the border town of Birganj to enter the capital. Such discriminations were made on the basis of language (Gaije 1975:88). NTC wanted to do away with such kind of linguistic restrictions and differentiations by demanding Hindi as one of the official language of Nepal. The demand of Hindi as

an official language was perceived by the native Nepali speakers as ‘further extension of Indian hegemony in Nepal’ (Kantha 2010:158).

The first elections for 109 seats to the House of Representatives were held on 18<sup>th</sup> February 1959. The Election Commission identified nine political parties as the national parties in accordance with the norms of elections. The Terai Congress was also recognised as one of them (Maharjan 2004:281). Nepal Terai Congress could not perform fairly well in the polls. The Nepali Congress won the elections with an overwhelming majority and formed the government.

There are several reasons behind NTC’s loss. Firstly, the party had failed to garner wide public support on the basis of regionalism and language. Political mobilisation on the basis of region and language had not gained prominence then. Secondly, majority of the Madhesi voters were in favour of bigger national political parties. The Nepali Congress which swept off majority of the votes had selected influential high caste leaders from the plains. They were also capable of winning the favour of other castes and landless people by emphasizing on the issue of land reforms. The Madhesis anticipated that the national parties would be efficient to solve their problems. In addition, most of the Congress leaders had lived life in an exile in Indian cities of Banaras and Calcutta during the Rana raj and were familiar with the culture of Madhesis. They did not treat the Madhesis indifferently. The Nepali Congress was designed in the lines of Indian Congress with a political credo of inclusive, egalitarian, secular and democratic virtues. Lastly, the leader of Nepali Congress B.P. Koirala was himself from Biratnagar, a Terai town in Eastern Nepal and had wider support networks with the Maithili speaking population in the plains (Jha 2014:169).

The Nepali Congress formed the first Government but very soon it started to face severe challenges. When the Nepali Congress started the task of ‘nationalisation of forests, land reforms, abolition of *birta* land and zamindari system, fixation of land ceiling and protection of peasant rights’, they were heavily criticised by the opponents. The Nepali Congress was accused of taking over the land from the people through the implementation of such policies. The opposition forces like Gorkha Parishad, Praja Parishad, Terai Congress and Karamvir Mahamandala formed a National Democratic Front (NDF) in September 1960. The NDF declared an open war against the

government. The front was supported by Communists and legions of land owners from different parts of the country. The country witnessed political disturbance and instability. The faction of Nepali Congress under Matrika Prasad Koirala, B.P. Koirala's brother, also joined the opposition and demanded the intervention of the king. On 15<sup>th</sup> December 1960, King Mahendra ordered the arrest of the Prime Minister and other ministers. He also dissolved the government and the parliament (Maharjan 2004:282). In this manner the democracy in Nepal came to an abrupt end. It in a way also brought the first phase of Madhesi movement to a standstill.

After the denouncement of democracy, the king after considering the situation of the country implemented the partyless Panchayat system in 1962. This was a unitary system of governance and it confined the power to the king. In 1963, a new constitution was passed and it prohibited the differentiation of any kind on the basis of caste. Caste system was abolished but all the citizens had speak the same language and wear same dress. This cultural model imposed on all Nepalis, to speak in Nepali language and wear *Daura Suruwal* and *Chaubandi Choli* was that of hill high caste Nepalis. This group had dominated the political culture of Nepal since ages. The Panchayat system also banned all means which could create a source of differentiation. It banned the political parties and religious proselytisation. It implemented new land reform policy where the individuals could own only a limited land and it prohibited the formation of caste or ethnic associations (Tilouine 2009:304). The marginalised ethnic groups lost the major medium to voice their demands for another three decades under the Panchayat system.

In order to promote national economic integration and to stop the hill and plain segmentation, the king introduced the land reforms in 1964. The Resettlement policy resulted in population movement of thousands of hill farmers in the Terai as homesteaders. The consequence was a drastic demographic and cultural change in Terai (Kantha 2010:158). Gaige (1975) had noted that the Madhesis were disappointed with the Nepali government's economic policy and 'Nepalisation' processes but the ruling elite was successful in quickly producing an opposition to suppress their dissension. A robust mass conscious and mobilisation of resistance had not developed among the Madhesis until that point of time.

During the panchayat system the Terai region developed rapidly at par with the Indian states of Bihar and Bengal. It contributed almost 56.5 percent of the GDP while the hills accounted for 36 per cent and mountains 4.3 per cent respectively. In 1975, the king divided the country into five developmental zones vertically. This was done with a view to promote 'administrative and economic cohesion between hills and plains'. Each development zone had the mountain, hill and plain region. The number of voters in Terai constituencies was higher numerically but the merging of Terai constituencies with the group of hill constituencies resulted in representation of the Terai district by the hill people (Gaige 1975:157). The consequence of these steps for national integration and economic prosperity was a backlash for the Madhesis in terms of their political participation and representation.

### **3.4.2. Second Phase of Madhesi Movement: After 1990's**

The collapse of the Berlin Wall and the disintegration of Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in the early 1990's, signified the major victory of democracy and liberal market capitalism over socialist and autocratic governance. Nepal was still under partyless panchayat system then, primarily governed by an individual, the king. In the Nepalese 'public sphere' discussions relating to reinstatement of institution of democracy, multiparty system, secularism, federalism had begun along with the growing demand to put the system of monarchy to an end. People had started to realise that underdevelopment in Nepal was because of authoritarian governance.

On the other hand, India and Nepal had secretly signed an Agreement on Trade and Transit in 1965. The treaty declared that Nepal would buy arms only from India and in case if it buys arms from other nations, India was to be informed and transportation of such arms would enter Nepal via India alone. King Birendra had violated the treaty by agreeing to buy arms from China without informing India. The denouncement of the treaty enraged India and disquieted the Indo-Nepal relation. As a consequence Rajiv Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India put an embargo on Nepal from March 1989. The embargo affected Nepal particularly the industries and citizens to a large extent. The price of petroleum rose up ten times higher. It limited the transportation of goods and people. Out of fifteen transit points between India and Nepal thirteen were shut down by the Indian side. All these events made the political climate suitable for the emergence of People's Movement or *Jan Andolan I* to



challenge the Panchayati government. All the democratic forces along with the Left political parties came forward and started to demand the end of monarchy (Shakya 2009:53-54).

*Jan Andolan I* began from 18<sup>th</sup> February 1990 and lasted for about fifty days. The particular date was chosen to start the movement because it was on the same date that king Tribhuvan had historically declared to democratise Nepal. The movement was mostly supported by the middle class and was centred in Kathmandu and other urban areas particularly in the Terai. However, the political changes which were brought about by the movement were mostly relative to the activities that occurred in the capital and other cities of the valley. Although Terai is economically productive as well as highly industrialised and urban, it is regarded as the political periphery in Nepal (Brown 1996:117). Oommen (2011) argues that social movements occur to bridge the gap between the periphery and the centre. In case of Nepal, the historically marginalised Madhesis and other indigenous groups were gradually gearing up to have a space and place in the centre which had been protractedly dominated by the high caste hill Hindus.

The restoration of democracy in 1990's was an outcome of the People's Movement or *Jan Andolan I*. The new Constitution of 1990 declared Nepal a parliamentary democratic nation and recognised its ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversities. Article 4, of the Constitution identified Nepal as a multilingual country with 123 languages. However, it is only Nepali language which is the mother tongue of half of the total population that has been defined as 'language of the nation' and 'language of official business'. The other languages have been defined as 'national languages' in Article 6 and it does not mention its meaning in practice (Kramer 2008:189). Therefore, in reality Nepal continued to remain a Hindu nation with Nepali as an official language. The Nepali upper caste hill Hindus, who were politically and economically dominant historically continued to rule the politico-economic realms. They outnumbered the other groups in terms of politics and administration (ICG Report 2011:4-5).

The consequence was Nepal witnessed an emergence of multiple ethnic movements after 1990's (Hangen 2005). The Nepal Federation of Nationalities (NEFEN) was founded in 1990 by eight ethnic groups in Nepal and their aim was to

demand “language rights, decentralisation, political autonomy for ethnic groups and proportional representation in state bodies” (ICG Report 2011:5). According to Anne de Sales, most of the ethnic movements in Nepal were organised on the basis of *bhumi, bhasa and dharma* meaning land, language and religion (2008:337). Moreover, the United Nations declared 1993 as the Year of Indigenous People. This resulted in the growth of marginalised ethnic groups which started to seek their lost identities and worked to retain and develop their indigenous culture, language and religion. This kind of development on ethnic grounds was not only visible in Nepal but also in the Indian state of Sikkim and Darjeeling district of West Bengal (Subba 1999:1). The emergence of varied ethnic movements in Nepal was antithetical to the dominance of Hindu religion, Nepali hill culture and Nepali language in the life world of the diverse Nepalese community.

After the restoration of multi-party system the Sadbhavana Parishad (Goodwill Council), a forum formed in 1985, to raise the issues of Madhesis in the national level turned into a political party in 1990 (Whelpton 2005:187). The very formation of the party brought some trouble among the members of the council. Some of the members left the party and joined the Nepali Congress. They believed that it was better to demand the issues of the Madhesis by lobbying with the bigger national parties and there was no need to form a new regional party. The Sadbhavana party was founded by Gajendra Narayan Singh and it advocated the issues of Madhesis relating to citizenship rights and federal polity. Singh was a former Congress leader and in 1959, he had demanded the use of Hindi in the Parliament. Although he was allowed to address in Hindi his speeches were not recorded (Riaz and Basu 2007:85-86). Later, during the panchayat system Gajendra Singh had been loyal toward the monarch and also served in the panchayat government.

The Sadbhavana party campaigned for rights of Madhesis and had several goals like federalism, recognition of Hindi as one of the national language, liberal citizenship policies, proportionate representation in the polity and reservation quotas for the Madhesis in civil and security forces and other administrative sectors (Yadav 2005, ICG Report 2007:7). The party had its major support base in the central and eastern Terai. The party contested its first elections in 1991 and it was successful in winning six seats (Whelpton 2005:187). It contested in 1991, 1994 and 1999 elections and won only the maximum of 4.1 percent of the total votes (ICG Report 2011:5).

Gajendra Singh after being designated a ministerial post in the cabinet became content with his personal position and did not take forward the movement sturdily (Jha 2014).

The Sadbhavana party had failed to win allegiance of the masses by placing priority on federalism and recognition of Hindi language. Although, Hindi is the lingua franca in Madesh, there exists caste, ethnic and linguistic differences among the Madhesis. Majority of the people in Terai speak Maithili and it is considered to be the second widely used language after Nepali in Nepal. The leaders of Sadbhavana party were mostly from the high caste groups like the Maithili Brahmins and Kayasthas (Riaz and Basu 2007:86). The caste division and the upper caste dominance in the party affected the formation of a 'collective consciousness' and political integrity among the Madhesis, to put forward their demands unanimously. Moreover, the demand of inclusion of Hindi language was not the only objective of Sadbhavana party. Other national parties were also supportive of it (Kantha 2010). As a consequence the voters from the Terai were in favour of national political parties.

The Madhesi voters were also more conscious and connected with their local structural positioning relating to caste, ethnicity or regional languages. Thus, they were unmoved with Sadbhavana party's ideals of building a pan Terai solidarity. Thus, majority of the Terai dwellers voted for other national parties. Moreover, the Koirala family's connection with Biratnagar helped the Congress develop good political relationship with the Maithil and Tharu leaders (Whelpton 2005). Since the Madesh was divided on caste lines majority of the Madhesis did not prefer to support a high caste dominated regional party rather they had put their faith in Congress as it was intricately democratic since 1950's. All these factors contributed to the electoral failure of the Sadbhavana party.

According to Singh the party failed because it had lacked "vision, policy and programmes for the marginalised Madhesis" (2010:169). After 1994 elections, the Sadbhavana party started to lobby with other national political parties to address the issues of Madhesis. In due course, it was engaged more in forming or overthrowing the government (ibid) but the governments that came to power after 1990s were not very stable. Every year or in two year time a new government was formed and it soon collapsed giving way for the new government. This kind of political trend was a striking feature of Nepalese politics after the restoration of democracy.

After the death of Gajendra Singh in 1998, the Sadbhavana parted broke into two factions. The one that was larger was led by his widow Anandi Devi and it joined the pro-democratic forces. While the other group headed by Badri Prasad Mandal nurtured allegiance towards the monarch (Riaz and Basu 2007) by supporting King Gyanendra's decision to sack Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba in 2002. These two parties started to siphon favour towards the issues of Madhesis through two different sources, one believed in democratic principles and another through appeasing to the king. However, these two factions have reunited again in 2007 under Anandi Devi (ICG Report 2007:7).

In 1996, the Maoists submitted their 40 points demands to the government and just few days before the declared date they launched their revolution. They had their political base in the mid-western hills of Nepal and they were mostly supported by the ethnic group of Kham-Mangers. They did not have a political base in the Terai and the history has visibly addressed that the Terai was a stronghold of democratic struggles and movements but that not of Maoists.

The Maoists demands of end of regional discrimination between the hills and the plains (Hutt 2004 cited in Kantha 2010), equality of all languages and regional autonomy (ICG Report 2011:6) became appealing for various groups like women, religious minorities, indigenous groups, including the Madhesis. Such propositions initiated the mobilisation for the support of the Maoists in Terai. In order to develop their support base in the Terai a Maoist started off its wing in Madesh in 2000. It was called Madhesi Rashtriya Mukti Morcha (MRMM or Madhesi National Liberation Front, MNLF) and was formed in Siliguri, a town in the Darjeeling district of West Bengal in India under the leadership of Jai Krishna Goit and Jwala Singh. The specific goals of MNLF were creation of an autonomous and discrimination free Madesh.

Its other goals were proportionate representation of Madhesis in state institution, full distribution of citizenship, recognition of Maithili, Awadi and Bhojpuri as the official language of Madesh, land reforms, revenue distribution, economic development and end of social practises evils like dowry and any form of discrimination, unlike Sadbhavana party it did not demand recognition of Hindi but

recognition of three major languages spoken in the Terai. MNLF saw Hindi to be associated with upper caste and Indian tactics (ICG Report 2007:7).

Madhesis initially supported the Maoists initially, hoping the Maoists were supportive of their cause and would demarcate an autonomous Madesh for them. Although the Maoists were sympathetic towards the demands of the Madhesis, they were not given any important posts within the Maoist party and the problem of Madhesis was seen not only due to upper caste hill domination but also because of the traditional feudal and caste differences within themselves. Moreover, the diversity in Madesh urged the Maoists to propose reorganisation of Madesh into five regions namely Kochila Pradesh, Mithila Pradesh, Bhojpur Pradhesh, Awadh Pradesh, and Tharuwan Pradesh (Riaz and Subho 2007). At the most the Maoists thought of dividing the Terai into two parts, the western Terai for the Tharus and Central and Eastern Terai region for the Madhesis. The Madhesis had voraciously demanded one autonomous Madesh.

Kantha (2010) has pointed out that the Maoists could not make a good support base in Terai because of its anti-Indian attitude. Out of 40 points which the Maoists submitted to the government before their revolution, the first 9 points emphasize on restructuring Nepal's relationship with India. Maoists called for ending 1950 Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship, strict regulation at border, termination of Gurkha recruitment in the army and permit for foreign workers.

The Madhesis on the other hand share a close linguistic, cultural and caste affinity with India and were not really against closing down of open border. They also have the famous '*roti-beti sambandh*' (bread and daughter relationship) with the southern neighbour since ages. The Madhesis have the tradition of marrying off their daughters in the Indian states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. This has been prevalent since time immemorial. So, they were not really interested in shutting the border or develop a feeling of hostility towards India. All these factors together caused a rift between the Maoists and the Madhesis and gradually their relation started to deteriorate.

Goit and Singh left MNLF and in 2004 and formed his own party Terai Janatantrik Mukti Morcha (TJMM or Republican Terai Liberation Front, RTLFF). The TJMM started to trouble the hill origin people in Terai particularly in Saptari through

kidnappings and threatening the hill land owners and warned the closure of the industries owned by the hill people. In due course it was turning to be a secessionist party as a result of which it has lost the support of Madhesi leaders (Riaz and Subho 2007). Such actions of TJMM increased the sense of regionalism between the hill and plain, causing further strife between the Madhesis and Pahadis (hill people). Due to internal political problems in 2006, Jwala Singh separated from TJMM and started his own Terai Janatantrik Mukti Morcha – Jwala (TJMM-J). Both TJMM and TJMM-J demand a separate or an independent state of Terai (Kantha 2010).

Upendra Yadav, a school teacher from eastern Terai who had earlier contested the election as a CPN (UML) candidate from Sunsari formed the Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF or Madhesi Peoples Right Forum, MPRF) in 1997. It is believed that the establishment of MPRF was supported by the Maoists. Yadav had supported the Maoist leader, Baburam Bhattarai's conception of 'internal colonisation' of Madesh, other marginalised and indigenous groups by the upper caste hill Hindus and the fancied solution to which was federalism based on ethnicity and region (Jha 2014). However, Yadav's affiliation with the Maoists party was a short lived one. In 2003, he along with other Madhesi leaders were arrested in India for having an affiliation with the Maoists. Although he was released mysteriously others were sent back to Nepal. After that particular incident he gave up his involvement with the Maoists (Kantha 2010).

Initially, MPRF was started by intellectuals and students as a Non-Governmental Organisation to address the issues related with the Madhesis. The forum engaged in research publication, organised debates, seminars, conferences related with Madheshi agendas. It soon turned into a cross-party forum to make people aware about the condition of the Madhesis and started to develop political consciousness among them. MPRF gained strength when the former Nepali Congress leader Jay Prakash Gupta joined it. In addition, Yadav's old association with Gopal Samiti which was a Yadav association helped him to garner support for the forum. Yadav and Gupta visited the Indian state of Tamil Nadu and there they drew a parallel relationship of Madhesis with the Sri Lankan Tamils who were also demanding autonomy in the northern province in Sri Lanka. There they wrote books relating to history, culture, marginalisation and exploitation of the Madhesis in Nepal (Jha 2014).

Although the forum was mobilising the issues of Madhesis it was not politically in consensus with the Sadbhavana party because the forum had majority of the leaders from the intermediate caste groups, particularly the Yadav's, mostly from the eastern Terai. In November 2005, after signing the 12 point agreement, the MPRF delegation visited India and met several Indian political leaders to gain their support for Madesh (ibid).

It is also important to note that apart from the Madesh based political parties, the national parties like Congress and CPN (UML) also has its own support base in Terai. The Nepali Congress has many Madhesi leaders with a large number of supporters from Terai. They support NC because it “offers benefits such as government jobs and contracts, local and national political access and social status”. UML's Terai wing is called Loktantrik Madhesi Sangathan or the Democratic Madhesi Organisation (ICG Report 2007:6). These wings of national parties are also supportive of the issues and grievances of the Madhesis. The MPRF or the MJF under the leadership of Upendra Yadav became a major party to fight for the rights and justice of Madhesis in 2007. They demand a federal republic with an autonomous Terai (Kantha 2010).

While all these political developments were taking place the within the Madesh the centre of national political stage was taken over by the Maoist insurgency from 1996. The revolution finally came to an end when the Seven Party Alliance (SPA) and the Maoists signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2006. Finally, the monarch which had gradually taken over the absolute power since 2003 was tipped down by 2<sup>nd</sup> Peoples Movement supported by the SPA and the Maoists. The SPA and Maoists then constituted an interim parliament and also promulgated the interim constitution on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2007. Of many contradicting issues in the constitution the matter of federalism was not clearly included in the constitution.

### **3.4.3. The Field View of the Madhesi Movement: 2006 Onwards**

A strike was called by Sadbhavana Party in December 2006, to protest the failure of the Interim Constitution to include the major demands of Madhesis which included federalism and re-delineation of electoral constituencies for Constituent Assembly elections. The strike resulted in a communal clash between the *Pahadis* and the Madhesis at Nepalgunj (ICG Report 2007, Bennett *et. al.* 2013). On 15<sup>th</sup> January

2007, the interim constitution was passed by the SPA and Maoists. On the very next day, the document was burnt in the capital and other towns of Terai by the Madhesi leaders. The leaders were arrested but the flame of discontent had by then, widely flared in the Terai. The most efficacious movement of the Madhesis started under the MJF. On 19<sup>th</sup> January 2007, a young MJF activist Ramesh Kumar Mahato was shot dead in a clash with the Maoists. This incident prolonged the agitation. MJF demanded for justice of the death of their activist.

The MJF took the streets to protest the inaction of the government and voiced against the Maoists. The activists looted the government offices, post offices, banks, media houses and offices of the national parties. They also blocked the highways leading to Kathmandu which resulted in disruption of petrol process and flow of goods. The movement turned ethnic when the agitators started to demolish the statues of hill political leaders and attacked the hill people who were residing in the plains. The movement started off in Lahan and Janakpur and soon spread to the major towns of Terai including Biratnagar. The government responded harshly with the protesters by announcing curfew with an increased police force in Terai region where the movement was active. Almost 30 people were shot dead by the police and 800 were injured (IGC Report 2007).

On 31 January 2007, the then Prime Minister G.P Koirala had to appear two times in the national television to console the agitating groups and publicly accepted the demand of federalism called by these disgruntled forces. On 12<sup>th</sup> April, government passed the first amendment of the interim Constitution that declared restructuring Nepal into a “democratic, federal system” (ICG Report 2011:8). Finally, the twenty-two point agreement was signed between the government and the MJF on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2007. The main points included compensation to the families of martyrs who died in the agitation, an autonomous province for the Madhesis, Tharus and other marginalised communities, proportionate electoral representation, withdrawal of cases filed against the MJF activists, dispatch of citizenship certificates to Madhesis who were deprived of it, recognition of the Madhesi languages, culture and customs, proportionate distribution of the revenue income to Madesh and other remote areas etc. However, the 22 point agreement was also criticised for not having a firm lasting effect on the demand of federalism (Bennett et al. 2013:105).



As a result the demand for autonomous Madesh was again raised by Terai Madesh Loktantrik Party (TMLP) which was formed by the disgruntled Madhesi leaders who had also resigned from the interim legislative assembly. They demanded for the creation of autonomous Madesh and subsequently submitted a fresh list of demands to the government. On 28<sup>th</sup> February 2008 the government signed an 8 point agreement with TMLP. In the meanwhile in Samyukta Loktantrik Madhesi Morcha (United Democratic Madhesi Front - UDMF) was formed through the alliance of MJF, Sadbhavana party and TMLP. They restarted their agitation for the creation of autonomy in Madesh from 13<sup>th</sup> February 2008. The agitation was observed by organising strike in the Terai region. It continued for 16 days. During this time Federal Republican National Front (FRNF), coalition of the Federal Democratic National Front (FDNF) comprising of Madhesi, Janjati, Tharu and Dalit political parties also supported the strike (ibid).

The policy of reservation was implemented in the Constituent Assembly elections in 2008. It was after this that event that the political stand of Madhesis changed in Nepal. In the CA elections the Maoists formed the power at the centre and the Madhesi political parties also won several seats. Almost 30 per cent of seats in CA elections were secured by the Madhesi groups. At this juncture, in words of Prashant Jha (2014) an associate editor of Hindustan Times, the Madhesis became the “king maker” in the newly constituted democratic Nepal. Madhesis supported the government formed by the Maoists and the party in power started the process of constitution writing in Nepal. The deadline of drafting the constitution was May 2011 but due to several issues particularly relating to federalism and province demarcation the constitution could not be written in the given time.

During 2007 and 2008, the significance of Madhesi in Nepali politics was revealed. Earlier the Madhesis were mostly supporting the national parties like the Congress, CPN (UML), Maoists etc but it was from this time that they started to form their own parties and contest elections. In 2008, broad alliances of Madesh based political parties were formed under the banner of UDMF. As the first Constituent Assembly failed to write the Constitution the second CA elections was conducted in 2013 and the constitution writing dead line was 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2015. This time it was not the Maoists but the Congress and CPN (UML) which won 371 votes out of 601 CA seats (ICG Report 2015).

The Madhesi political parties could secure only 10 per cent votes. The primary reason for this was lot of Madhesi parties had evolved by this time and all of them were fighting for a common cause but in their own strength and capacity, dividedly. This led to the division of Madesh political parties and their supporters giving way for the NCP and CPN (UML) to form the government at the centre. At the same time Bijay Kumar Gachhadara major member of the MJF resigned from the party and started his own party the Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (Democratic). He was a Tharu leader and he formed his own party to demand a separate province for the Tharus in the southern part of Nepal. He joined hands with the ruling government while the MJF under Upendra Yadav was facing lot of political losses after Gachhadar's decision to form his own party based on region and ethnicity. This act of Gachhadar was considered to be a betrayal for the Madeshi parties because earlier the MJF had demanded for 'One Madesh One Pradesh' a single undivided region but MJF (D) started to demand for a formation of another province in Madesh for the Tharus. Tharus are considered to be the original aborigines of Nepal.

On 25<sup>th</sup> April 2015, a major earthquake occurred in Nepal. The hilly regions of Gorkha, Lamjung in western and central hills of Nepal was completely devastated. This earth quake also brought down the '*dharara*' or the memorial tower of Kathmandu, killing more than 10,000 lives and loss of properties worth millions. This compelled the ruling government to fast track the implementation of Constitution. The ruling parties started to discuss their constitutional recommendations to the public by June 2015. However, this time also the issue of federalism had not been dealt properly by the CA. There were also dissatisfactions relating to the issue of citizenship. When the draft of the Constitution reached the Madhesis they opposed it because the entire Terai was divided into Tharuhat and Madesh Pradesh. The eastern Terai district of Jhapa, Morang and Sunsari was not included in the Madesh Pradesh. Similarly, Kanchanpur and Kailali were not included in the Tharuhat province but clubbed with the hilly provicnes. Therefore, the Tharus and Madhesis along with other residents of Madesh started to protest the constitution. This also led the leader of MJF (D) Gachhadarand other Madeshi leaders to move out from the CA.

When the western Terai provinces were not added to Tharuhat Pradesh, the violence broke out in August 2015, in Tikapur. The Tharus attacked the police security forces and killed seven members of police and armed forces including a baby

of the armed force personal. This incident resulted in army deployment in the region and gradually the protest against the government spread across Terai. As the protestors volume increased the state's deployment of armed forces, police and curfew also increased. The Terai went on a strike for almost six months since 16<sup>th</sup> august 2015 till February 2016.

During the strike all the important Terai border entry points in between India and Nepal was taken over by the Madhesi protestors. They blocked the border and entry of vehicles carrying goods and other essential commodities. The protestors were seen by the government to have been supported by India. During this time Indo-Nepal relationship was becoming unpopular and the Nepalese government was gradually being attracted towards the Chinese for support and benefit. The Chinese were trying to take over the Nepalese market by opening trading routes from the hilly regions of central and eastern provinces. Unfortunately, it was also realised that these highlands remained frozen during the winters and a viable trade could not be carried out for more than seven to eight months. It was during this period that Prachanda the famous Maoist Nepalese leader had claimed that if India does not supply petrol to Nepal the Nepalese would ride on cycles.

The strike demonstrated by the UDMF, a coalition of the Madesh based parties affected the economy of Nepal to a large extent. The price of LPG cylinders, petrol, diesel, everyday essentials started to rise up in Nepal. Black market gradually grew up increasing the price of almost all the commodities. The protestors would sit in the highways of Madesh and any vehicles or buses plying towards Kathmandu were pelted stones. The buses travelling from eastern part of Nepal, that is from Kakkirvitta to Kathmandu were all line up in Itahari in Sunsari district and with police and army security they would all move towards Kathmandu mostly after 11 o'clock at night. There was hardly any bus which was not damaged by the protestors.

The government on the other hand called the agitators for discussion but these agitators stressed that the discussions should be on federalism and demarcation of federal boundaries and proportionate representation in the government. It was argued that the population of Terai was more than 40 percent but their political representation was not equivalent to that. However, the government kept stressing that the constitution should be implemented first and then after the amendments could be

made. However, the government led by three important political groups the NC, CPN (UML) and Maoists kept calling these disgruntled groups for talks but these groups did not accepted the invitations as the government was keen on implementing the constitution and make amendments later. As these three powerful political groups had the majority of almost 90 per cent they implemented the constitution on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2015.

When the constitution was implemented half of the state was celebrating while the other half was burning. On the Indian side, just few days before the implementation of the Nepali Constitution, the Indian Ambassador to Nepal Ranjit Ray and Indian Foreign Secretary P. Jaishankar tried to console the Nepali politicians and suggested them to delay the constitution promulgation dates. Unfortunately, this was seen as an Indian interference by the Nepalese side. These Indian diplomats had a meetings and lunch with the Madhesi political parties and this event made the Nepalis of hilly origin that Indian government was behind the Madhesi movement as both of them are ethnically common. The Nepalese of hill caste also started to take out rallies and burnt the effigy of the Indian Prime Minister. The strike finally came to an end in February when the newly elected President of Nepal decided to visit India as he first foreign trip. The socio-economic and political systems in entire Nepal was in a pathetic condition and to proceed forward with the strike was seemingly impossible for the Madhesis as the state was not at all listening to their voices.

### **3.5. The Field Findings from Terai region of Nepal**

In this section the data collected from the field has been discussed. The fieldwork was conducted in three eastern Terai districts and the capital city of Nepal in three intervals. The fieldwork was conducted in the month of January in 2015 in Biratnagar in Morang district, second was carried out in Jhapa and Morang districts particularly in Kakkirvitta, Birtamode, Itahari and Biratnagar from September 2015 to November 2015. This was the major part of the fieldwork of this study. The last fieldwork was conducted in June 2016 in Biratnagar and Kathmandu, the two major cities of Nepal.

The fieldwork was mostly concentrated in the eastern Terai region. The total number of respondents was 145. Out of the total number of respondents 145 were males and 50 were females. 142 (98%) of the respondents wanted the creation of Madesh Pradesh and their reason was the discrimination and under representation of

Madhesis in the government and administration of Nepal. When their educational qualification was enquired 129 respondents (66%) had studied till or below class 10, 35 informants (18%) were illiterates and had not gone to schools at all. While 31 samples (16%) had pursued graduation and other higher educational qualifications. Most of the informants were employed, 141 respondents (72%) had an income of between 4,500 Rupees to 6,000 Rupees. Most of the people falling in this income group were involved in agriculture and farming. They cultivated rice, sugar cane, jute, lentils and other cash crops and also domesticated animals like cows, ox, buffalo, goat and so on. The highest income of 80,000 Rupees was of the manager at the Volkswagen car company in Biratnagar. While the lowest income was reported to be 2,500 rupees of a respondent who worked as a helper in the grocery store. 105 respondents (54%) had land certificates and owned concrete houses while the remaining 46% informants did not have land and land right certificates despite of having been lived in Nepal since time immemorial. 90 samples (46%) lived in rented houses and huts. They worked for their land owners mostly in agricultural fields.

184 samples (93%) were Hindus and 158 (85%) were from middle caste groups. While 8 were Muslims and 3 were Christians. It was also to be noted that none of the respondents were Buddhists despite Nepal's Madesh being the land from where Buddhism had started spread into the world. 130 respondents had relatives in India and 104 people (53%) had married or had a family member who had married from India. It was found that the Madhesis preferred to get daughter-in-laws from India because the dowry given by the Nepalese women were comparatively low then it was given by the Indian brides. The currency valuation of Indian rupees is higher than that of Nepal. One thousand Indian rupees was equivalent to 1630 Nepali currency. Their social ties were strong and both these parties visited India and Nepal during times of festivals, deaths, marriages and other social events. Most of the marriages were arranged and decided by the elders members of the family. Very few cases of love marriages were observed among the Madhesis. The modern generation Madhesis believed in marriage in mutual consent but the family was very much influential in choosing and deciding the brides of Madhesis grooms.

In case of Nepal 171 samples (88%) were of the view that the movement had emerged to end the socio-economic and political discrimination of the Madhesis. The socio-cultural discrimination was that their culture, language was not given any

significance in Nepal. The economic problem was related to minimal degree of the state sponsored development projects and funds related to it for Madesh. The political subjugation was the Madhesis despite comprising almost half of the total population of Nepal they still had very few scope and space in terms of political representation. Moreover, they believed that the Nepalese government had treated them as Indians and doubted their loyalty. Thus, the majority of the respondents argued that it was their ethnic identity which made the hill caste Nepalese label them as Indians and due to this factor they were often doubted with regard to their nationality. The International Crisis Report 2011 has clearly stated that for Madhesis to get the citizenship certificate or passports it took much time as the people of the concerned departments would verify their each and every details that they were not Indians then only they were given the national certificates and documents. But for a Nepali speaking nationals it was not a difficult task and these documents were issued in no time.

One of the intriguing information that was reported by the respondents was the Madhesi leaders looked upon the Indian politicians and public for political support and directions. In September 2015, it was reported by the almost all the Nepali television channels that the leaders of United Democratic Madhesi Front (UDMF) had gone to Bihar to meet Lalu Prasad Yadav the former Chief Minister of Bihar who is also a famous Indian politician. The Madhesi leaders also met the Chairman of the Ministry for External Affairs Dr. Sashi Tharoor, a Congress Member of the Parliament (MP). All these interactions were seen by the hill caste Nepalese that Madhesis were being backed by the Indians and Indian government. When it came to the Madhesi movement the movement was witnessed in the plain land of Nepal but it was not felt in the hilly or mountainous region as very few Madhesis lived in these regions.

The linguistic domination of the Nepalese government was viewed by Madhesis as the most discriminative issue. The government was issuing citizenship certificates only to those who could speak in Nepali language and were assimilative. Unfortunately, those who could not speak the language were deprived of all the national benefits including issuance of citizenship certificates, passport, job opportunities and so forth.

The state was said to have used the police and armed forces to silence and end the movement. In the so claimed first Madhesi movement of 2007, 30 people were killed and more than 800 were injured (IGC Report 2011) while in the movement that occurred in 2015 more than 50 people were killed and thousands injured. The state was also using a soft approach of bringing the disgruntled groups in the fourfold of the government and the constitution implementing committee by inviting them for talks but the manner in which the government approached the agitators was also not accepted by the Madhesi parties as the government had been firm that the invited meetings would not discuss on the creation of Madesh Pradesh. The Madesh based political parties were also strong in their decision that they would attend the meetings only if the issue of federalism, proportionate representation in elections, reservations and citizenship rules were discussed.

It was also revealed from the secondary sources that the Madesh based parties were also based on caste categories. The Terai Madesh Democratic Party (TMDP) comprised of the high caste Madhesis. The Sadbhavana party was having lot of connections with the Indian establishment while the Madhesi Janadhikar Forum was having majority of middle caste people. The Madhesi community was very much a caste based society which was very much similar to that of Bihar (ibid). The high caste categories maintained the notion of purity and pollution with the other caste groups. Common dinning and inter caste marriages were rarely possible in the Terai region of Nepal.

The Madhesi movement supporters believed in the idea of non-violence and when they were organizing demonstrations and strikes they always had the photo frame of the Indian Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhiji who is also globally accepted as the figure of peace and non-violence. At times when the protestors were pressurized by the Nepalese police and armed forces they would move into the “no man’s land” area and continue their protest as the place was in between the border of India and Nepal and did not belong to either of the nations. The protestors were said to have been supported by their Indian relatives during the movement. The Biharis also supported the demand of the Madhesis. During the course of the movement in 2015 it was stated that many times the agitators were fed by their community members across the border.

The Madhesis did not want to do away with the Treaty of Peace and Friendship signed between India and Nepal in 1950. They felt that it was because of this particular treaty that they could visit their relatives across their national border, carry out economic trade and transactions, benefit from the facilities developed by the Indian government in terms of education, market, transportation infrastructure, religious pilgrimage and so on. For many this open border policy meant bread and butter as they believed that without this treaty it would be impossible for them to carry out their trade and business.

Almost 80 per cent of the respondents advocated that their ancestors had come to Nepal along with their land and their forefathers had been living or had migrated to Nepal before 200 years. They believed that they had contributed towards the economic development of Nepal since centuries, it was out of their hard work and commitments that Nepal was developing economically as more than 60 per cent revenues were generated from the Terai region of Nepal. However, this contradicted with the understanding of the hill caste Nepalis who viewed Madhesis as Indians who come to Nepal after marrying a Nepalese Madhesi woman and try to gain economic benefits from Nepal. The hill caste groups were also of the view that there is a severe crisis of job opportunities in Bihar and others northern states of India and the Nepalese Madhesis who have their relatives in India invited these migrants to Nepal for economic progress and prosperity.

The majority of the respondents had voted in favour of the Madeshi political parties in the 2008 CA elections but after the end of Madhesi movement the Madhesis felt that their leaders on being elected as their representatives did not actually fight for the creation of separate province for them. Out of many Madesh based parties and leaders the respondents informed that the MJF and its head Upendra Yadav was the only trusted leader despite his betrayal to the Madhesis after being elected their representative who later on became the Foreign Minister in the government formed in 2008. They argued that the Madhesi leaders after being elected in the elections did not actually fight for the creation of Madesh province but they were in Kathmandu contesting for power and positions forgetting their promises of formation of Madesh Pradesh. Therefore, in the next CA elections the voters had not voted for the Madhesi leaders as they were dissatisfied with them and voted for national and other newly formed Madhesi parties.



## Chapter 4

### Politics of Culture – A Case of Gorkhaland and Madhesi Movements

#### 4.1. Introduction: Culture and Politics

This chapter focuses on how culture can be used as an important political instrument by the leaders and activists of Gorkhaland and Madhesi movements. Before analyzing the politics of culture, the conceptual and theoretical formulations of culture and politics from a sociological viewpoint has been discussed in a brief manner.

Culture is an ambiguous concept and generally defined as a way of life that is learnt, shared, followed and transmitted from generation to generation among the members of a particular community through the process of socialization. Culture is essential as it moulds the biological being into a social one. It also regulates and restricts social interactions depending upon different socio-political, legal and economic contexts. It is also to be noted that culture is a socially constructed set of values, beliefs and practices, universal in nature and varies from one society to another. Abraham (2008:55) argues that culture has five broad types of components namely belief, values, language, norms and technology.

There are different theoretical expressions of culture. Some major philosophical interpretations of culture have been discussed here. The functionalist's views culture as an important element of society. The norms and values of society help to maintain the social equilibrium. French sociologist Emile Durkheim in his doctoral thesis 'The Division of Labour in Society' published in 1893, claims that the traditional societies were homogenous and simple in nature and the members were integrated on the basis of a common belief and value system relating to religion and culture. In a way, common culture was an important element for maintaining integrity in the society. However, the modern societies are diverse and plural in nature and so is the culture. Under such situations there are tendencies where two different cultures may come in contact and contradict with one another. These contradictions can be found in different socio-political and economic institutions (Haralambos, 2009).

The Marxists view culture from a different perspective. They believe that the ruling class is economically powerful and their economic dominance gives them the privilege and authority to control other socio-political and legal institutions. Marxists believe that culture of a society is basically designed to promote the interests and needs of the ruling class. Similarly, Max Weber has focused on the cultural aspects of Protestants of Western Europe and related it towards the growth and development of capitalism in the western world. For Weber cultural traits were at times important in determining the economy of the society, a view which stands in opposition to the Marxian notion of economy as the base or infrastructure of the society where other institutions rest upon it and are determined by it (ibid).

The sub-altern theorist's claim to raise the voice about the issues of the most exploited groups like dalits, peasants, women and other subjugated communities and groups. They try to explore the situation and conditions of the marginalized groups particularly in the post colonial societies. In doing so, they emphasize and analyse the culture of the sub-altern societies. The indologists try to understand, primarily the Indian and South Asian societies by concentrating on religious books and also by considering the civilizational, cultural and architectural heritage of the concerned area. For them different societies have their unique culture and civilization and these attributes are used to study the society. Louis Dumont and G.S. Ghurye have used this approach to study the Indian society.

The structuralist's are of the view that binary opposites define the social structure. The various elements of society are characterized by opposite components that are contrast to one another and contradict each other. Some examples of binary opposites are nature and culture, black and white, male and female and so forth. Under such conditions one component always dominates the other and stands as superior in the social reality. The post-modernists argues that the notion of binary opposites should be totally deconstructed and both the contrasting and opposite elements should be given equal emphasis and representation for understanding the society in totality. These are some approaches which are significant to study culture.

Now when we turn our attention to politics then the classical sociologists like Durkheim, Marx and Weber have all talked about it through their own set of philosophies. For Durkheim in the traditional society religion was all powerful and guided the everyday life of the members of the society. As the population increased in the society different individuals started to engage in different activities and as such the division of labour began to get enlarged. This resulted in the transformation of society from a simple type to an organic and heterogeneous one. Under such conditions, the integrity of the society could no more be controlled by religious beliefs and values. Therefore, the modern political values like equality, liberty and fraternity became very much significant to maintain unity and integrity in the society. Thus, for the functionalists like Durkheim the primary function of political institution was maintaining the integrity of society at large. Similarly, functionalists like Talcott Parsons have also regarded politics as an important institution of society whose role was to fulfill the desired goals of the members of the society. The functionalists have basically looked into the role and functional aspect of polity.

The Marxists view political institutions as an important tool of the capitalist for controlling the society. They claim that the capitalists who are economically dominant also have the political power which is used to control the state. They view that the ownership of private property led towards the division of society into two economic groups namely the haves and the have not's. These two groups have different interests, ideologies and goals which stand in contradiction to one another. According to Marx, it is only in the primitive communal society and his utopian communist society that the private ownership of property is absent. They argue that the political conflict that is primarily based on economic interests and ideologies would finally come to an end with the establishment of a classless society.

Weber has defined the three types of political authority on the basis of different kinds of social actions and values. The three types of authority are namely, traditional, charismatic and legal-rational. For him, in the traditional form of politics the leader inherits the political power on the basis of heredity and tradition. While in case of charismatic authority the leader has a charismatic or an extraordinary power which the

masses recognize and they follow the instructions and commands of their iconic leader. While in case of legal-rational authority the power and authority is derived on the basis of potential, logic and scientific calculations and qualities. Weber has basically contributed towards the conceptualization of political authority and power in the society.

#### **4.2. Politics of Culture in India and Nepal**

When we talk of politics of culture, in a simple understanding it is the interplay of culture and politics. When we look into the socio-cultural and religious aspect of India and Nepal then there is a thin line of difference between them. In both the nations the Hindus forms the majority population, they worship the same Gods and Goddesses, have common religious places and they also celebrate the same festivals and engage in similar religious rites and rituals. The Indo-Aryan languages like Hindi and Nepali are the national official languages of these two nations respectively. Caste-system was prevalent in both the nations and still continues to in different shape and dimensions although both these countries have announced its abandonment legally (Whelpton, 2005:157).

When we consider their political systems then historically both India and Nepal have been ruled by different monarchial rulers including the colonizers in case of India and Rana prime ministers in Nepal. Presently both these states have become democracies, a form of government which is regarded as 'of the people, for the people and by the people'. In democracies, the representatives are voted through adult franchise suffrage and number becomes an important criterion for attaining the political power. In order to achieve the political power and authority, also for mobilization of masses for social movements, the political parties have seemingly started to use the primordial elements like culture, religion, caste, language, region in both India and Nepal. According to Banton (1977:3) "men utilize physical and cultural differences in order to create groups and categories by the process of inclusion and exclusion". Such a situation invites culture into the political realm in the concerned nations.

When we talk of South Asian countries like India and Nepal then they are diverse and plural in nature characterised by multiethnic, multi-lingual and multi-cultural societies. Ganguly and Phadnis (2011) argues that the historical conquests, colonisation

process and human migration as the major reasons behind South Asian diversity. At the same time these three events and processes have also been responsible for cross-border ethnic and cultural interlinks in this part of the world. According to Mac Iver and Page in the traditional societies the religious institutions have been very vital elements for society to function efficiently as it unified its members and helped in maintaining the social order. However, in the modern states the economic and political institutions have gained more significance and play a critical role when it comes to preserving and maintaining the society.

In today's world, culture apart from socializing the individuals in the lines of beliefs, values, customs and traditions of society, it has equally become an important tool within the political structure for achieving the political demands and goals. Dov Ronen (1986) is of the view that ethnic group politicise ethnic factors like culture, when it is in conflict with the political elite over limited resources or allocation of benefits. In cases of social movements for separate statehood the political actors utilize their specific culture to express their distinct identity from the dominant ethnic group that controls the state and from which they seek to part off from. In doing so, both kinds of culture namely, the material culture and the non-material culture as distinguished by Ogburn, is seemingly deployed by various political and interest groups in their political dealings. It becomes quite appealing to see as how the traditional cultural traits like religion, language, race, ethnicity etc. penetrates, interacts and influences the modern institution of politics in contemporary societies. It is at this juncture that cultural identities become an important element for political analysis. The different cultural attributes which has been politicized in the Gorkhaland and Madhesi movement would be dealt in an orderly fashion.

#### **4.2.1. Language and Politics in Gorkhaland and Madhesi Movements**

Some basic constituents of culture includes language, beliefs, values, dress codes, signs, symbols and so forth. Both the Gorkha and Madhesi agitators have used their specific cultures in putting forward their statehood demands. Language is an important attribute of culture and Bartlett (1996) argues that language plays an important role in unifying the masses and for making political claims. Since both the Gorkhas and Madhesis were asserting that they were facing an acute identity crisis in India and Nepal they started to

politicise their culture particularly their language as it is considered to be an important ingredient of identity formation (Tagil, 1995).

When we look into the colonial history of Darjeeling then Hodgson had once claimed that the region was “Babel of tribes and nations” (O’Malley, 1907:47), the society then was highly heterogeneous in terms of race and language. Different sub-communities of Nepali ethnic group interacted in their own dialects. The present day Nepali language was then known as *Khas Kura* or *Parbate Bhasa* which was generally the language of the Khas communities which includes the Nepali caste groups like the Bahun, Chettri, Sarki, Damai and Kami. When we look at the developmental course of Nepali Grammar in Darjeeling hills then it was mostly contributed by the British administrators and missionaries during the early decades of nineteenth century. Col. Kirkpatrick published a Nepali vocabulary of 550 words and Lt. J.A. Ayton published the Nepali grammar in Devnagri script. Rev. William Start, Rev. William Macfarlane, Archibald Turnbull, Alexander Macleish, Rev. H.C. Duncan, Rev. Kilgour and Padri Ganga Prasad Pradhan who is one of the first Nepali Christian converts from Darjeeling were all engaged in translating the Bible into Nepali and compiling English-Nepali dictionary (Allay, 1972:6, Sen, 1992:79 cited in Sarkar, 2006).

In the early part of the twentieth century the local Nepali intellectuals of Darjeeling hills like Paras Mani Pradhan, Pandit Dharni Dhar Koirala and Surya Vikram Geweli developed the Nepali language through preparation of grammar books, publication of newspapers, monthly magazines, books and articles in Nepali language for schools students of different levels and for general masses. These Nepali trios were popularly known as “SuDhaPa”, the term was created by taking the first two initials of their names. With the development of Nepali language and literature, it soon became the lingua franca of Darjeeling hills. Sarkar (2013:13) by using a historical approach has linked language and ethnicity of Darjeeling hills where he has argued that Nepali as a common language created a sense of solidarity and facilitated the creation of a Nepali ethnic group in Darjeeling district. Sarkar (ibid) and Chalmers (2009) have argued that Nepali nationalism in India emerged due to the development of Nepali language and it

has successfully mobilized the Nepali ethnic group to demand three things. They are as follows:

- i. Inclusion of Nepali language in educational institutions during the mid 1920's.
- ii. Recognition of Nepali as an official language of the state and nation in between 1956 to 1992,
- iii. Justification of the demand of separate statehood on the basis of language since 1986 (Sarkar, 2013).

'SuDhaPa' having realised that India was about to gain independence from the British and in the post-independence era separate electoral province would be formed on the basis of language, they started to demand inclusion of Nepali language in educational institutions since the mid 1920's. Finally, the government decided to include the Nepali language in the educational institutions of Darjeeling hills. Although language was not considered as an effective political tool in Darjeeling before the independence but in the post-independent era language has been one of the vital elements for demanding a separate state as most of the states in post-independent India were classified on the basis of language.

When the State Reorganisation Committee (SRC) visited Darjeeling hills in mid 1950's then their record revealed that only 20 per cent of the hill population claimed Nepali to be their mother tongue. As a consequence Darjeeling was not eligible for a separate statehood under the reports of SRC. Scholars like Subba (1992) and Bomzan (2008) have also stated that the first Chief Minister of Bengal had misinterpreted the facts related with the actual number of Nepali speakers in Darjeeling hills. Immediately, the Nepali language committee was formed at Dehradun under the leadership of Thakur Chandan Singh (Lama) and the wave of the movement heightened when Darjeeling District Hill People's Language Implementation (Recognition) Committee (Bhasa Mannyata Samiti) was formed in Darjeeling on 31<sup>st</sup> March 1961, particularly to recognize Nepali as an official language in the district of Darjeeling and also to include the language in the 8<sup>th</sup> Schedule of the Indian Constitution with a claim that majority of the hill population spoke Nepali. Finally on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1961, Nepali was recognized as

one of the official language of Darjeeling district by the then West Bengal government (Sarkar, 2013).

Although Nepali language was recognized by the West Bengal government, the language was yet to be recognized and included in the Indian Constitution. Nepali speakers across the India came forward and demanded for the constitutional validity of Nepali language by forming All India Nepali Bhasa Samiti (AINBS) in June 1972. Finally in 1992, Nepali language was included in the 8<sup>th</sup> Schedule of the Indian Constitution after much trial and tribulations. Soon after the recognition of Nepali language AINBS became defunct.

Nepali that is the language of the Gorkhas was included in the Eight Schedule of the Indian Constitution after almost three decades of Nepali language movement. But it is unfortunate for the Gorkhas that despite having their language listed in the Indian Constitution but they have not achieved a separate state of their own. Therefore, in the mid 1980's language movement became closely connected with the demand of separate statehood in Darjeeling hills. Subash Ghising the Gorkha National Liberation Front chief started to demand the creation of Gorkhaland, a separate state for the Nepali speaking people of Indian origin. He claimed that the Indian Nepalis were facing a severe identity crisis because the mainstream Indians confused the Indian Nepalis with the Nepalis from Nepal as both are ethnically, linguistically and culturally similar. Therefore they considered the Indian Nepalis them to be immigrants from Nepal. In order to save the fate of Indian Nepalis he started to demand Gorkhaland and in the process started to differentiate between the Indian Nepalis from the nationals of Nepal.

It is also to be noted that when the Nepalis across India had united to demand the inclusion and recognition of their language in the Eight Schedule of the Indian Constitution, Subash Ghising the GNLF chief who had been demanding the formation of Gorkhaland had demanded the inclusion of Gorkhali language instead of Nepali language in the Eight Schedule of the Indian constitution. He had intentionally done so to separate the notion of Nepali from the Gorkhas. Nepali is both a language and nationality, but for the Gorkhas or Indian Nepalis, 'Nepali' is only their language and not their nationality. So including the term Nepali was considered by Ghising to bring confusion



with regard to their language and nationality. Such attempts of Ghishing also brought about some kind of contestation among the Nepalis within India.

Leaders of Sikkim and other parts of India preferred the term Nepali while Ghishing was against it. Both the groups had created their separate language organizations where one demanded inclusion of the term ‘Nepali’ and other ‘Gorkhali’. Finally, Nepali language was accepted by the government and Gorkhali was denounced. Nepali language which initially united the local population into one common ethnic group in the latter stage became a subject of discussion, debate and differentiation among the Nepalis of Darjeeling and other parts of India particularly with regard to its naming. Language was very much associated with the politics of Gorkhas and it still continues to impress the contemporary politics of Darjeeling hills.

At present times the GJMM has party offices in more than 20 states of India and they claim that there are 1.5 crores Gorkhas spread across India. It is on this basis also that GJMM pleads the state and central government to form a separate state for the Indian Nepali speakers. At present times the GJMM has emphasized that all the paper works of the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA) should be done in Nepali language. At the same time the party is also organising Nepali literary award functions and festivals where Nepali writers, poets, journalists, academics including sportspersons are given awards and accolades. The Nepali cultural research institution is also under construction in Darjeeling. All these activities are primarily done to emphasize the Nepali language and literature.

The rift between the Nepali speaking population and the West Bengal government swells when the important government notice circulars are issued only in Bengali language. Similarly, the compulsory knowledge of Bengali for appearing in the West Bengal Civil Services (WBCS) examinations and other government services has invited a lot of disorder over language in Darjeeling. Such a treatment by the state government has infuriated the Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha (GJMM) and the Nepali speaking population in the region. Due to such factors GJMM has time and again demanded for a separate school and college service commissions for GTA region which is also included in the GTA agreement signed by the centre, state and GJMM in 2011. They view such linguistic

barriers as hegemonic mechanisms of the Bengal government. As a consequence only those candidates who language proficiency in Bengali gets a chance to appear for government jobs. As a consequence the majority of Nepali speaking population feels that they are excluded and mistreated, and considers themselves as different from Bengal and Bengalis. This kind of linguistic challenge and contention has also resulted in worsening the century old community relationship between the Bengalis and the Indian Nepalis.

When we talk about the language and politics of Madhesis of Nepal then they are also facing a similar situation like the Indian Nepalis. Nepal being a plural society in diverse in terms of its ethnicity, language, culture, costumes and so forth. However, since the very formation of modern Nepal in 1768 under Prithivi Narayan Shah, Nepali language has been recognized as the official language of the nation. The Muluki Ain (Constitution under the Rana regime) of 1854 including the Nepalese Constitution of 1960, 1990 and subsequent Constitutions (including the interim constitution of 2008) have all considered Nepali as the official language of Nepal.

Majority of the Nepalese population living in the southern plains of Nepal speaks in their distinct languages and dialects like Maithili, Bhojpuri, Awadhi and plethora of other local dialects. The Madhesi politicians have been arguing that Hindi is a link language among the natives of Terai and it should also be made the official language of Nepal. The recognition of Hindi as an official language was first demanded by the Nepal Terai Congress (NTC) in 1950's. in 1990's Sadbhavana party and Madeshi Janadhikar Forum (MJF) in 2007 have also placed the demand for recognition of Hindi as an official language in Nepal. Madesh Rastriya Mukti Morcha (MRMM) in 2000 demanded for recognition of Maithili, Bhojpuri and Awadhi as official languages while the MJF demand for the promotion and use of these languages in Nepal (Bennett, 2013:106). However, such linguistic demands of the Madhesis have not been accepted by the government. Nepali is the only language that is used in the government offices of the county. Many times the inability to communicate in Nepali language disqualified Madhesis from acquiring various jobs and other opportunities.

Similarly, when we talk about the language used in educational institutions then the Nepali is the primary language. Jha (2014) in his book "Battles of the New Republic:

A Contemporary History of Nepal” has given a detailed autobiographic account of how Madhesis feel when they have to study in a language which they are less comfortable with. However, Bhattarai (2000) has revealed through his field investigation that in the southern plains of Gouriganj in Jhapa district of Nepal that the teachers do explain the students in their local languages as majority of Madhesis inhabit in the region. The Nepali state which turned to be a complete democratic nation recently, has been quite stern with recognition of Hindi as one of the official language.

Whelpton (2005) has also indicated as how the non-Nepali speakers including the artists have been given less preference in Nepal. The famous Bollywood singer Udit Narayan who hails from the Terai region of Nepal was not given a preference to sing in the national radio of Nepal. Instead many Nepali singers and artists from Darjeeling were invited to Nepal to perform in different programs. Such kind of inequality has severely hurted the sentiments of the Madhesis. Similarly, when it comes to citizenship certificates in Nepal the authorities are willing to give these documents to only those citizens who can speak, read and write in Nepali. Nepalese citizens who cannot fulfill such requirements are not issued citizenship certificates and other important documents issued by the state.

When we compare the language of Nepalis and Madhesis then it is found that majority of the people from Darjeeling hills speaks in Nepali. It is the medium of instruction in many government educational institutions and has been recognized as an official language by both the state and the central government of India. However, in case of Madhesis of Nepal, all the people of the southern plains do not regard Hindi as a common lingua franca although it is close to Maithali, Bhojpuri and Awadhi languages. There is a linguistic diversity among the people of Madesh. People living in the western plains mostly speak in Tharu while majority of the population in the borderline between Nepal and Uttar Pradesh speaks Awadhi and Bhojpuri language and in the eastern plains Maithili is used by majority of the populace.

Various political parties of plains including the Maoists during their ten year civil war in between 1996 to 2006 had demanded for recognition of different plain languages in the list of official languages of the region and nation. Unfortunately, such claims were

unaccepted by the government. When we look into the linguistic homogeneity of Nepalis in Darjeeling then the linguistic movement led by the 'SuDhaPa' in the mid 1920's, their contributions towards development and introduction of Nepali language in schools and print medias, the language movements for the recognition of Nepali language as one of the official languages in the state and its inclusion in the Eight Schedule of the Indian Constitution have all played a crucial role in making Nepali the local lingua franca of Darjeeling hills.

However, in case of Madesh distinct linguistic movements for the development of Hindi language and its inclusion in the national constitution has not been made in an adamant manner as there is no equal support from the entire plain community unlike in the case of Nepali language movement that took place in India. However, Tharus residing in the western plains of Nepal, who are considered to be an indigenous community of Nepal speaks in different Tharu dialects that different from one another. This group at present times are coming together and forming a common ethnic group despite their linguistic variations. Arjun Guneratne (2002) in his book "Many Tongues, One People: The Making of Tharu Identity in Nepal" has undertaken a study on Tharus and has clearly revealed as how different dialect speaking Tharus were being clubbed under one single organisation of Tharus. When it comes to the geography, twenty districts constitute Nepal's Terai while in case of Darjeeling it is only one single district of West Bengal and vey recently in March 2017, Kalimpong which was earlier a sub-division was upgraded to a district and Mirik municipality was made a sub-division.

The problems relating to language in case of Gorkhaland movement was observed thrice in course of the fieldwork and during the preparation of the final draft of this study. In 2013, six candidates from Darjeeling had appeared for the West Bengal College Service Commission interviews and they had passed it but they were not given jobs because they did not have proficiency in Bengali language. This was protested by the politicians and people of Darjeeling hills. Again in the year 2015, when the West Bengal Public Service Commission (WBPS) and also the State Bank of India (SBI) declared the employment notification that stated compulsory knowledge of Bengali language was essential, the people of Darjeeling hills strongly opposed it. The Member of Parliament

(MP) representing Darjeeling, S.S. Ahluwalia too was seen to have protested this action of the West Bengal government. In June 2017, the official facebook page of the Chief Minister of West Bengal Mamata Banerjee stated that Bengali was to be a compulsory language across the state. This was again protested by the hill people. The very next day the CM declared that it was not applicable in the hills but Bengali language could be kept as an optional language. But the mass had already been charged emotionally with the government for making an attempt to erase the existence and importance of Nepali language and they started to take out protest rallies and burn the effigies of the CM. This resulted in a new wave of Gorkhaland movement at the time when this study had almost come to an end.

#### **4.2.2. Politics, Caste and Indigenous Community:**

Now when we look into the indigenous community, caste and politics there is seemingly a very close interconnection between these three variables while studying the Gorkhaland and Madhesi movements. The stress on who is the indigenous community of the region? Caste in politics or politicization of caste was very much relevant in the present study.

In case of Gorkhaland movement the Lepcha community has been identified as the autochthon tribes by the government and has been considered as the original inhabitants of Darjeeling hills. The colonial gazetteers written by O'Malley, Dash, Dozey and others have clearly revealed that before the urbanisation process began in Darjeeling hills in 1835 there were only 20 huts of Lepchas in the present day Darjeeling town. At that time the number of Lepchas was approximately 100. Darjeeling which was historically part of Sikkim before it was annexed by the Gorkhas and later gifted to the East India Company is considered to be the original home of the Lepchas.

Even the CM of Sikkim Pawan Kumar Chamling on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2016, in a meeting held at Namchi announced that the Sikkimese Nepalis are not similar to Gorkhas. Although the two groups share culture but the Sikkimese Nepalis are majority and their votes determine the formation of the government in Sikkim but the Gorkhas are minority and historically they have migrated to India to serve in the army and later settled down in different parts of the country. He concluded that the Sikkimese Nepalis should not feel

insecure unlike the Gorkhas (Chettri, 2016). Gorkhas were viewed as migrants. The CM's statement also created fury among the people of Darjeeling hills. The Government of Sikkim has even declared Lepchas as the most ancient indigenous community of the state. In case of Madhesh also there is a debate about the original aborigines of the region.

The Gorkhas and the Madhesis are seen by many in both the countries as migrants from Nepal and India respectively. The state in both the nations also strongly projects that the Lepchas and the Tharus are the real inhabitants of the country. When it comes to Darjeeling district the Lepchas were given the first tribal development board by the West Bengal government under Mamata Banerjee in 2013, after the formation of the GTA. The state government expressed that the GTA was corrupt and the tribal and indigenous community like Lepchas among others would be developed by forming such tribal boards. After declaration of Lepcha development board the West Bengal gradually created development boards for almost all the hill communities including the religious and linguistic minority groups as well. However, the GJMM viewed this as a major attack from the government to break the social fabric of Gorkha community comprising of various castes, tribes, communities and minority groups. This action of the government was particularly seen by the GJMM as a mechanism to put an end to the demand of Gorkhaland by dividing the hill communities.

Members of different castes and community groups of Gorkha ethnicity who were dissatisfied with the GJMM and GTA started to accept the tribal development boards given by the government. It was also evident that in most of the caste and communities two groups emerged one that wanted to accept the development board and another who rejected it. The groups that rejected the offer were supporting the GJMM and expressed that such strategies of the government would break the Gorkha solidarity. While the people who accepted the boards believed that GTA was corrupt and such boards helped the development of the local communities and also helped in strengthening the demand of Schedule Tribe status for these groups who had not yet been granted that privilege. The GJMM was initially not really bothered with the formation of such boards but when the state was successful in forming more than 5 such boards they saw it as a major threat and perceived that the state was trying to break the integrity of the Gorkha community. Then

after, the GJMM also declared to form 17 development boards within the GTA arena (Sikkim Express dated 13/02/2016). There seemed to be a competition between the GTA and the state to form the development boards. Both the groups formed these boards for their support base. TMC government through the creation of development boards seemed to garner its support base in the hills and stop the hill people from demanding Gorkhaland by stressing on the ideology of '*poribortoon*' or development. The GJMM on the other hand was trying to stop the growing popularity of TMC in the hill and maintain its support base.

The Tharus residing mostly in the western Terai region of Nepal are considered to be the original dwellers of Madesh. This group was historically exploited as bonded labourers in Nepal and they are immune to malaria. After the 1990s the traditional practice of bonded labour was made illegal in Nepal. It was only after this that the Tharus who were discriminated and subjugated in the history have been demanding their rights and privileges in the government and administration. It was also reported that many poor Tharu women were also lured into the surrogate motherhood business in India. Before the eradication of malaria in Terai in 1950's the region was sparsely inhabited and Tharus predominantly lived in the Terai. Madhesis too are viewed as later migrants to the lands of the indigenous Tharus. The government after the first people's movement in Nepal in 1990's gave certain reservations to many traditionally marginalized groups like Tharus, janjatis and dalits but the Madhesis were not given such reservation rights until 2007.

During the Madhesi movement of 2007, both the Madhesis and Tharus were initially unified and demanding the creation of autonomous Madesh Pradesh. Upendra Yadav and Bijay Gachhadar were the most important leaders of Madhesis and Tharus. They along with other Madesh based parties had formed the UDMF in 2007 to demand for the formation of autonomous Madesh but in 2010 these two leaders parted ways as Gachhadar saw that the Madesh leaders were focusing only on the issue of Madhesi and not Tharus. Tharus fear ostracisation, exploitation and domination from the Madhesis (Miklian, 2008:9). This resulted in split of collectivity among the Madhesis and Tharus in their demand for separate Madesh.

After this Gachhadar formed his own party Madeshi Janadhikar Forum (Democratic) to fight for the regional autonomy and rights of the Tharus. The party led by Upendra Yadav came to be known as Madeshi Janadhikar Forum (Nepal). After this event the Tharus also started to demand for their own separate province. In the 2013, Constituent Assembly elections the government was formed by Nepali Congress led by Sushil Koirala, CPN (UML) under K.P. Sharma Oli and the Madeshi Janadhikar Forum (Democratic) headed by Gachhadar (ICG Report, 2016). The government according to the Madeshi respondents was soft towards the Tharus and harsh towards them.

Looking within the Madesh based parties also the different parties had different caste affiliations. The Sadbhavana party and the Terai Madesh Democratic Party was backed by high caste Madhesis while the Madeshi Janadhikar Forum (Nepal) under Upendra Yadav had predominant support from the middle castes. There seemed to be a close connection between caste and political parties in case of Madesh. However, similar trend was not found among the caste groups and politics of Darjeeling. But when the government started forming different development boards many Gorkha caste groups and communities started to support the TMC party which was heading the government then. This was clearly visible during the 2014 General Parliamentary elections and 2016 State Legislative Assembly elections where the members of the tribal boards were seen supporting the TMC party. Therefore, one can conclude that there is a linkage between caste, the question of indignity and politics of the Gorkhaland and Madeshi movements. The governments in both the nations are gentle while dealing with the aboriginal tribes but the Government does not view the Madhesis and Gorkhas as the original inhabitants of the land despite the stress from the agitating groups.

#### **4.2.3. Politicisation of Region in Gorkhaland and Madhesi Movements**

When we look into the characteristics of social movements T.K. Ommenn (2010) has clearly highlighted that out of several factors one factor that is responsible for strengthening the movement depends upon the geographical coverage. The same conceptualization in frame analysis has been termed as 'frame extension' by Snow (1986) which means the activists try to expand their boundaries to attract more number of supporters. It is also to be noted that different regions are characterized by different forms



of culture, belief and values. When we look into the demand of Gorkhaland the protestors are of the view that Gorkhaland should be created for the Nepali speaking Indians and the geographical area under it should include Darjeeling district along with Kalimpong and Dooars region of Jalpaiguri district extending up to Kumar Gram in the West Bengal Assam border. However, the agitation protests are mostly done in the hilly regions of Darjeeling and becomes quite risky to be conducted successfully in the of North Bengal as the Nepali speaking people are minority in the area.

When GJMM entered into Dooars in the Jalpaiguri district with their campaign for Gorkhaland in 2011, then a clash between the GJMM and the Adivasis of Dooars was witnessed where 3 Gorkhas were shot dead by the state armed forces. Many Gorkhas also inhabits in Jalpaiguri district and in almost all the states of India but the proposed state of GJMM demands Darjeeling hills and the adivasi dominated Terai area of Jalpaiguri also to be included within the framework of Gorkhaland. When the Gorkhaland movement reached its peak in 2017, protest rallies for Gorkhaland was carried out in almost all the major Indian cities. The Gorkhas who inhabits in different parts of India are seen to be supportive of Gorkhaland and also participates in the rallies to support it. This has purely been an effort of the migrant Gorkhas who have moved out of the hills either for job opportunities or for studies. The mass rallies for Gorkhaland is not solely confined in the hills of Darjeeling alone but also in other metropolitan areas within and outside India.

At times the GJMM led agitators were also seen fighting with the members of pro-Bangla groups like Amra Bangla, Bangla Bhasa Bacho committee based in plains of Siliguri. These groups are pro and radical Bangla groups who are against the idea of Gorkhaland. This group sees the Gorkhas as migrants from Nepal who came to the region through the Indo-Nepal treaty of Peace and Friendship 1950.



Figure 4.1. Federal provincial demarcation of Nepal.

(Source: <http://www.expeditionsnepal.com/where-is-nepal/> accessed on 12<sup>th</sup> August 2016)

Similarly, when it comes to the Madhesi movement the mobilization and demonstrations for autonomous Madesh are carried out only in the Terai regions of Nepal particularly in the central and eastern Terai. The Madhesi demand for the creation of autonomous province comprising of 20 Terai districts of Nepal starting from Mechi river in the east to Mahakali river in the west. They were concerned only with the plain land and were willing to keep the contested areas with the hills. The Madhesi unlike the Gorkhas are not living across the length and breadth of Nepal. Therefore, their political mobilization is limited only in the plains and totally absent in the hills. After the 1960's resettlement policy and eradication of malaria in Terai, the hill caste groups have also started to migrate to the plains of Nepal and settle down in the area. This has resulted in the formation of heterogeneous society in Terai. When the Madhesi movement started in Nepal in 2007, there was a communal fight between the Madhesi and the hilly Nepalese in Nepalgunj, a border town between India and Nepal in central Terai region of Nepal. Many armed Madhesi groups like the Janatantrik Terai Mukti Morcha (JTMM) which has two factions one under Jalwa Singh and another under Goit have at times attacked the hill caste Nepalese in the Terai and also taken extortions from them. At the same time there are also many groups of the hill castes such as Chure Bhawar Ekta Samaj (CBES) living

in the Terai who argues that they would be turned into minority if Madesh Pradesh is formed and The Chhetri Samaj of Nepal (CSN) strongly opposes federalism based on identity.

#### **4.2.4. Cultural Symbols, Dress and Presentation of Self in Gorkhaland and Madhesi Movements**

Basu (1996:229) holds the view that ethnic and regional identity movements make use of cultural signs and symbols in asserting their demands. Both the Gorkhas and Madhesis have instrumentally used their respective cultural attributes for demanding separate states or provinces within their respective nations. The Gorkhas in a form of protest started to wear their traditional dresses. The men started to wear their traditional dress *daura suruwal* and *dhaka topi* while the women wore the *chaubandi cholo* or *faria* in the agitation led by GJMM after 2007. Similarly, the Madhesi males were also seen wearing *dhotis* in their protests for autonomous province. These acts were basically undertaken to showcase that these groups are different from Bengalis in case of Gorkhaland and the hill caste Nepalese in case of Madhesi movement. In case of Gorkhaland movement the norms were much stricter as those who did not put on their traditional dresses, their faces were painted black. Everyone in the region was summoned to put on their cultural dresses in form of protest.

During the agitation period, apart from dress code the billboards and signboards in Darjeeling hills and Nepal's Terai were replaced by Gorkhaland and Madesh Pradesh signboards. The signboards which had government of West Bengal or Nepal written on it were replaced by Gorkhaland and Madesh Pradesh signboards. This was done to assert the government that they wanted the creation of autonomous states of their own and not be part of the existing states. The Madhesis asserted that Nepal was not only the country of people putting on *topis* or the traditional Nepalese cap but it was also the country of people wearing *dhotis*, the traditional dress code of the Madhesi men. In case of Nepal, it is mandatory to wear this traditional cap while taking a photo for national passport. All the Nepalese citizens including the Madhesis have to wear this cap while taking the photo for passport. This cap although was not the traditional outfit of the Madhesis they were compelled to wear it during the time of making their passports. Passports with photos

without this cap was rejected and not approved by the concerned department. In both the movements putting on black ribbon in the arms or hoisting black flags were common. This expressed that these agitators were unhappy with the government and it represented protests. When the CM of West Bengal visited Mirik after the TMC won the municipality elections in June 2017, she was greeted with black flags as she had made an announcement regarding the compulsory Bengali language across the state just few days ago. During the agitation time, both in Darjeeling and southern Nepal the protestors were seen using black coloured flag and arm ribbons while demanding separate statehoods.

When the new Constitution of Nepal was promulgated on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2015 by the Hon'ble President of Nepal Shri Ram Baran Yadav at 5:30 p.m. the nation was to celebrate the implementation of the law of the land by lighting candles and lamps. In a much similar fashion like the festival of lights, Deepawali is celebrated. The observations turned something different as the entire nation was not really apprehensive about the new law. Half of the nation particularly the citizens of the Terai region including some janjatis, ethnic minorities and women activist groups were unhappy with the new constitution. They advocated that the new law did not include the aspiration of half of the population. Madesh based parties claimed 20<sup>th</sup> September as the "Black Day". Such demonstrations is an expression of dissatisfaction and rejection of the law.

Lastly, in case of Gorkhaland movement the protestors often used *Khukhuri*, the machete used by the Gorkhas as their cultural symbols. Both the GNLF and GJMM have symbolically made use of this weapon in their party flags. This tool for the Gorkhas reminds them of their bravery and heroic deeds, using which the Gorkhas serving in the armies had fought various wars winning many victories across the world. However, to the people of the other communities the use of such a weapon was an expression of violence and terror.

#### **4.2.5. Gender and Political Culture**

In this section an attempt has been made to look into the participation of different genders in the movement. It was found that in case of Gorkhaland movement led by GJMM the women were actively participating in the movement. In the very beginning the GJMM

had formed the *Nari Morcha* or the women wing of the party. Women were also recruited in the Gorkhaland Personnels (GLP) cadres and they were given training by the retired army personals. However, in case of Madhesi movement a visible and an active participation of the women was not seen.

Most of the leaders of Madhesi movement were males while in case of Gorkhaland movement women and their participation formed an important element of the movement. The *nari morcha* is also found in the Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) party in the neighbouring state of Sikkim which has a majority of Nepali speakers. It is seemingly acceptable that the Gorkha women are very much active in politics of their region. In case of Madhesi movement the people who were killed by the armed forces were mostly men but in case of Gorkhaland movement women have also been shot down by the police and army. The *nari morcha* became a very instrumental body in the demand of Gorkhaland as they came forward in strikes, rallies and other demonstrations.

The Bharatiya Gorkha Parisangh (BGP), a pan-Indian apolitical organisation which also demanded the formation of Gorkhaland had a woman president Mrs. Dil Kumari Bhandari. She was the former Rajya Sabha MP and wife of late Nar Bahadur Bahndari, the former CM of Sikkim. She had also played an important role in the linguistic movement for the recognition of Nepali language in the eight Schedule of the Indian constitution. Mrs. Sarita Rai, the present Kalimpong MLA is also a women and she has time and again raised the issue of Gorkhaland. In case of Madhesi movement the women did participate in rallies and protests but their number and participation was less as compared to the female supporters of Gorkhaland movement. Rai (2015) in her unpublished M.Phil. dissertation 'Women in Gorkhaland Movement: A Sociological Study' has dealt with the role of women in the Gorkhaland movement where she has concluded that the role of women in the movement was significant. The formation of women wing within the parent body was successful in mobilizing the women. The participation of women in the movement raised political consciousness among them and its impact is seen in the political process.

The new constitution of Nepal that was passed on September 2015 by 507 out of 598 Constituent Assembly members was criticized for gender biased citizenship policy.

Motherhood was not counted as a basis of citizenship. The new constitution stated that if the Nepali women married a person from outside the country then her children would not be given citizenship by birth but citizenship through naturalization was allowed but that too involved a complicated procedure. Moreover, such citizens were not allowed to take charge of the most important positions of the government and administration. This was done to keep out children “born out of Nepali mother and a foreign father”. This caused disappointment among the women in Nepal against the government for formulating a gender bias policy citizenship policy. The Madhesis also joined along with other protestors and criticized the citizenship policy as they would also be the most affected the most for many Madhesi women are married to the northern states of India. The number varied between one million to four million people who would be made stateless under the new citizenship provision (Muni, 2015:15-17).

In both the movements it was found that during the election time the regional parties at every level had campaigned on the issue of federalism or separate statehood. In case of Madhesi movement in 2008 CA elections the Madesh parties had emphasized the demand of autonomous Terai. During that elections the Madeshi parties could garner much support from the Madhesis and they won almost 30 per cent votes (Bennett 2013). However, after the elections the Madhesi leaders were busy in Kathmandu and had been silent on the formation of Madesh Pradesh. Therefore, in the CA elections held in December 2013, the public was disoriented with their leaders and many other Madesh based political parties had been formed by then which resulted in defeat of Madeshi parties. This time they could gather only 10 per cent votes and the number of Madhesi leaders in the government declined drastically. The Madhesi voters seemed to be politically calculative in terms of functioning of their leaders and political parties, as the results of 2013 elections has highlighted it. While in case of Gorkhaland movement the leaders after the elections were busy with their personal and political motives making the public disoriented. Yet in other elections also it was GJMM who was continuously winning the elections with huge margins. The agenda of Gorkhaland pursued by the GJMM seemed to win the political aspirations of the people through an emotional manner where Gorkhaland was often compared with a mother imprisoned by the Bengal

government in the Writer's building in Kolkata. Any party that opposed the GJMM's opinion was also labeled as an anti-Gorkhaland party.

Similarly, the GJMM including other political parties of Darjeeling hills have mentioned the demand for Gorkhaland as one of their fundamental issues in their respective manifestos. GJMM since its very inception has kept Gorkhaland as their political agenda in every elections whether it be General Assembly elections, State Legislative elections, municipality and GTA elections. The inclusion of the term autonomous Madesh or the creation of Gorkhaland has been a major political tool for both the hill parties of Darjeeling and Madesh based parties of Nepal.

Historically, in case of Madhesi movement the Madhesis mostly supported the national parties like Congress, CPN (UML) or the Maoists mostly to prove their loyalty towards these parties and nation at large. But to achieve an autonomous province through this strategy was a failure as the national parties did not really give any heed to the regional and ethnic demands of Madhesis. As a consequence the Madhesis after 2000 started to form their own regional parties and started to fight for their demands by forming an alliance with other Madesh based parties. While in case of Gorkhaland movement the GJMM also supported the national party, BJP and supported its candidate to win MP elections twice. Unfortunately, BJP which had earlier promised to fulfill the aspirations of Gorkhas have been silent on the issue of Gorkhaland after coming to power at the centre. Observers are of the view that BJP is silent on the issue of Gorkhas as it is striving to develop and grow its influence and support in the state of West Bengal. If the party talks in favour of Gorkhaland then they would be very much unpopular in Bengal as most of the Bengalis do not want the state to partition for Gorkhaland.

Both in Darjeeling and Madesh majority of the people lived in rural areas. In the former majority of the people worked in tea gardens. A Telegraph report of 21<sup>st</sup> October 2017 written by Vivek Chettri has stated that in 87 tea gardens of Darjeeling hills 55,000 people are permanently employed in the tea industry. While in case of Nepal's Madesh the people in the rural areas are mostly engaged in agriculture and livestock. The economic profiles of both the rural dwellers were comparatively lower than their urban counterparts. This segment of society was politically sensitive as they felt the relative

deprivation in all socio-economic and political set-ups. Therefore, most of them were participating in the movements with a hope that if the movement succeeds then their overall conditions would improve positively.

#### **4.2.6. Religion in Gorkhaland and Madhesi Movements**

Although religion through Durkheimian lens is viewed as an important integrating institution in the traditional society but in the modern contemporary times Coakley argues that it is responsible for many conflicts (2012:77). In this section religion and its interlink with the movements of the Gorkhas and Madhesis has been dealt.

In case of Darjeeling and southern plains of Nepal, Hinduism was the major religion. More than 90 percent of the respondents followed this religion. Other religious groups like Muslims, Christians, Buddhists were also found in the study area. However, religion did not have any direct implication with the two movements as majority of the agitators and the state government officials were mostly Hindus but it did have some undercover significances.

In case of Nepal, monarchy was brought down in 2007 through the joint efforts of the seven parties of Nepal and the Maoists. The Madhesi movement started in the same year and it was initially seen as the group that was backed by the royal family and the Indian government. The Madhesis are mostly Hindus and Nepal was the only Hindu nation in the world. People initially felt that that India also supported the image of Nepal as a Hindu nation. So, the Madhesis were thought to be the politically charged groups for safeguarding Hindu monarchy in Nepal. However, later it was revealed that they were politically motivated for attaining separate federal province, reservation rights, proportionate representations and others rights. It was the Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP) that was advocating the reinstatement of monarchy in Nepal and Hindu Nepal. The elected CA members of this party had also boycotted the constitution drafting process along with the Madhesi political parties in 2015.

In case of Darjeeling religion was not seen to have any connection with the politics. However, when it supported the BJP twice in the MP elections in 2009 and 2014 then some incidents linked with religion did take place. BJP is a national party in India



that is believed to have '3H' objectives namely Hindi language, Hindu religion and Hindustan. In case of Darjeeling there are many minority groups like the Christians and Muslims. During the election campaign time of the former Darjeeling MP Jaswant Singh, he opened his speech by addressing the crowd with the slogan "Jai Jai Maa Kali ayo ayo Gorkhali" meaning "Praise to Lordess Kali, here comes the Gorkhali" it was heartily accepted by the majority of the masses while the minority groups of the hills was disappointed. When GJMM officially declared that the party would be supporting the BJP candidate for the MP elections in 2009 then the people particularly belonging to the Christian community opposed the idea of GJMM. Rev. Stephan Lepcha the head of Christian community organization gave an open press release that the Christian community would not be supporting BJP as the party had some religious doctrines which was unaccepted by the people following Christian faith. Again in 2014 General Assembly elections also the minority community was less supportive of the BJP party as the party is believed to dominate the people following other faiths apart from Hinduism.

Recently, when the Gorkhaland movement reemerged in June 2017, the Chairman of the Christian minority development board, Solomon Subba gave a statement in the television that "Christians are against the formation of Gorkhaland". However, other Christian organizations criticized his comment and expressed that just like others, Christians were also Gorkhaland lovers. The other minority community that is the Muslims also lives in large number in Darjeeling hills. They are mostly engaged in business, bakers, butchers, carpentry, restaurant owners and others. The Muslims openly expressed that they would not be celebrating their religious festival Id but continue to support the ongoing strike for Gorkhaland in 2013 and 2017. GJMM supremo Bimal Gurung referred them as Gorkha Muslims. There was also one Muslim candidate who was an elected GTA councillor.

In case of Madesh also, Muslims are found. There also they are mostly engaged in business, agriculture, artisans and others. Although 96 per cent of Muslims lives in Madesh they do not prefer to be called Madhesis (Bennett, 2013:96). When the Madhesi movement began in 2007 initially they were silent as the movement was led by MJF (N) a middle caste Yadav dominated party. But in 2015, the alliance of Madesh based parties

UDMF was not actually leading the movement but all the people from Terai had collectively come forward to protest the age old domination of the hill caste Nepalese of particularly the high caste and demand their electoral, political and legal rights and justices. During the Madhesi agitation of 2015, the Muslims also organized rallies and started to demand for their rights and privileges in the southern plains of Nepal. Such kind of participation of people belonging to various religious backgrounds indicates that in the movements under study religion has certain linkages with politics of social movement.

## Chapter 5

### Understanding Gorkhaland and Madhesi Movements:

#### Through the Framing Analysis

##### 5.1. Framing Theory of Social Movements:

The idea of framing analysis was propounded by an American sociologist Erving Goffman in the 1970's. He argued that within human minds there is a presence of something in between the existing reality and human perception. This existing element between the reality and mental sense is called 'mediator'. This mediator helps us to develop knowledge and understand the world around us. Every human has a unique mediator and it is situational, meaning it varies in different circumstances and different mediators generate different motivations. This creates a variety of human understanding regarding a particular situation and there can be no single explanation that fits everyone in all the situations. He then developed the concept of 'primary framework' for mediator that lies between the social reality and human perceptions and he used the framing to understand as how individuals construct meaning regarding various phenomena occurring in the world (Goffman, 1974:8).

Primary frameworks are basically the preexisting view within the schemata of interpretation which humans use to give meaning to a meaningless event or action. The primary framework is divided into two types name the natural and social. Natural frameworks help us to understand events that are "undirected, unoriented, unanimated, unguided, purely physical." It gives us natural and biological interpretations which cannot be controlled by people. The social frameworks are complex and it is this framework that helps people to design their perceptions. Different cultural values, religious beliefs and social norms play an important role in determining the human interpretation of various circumstances. For an example death is purely a natural and a biological event but when we talk about the sorrow or grief of family members affected by a death of a person, it is social. In doing so, people make use of their experience and knowledge from the social frameworks. They communicate their thought over the event. Their thoughts are basically accrued during the process of individual socialization (ibid).

In discussing the primary framework Goffman also highlights that there are many frameworks which stands more important than the others. The first frame that is chosen from the many for taking actions and developing meanings is basically determined by the cultural elements of the society. It is also to be noted that the central frames may at times overlap or conflict with one another. Different people choose one primary framework out of many different frameworks. As a result people may be in living in a same socio-economic and political conditions, facing common situations but due to their varying primary frameworks their interpretation about the world differs (ibid: 21-25).

The framing of social movements was developed by Snow, Benford, Worden and Rochford in 1986 and through it they argued as why people involved in social movements. They borrowed the concept of framing from Goffman and argued that schemata of interpretation helped people to 'locate, perceive, identify and label' the events occurring around them. The supporters of framing theory of social movements advocate that frames influence and shape people's perception and guide their action. Therefore, this theory helps us to understand what type of beliefs and values are framed by the activists of the movement to assert and ascertain their cause (Snow, 1986).

Snow also focused on how the collective identity is dynamic by including four processes namely frame amplification, frame extension, frame transformation and frame bridging. Frame amplication means developing a stimulative frame which helps the participants of the movement to construct their identity, their demands, beliefs and goals they aspire to achieve. Frame extension means the activists expanding their boundaries and adding more values to attract more number of supporters. Frame transformation is similar to frame extension. It develops new values to replaces the old values which do not seem to be crucial for the movement. Lastly, frame bridging means connecting two frames which earlier was unconnected but have an ideological significance for the movement (ibid). This particular study has been undertaken by using these theoretical entailments of the frame analysis to understand the Gorkhaland and Madhesi movements.

## **5.2. Reasons for the Emergence of Gorkhaland and Madhesi Movements: Respondent's Frame**

Social movements according to Oommen emerge for varied reasons. According to him, various sociologists and scholars of social movements have pointed at different reasons and conditions for the rise of social movement. Davis claims that the newly felt need is one reason for the emergence of the movement. Barber considers the deprivation of various types as the factor for initiating social movement. Wallace holds that social movements begin when the members of the society feel that their culture is unsatisfactory. Linton points that the frustration of the people leads to social movements. Bank opines that strain and dissatisfaction with the existing social order results in social movements. Abel claims that the need for modification of the existing social order is a major cause for social movements to occur (2010).

The Gorkha and Madhesi movements are basically regarded as ethnic and regional movements seeking for the creation of an autonomous federal state or province. Gorkhaland movement has its history embedded in the pre-independence period, during the British rule in India in 1907. It is considered that the movement began with the leaders of the Hillmen's Association submitting a memorandum to the then British administration and demanded for a separate administrative framework for the people living in Darjeeling district. While the Madhesi movement traces its origin since the 1950's, the time when Nepal became a democracy after being freed from the autocratic Rana rule.

In the field the respondents had different opinions about the reason for the emergence of the movement. 172 informants (74.78%) believed that the present Gorkhaland movement was due to the identity crisis, lack of political representation and economic underdevelopment of the region. 36 of them (15.65%) felt that the reason for Gorkhaland was due to identity issue and 22 respondents (9.56%) believed that the Gorkhaland movement was because of economic underdevelopment.

The informants who articulated that the reason for the movement was because of identity, political representation and economic underdevelopment was the highest. Their

claim was the Gorkhas in India was mostly misunderstood as Nepalese, the Nepali citizen of Nepal. They disliked being called a citizen of Nepal. They believed that a separate state alone can solve their identity crisis. Moreover, they also claimed that they had very few elected representatives in the state and center to represent them. Lastly, they argued that most of the revenues that is generated from Darjeeling hills particularly from tea, tourism and other industries is taken by the state and a very limited budget is allocated for the hills. They argued that Darjeeling is still under a colonial rule of Bengal. 36% of the sample argued that the demand for Gorkhaland was for identity. They advocated that most of the citizens in India are recognised by the names of their states and the Indian Nepalis did not have a state of their own. As a consequence they are often mistaken as the citizen from Nepal and this hurts their sentiments and also troubles their existence in India. They also claimed that only a separate state can solve this issue of identity. Lastly, a very handful people mostly from tea garden belts claimed that the demand for Gorkhaland is for economic development. They argued that the economic condition of Gorkhas was very poor and they believed that if their economic condition improves then the identity of Gorkhas would automatically improve.

On the other hand the frames of Madhesi respondents was 88 per cent of the respondents where, the view that their socio-cultural rights had been chequered by the hill caste groups. They argued that the high caste groups were ever dominating in all the sectors if administration and governance. They felt that the handful upper caste Hindus of hills dominated every important sector of Nepal. They claimed that the movement for Madesh Pradesh was primarily for getting liberated from the exploitative system of the high caste of hill origin.

The remaining 12 per cent argued that they had well accommodated with the hill people and they did not have any major problems related with governance, administration and political representation. They seemed to have been fully accommodated within the life world of the hill caste Nepalis. These categories of respondents also seemed bit scared and unconfident to tell their viewpoints and spoke Nepali fluently.

### 5.3. Frames of Gorkhaland and Madhesi Political Group

All the political parties were of the view that a separate statehood was important in Darjeeling hills and now turning the focus on the three frames of collective actions of social movement organizations for Gorkhaland, it was found that many political parties of Darjeeling hills *had the demand of Gorkhaland* as their primary agenda. Here, the different political groups and their diagnostic, prognostic and motivational frames have been discussed.

The most important political party with majority supporters was the GJMM under Bimal Gurung. It is the dominant party in the hills. It emerged in 2007 and revived the Gorkhaland movement and continues to advocate the formation of a separate state for the Indian Nepalis within the Indian Union. It has a very strong support base mostly in the tea garden belts which represents more than seventy percent of the total population of the district. In order to achieve its goal the party has been vehemently supporting the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP). Both in 2009 and 2014, the GJMM backed the BJP candidates in the Lok Sabha elections and in both the cases made them victorious with a huge margin of votes. Although the first attempt was futile as the BJP could not form the government. The second trial is expected to be fruitful with BJP in power at the centre. Quite confident with this great hope and trust, the present GJMM supremo at times roars in public meetings "The ball is in our court and it is near the goalpost...we are about to score a goal" meaning that they are very close in achieving Gorkhaland. Moreover, the benevolent words of the present Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the 2014 election campaign at Siliguri declared "The dreams of Gorkhas are my dreams" has consequently given a lot of consolation to the Gorkhas across the country for the fulfillment of their century old dream of a separate state.

The party believes that BJP is sympathetic towards the Gorkhas and has high hopes that BJP which had earlier carved out three new states during their NDA I regime will also eventually create Gorkhaland. GJMM is mobilising its support base through *padh yatras* (foot rallies), the door to door foot campaign organised in different wards of the district. They have also taken up the issues of granting Schedule Tribe status to ten

hill communities and regularization of more than five thousand casual workers working under the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA).

The unfortunate situation for the party is its failure to convince the BJP of West Bengal, to garner their support for the cause of Gorkhaland. The state BJP is only in favour of development and political stability in the hills but completely against the partition of Bengal for Gorkhaland. Secondly, the murder case allegation of the late Madan Tamang, the leader of Akhil Bharatiya Gorkha League (ABGL) on the main leaders of the GJMM has given them a bad name and fame. The critics point at these inhumane and barbaric character of the leaders. The murder case file has not been closed down but the investigation is still going on. Lastly, the BJP does not have a majority in the Upper House of the Parliament to pass the bill in favor of Gorkhaland. Probably the reason for GJMM to ally with Congress and Communists is to gain their support in the Upper House that is if and when the BJP introduces and passes the bill from the Lower House. Unfortunately, the issue of Gorkhaland has not even been raised by the BJP in the parliament till date.

Apart from GJMM GNLFF was the party to first demand the creation of Gorkhaland under the late Subash Ghising. The party came into existence in the mid 1980's and it was the first party to demand Gorkhaland in a legitimate and vocal manner by provoking Article 3A of the Indian Constitution. The party saw the plight of Indian Nepalis or Gorkhas in the Indo-Nepal Peace and Friendship Treaty of 1950 and demanded its abrogation. After his demise in 2015, his son Shri Mann Ghising has been made the new party president. GNLFF is empowering its support base by reviving its old demand of Sixth Schedule for Darjeeling which was slumped down after the party's failure to remain in power since 2008. This special statute of autonomy was particularly designed for the tribal areas of North East (NE) India and both the state and centre were in favour of bestowing this plan for the region. Drawing from the experience of NE states, it became evident to the leaders that most of the present day states of that region were earlier placed under Sixth Schedule before they became a state. Almost all the backward and scheduled areas of the colonial administration have been made states in the post-independent India. So far, Darjeeling is the only remaining historical backward area that has not been



converted into a state. So, for GNLF the foundation stone for Gorkhaland is to bring the region under the Sixth Schedule first and concomitantly, follow the political footprints of NE states. The party had aligned with TMC in the 2014 MP and 2016 MLA elections.

However, the opposition groups argue that for an area to be brought under Sixth Schedule it has to have more than fifty to sixty percent of the tribal population which in case of Darjeeling district does not fulfill the required criteria. The opponents also asserts that if Sixth Schedule is granted then the region will be declared a tribal area, majority of population which comprise of non-tribal groups would be debarred from many socio-cultural, politico and economic engagements and benefits. It is directly seen as a device to divide the regional society.

JAP was formed in January 2016 by a group of erudite personals. The party is headed by Dr. Harka Bahadur Chettri, the former GJMM spokesperson. He parted ways with Morcha in September 2015 when he turned down the party chief's order to resign from the post of the Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA). He resigned from the party but continued to remain as an independent MLA from Kalimpong. He also shares a very close relationship with the CM Ms. Banerjee. The party has well known experts drawn from the pool of academia, lawyers and activists from pressure groups. The first point in their manifesto is development of the region and an attainment of a separate statehood. Although a separate statehood is also their demand, they do not stress on using the concept - Gorkhaland. They believe that Gorkhas are not the only ones inhabiting in Darjeeling district and Dooars but the region has also been a home for many other ethnic minority tribes and communities since ages. They go for integrative approach of accommodating every group of the region. They have an impression that the direct use of pro-ethnic terms like Gorkhaland would exclude the members of other communities. Moreover, the concept Gorkha has direct connections with the small hill district in western part of Nepal and with the conquerors and founders of the kingdom of Nepal. The use of the term may provide more space for political criticism and opposition rather than favour and support when the issue is placed at the national level. Therefore, they apparently hold that using the ethnic term Gorkha at present may not be very appealing in the sight of the opponents and the government, particularly while placing the issue of a

separate state which calls for ethos of greater national interest and integration. Prof. Mahendra P. Lama, the Founding Vice Chancellor of Sikkim University and currently the Chairman of JAP had earlier asserted that the name of the state can be easily amended later once the state is achieved, what is really required at the present hour is the understanding and strategy of placing the demand in the right place, right Ministry and active lobbying with the government. They call for politics of rationality over the politics of emotionalism.

JAP aspires to have a corruption free administration and believe in maintaining a healthy relationship with both the state and central governments. They prefer to put forward the issue of statehood through rational and robust discussions and deliberations. They are mobilising support with the demand for land rights in tea gardens and cinchona plantation areas along with the implementation of Minimum Wage Act and creation of Kalimpong districts and other sub-divisions in Mirik and Bijanbari.

Since the members of JAP hardly use the term "Gorkhaland" and believes in maintaining a healthy relationship with the state government they are looked down by their rivals as brokers of the state and referred as "Mir Zafars - the traitors." These politicians are seen as opportunists and agents of West Bengal government by their opposition forces and their party is seen as a sub-TMC party, a major opponent of Gorkhaland.

The collective identity frames of Madesh based movements have been highlighted below. The diagnostic view of all these parties is the Madhesi feel underrepresented in the decision making bodies, they are not given jobs in the civil services, they are excluded, exploited and marginalised. These are their major diagnostic frames for the emergence of Madhesi movement. All these parties are motivated to carry forward their demands peacefully in a non-violent manner. These groups also try to separate themselves from the armed rebellion group of Terai who are also demanding the creation of a separate country for the Madhesi through armed struggle or violent ways. The prognostic frames of the different Madesh based parties have been highlighted below. These are the demands as well as the strategies to attract the support of various Madeshi population by the different political parties.

### **Terai Congress (1950s)**

1. Establishment of an autonomous Terai state.
2. Recognition of Hindi as a national Language
3. Adequate employment of Madeshi in the Nepali civil services.

### **Nepal Sadbhavana Party (1990s)**

1. Recognition of Hindi as an official language.
2. Federal system of government.
3. Reservation for Madhesis.
4. Liberal policy on citizenship
5. Separate Madhesi battalion in the Army.

### **Moist affiliated Madeshi Rastriya Mukti Morcha (MRMM) (2000)**

1. Recognition of Maithili, Bhojpuri and Awadhi as official languages.
2. Guaranteed protection of cultural rights of Madhesis.
3. Reinvestment of tax revenues from Madesh in the region itself.
4. Revolutionary tax reform.
5. End of social discrimination and women's exploitation, including prohibition of dowry system and practices of untouchability.

### **Madeshi Janadhikar Forum (MJF) (2007)**

1. Declaration of federal democratic republic with an undivided, autonomous Madesh.
2. Proportional electoral system.
3. Citizenship certificates for all Madhesis.
4. Inclusion of Madhesis in all state organs.
5. Special schemes for Dalits and other oppressed Madhesi castes.
6. Local promotion and use of Maithali, Bhojpuri and Awadh languages, and recognition of Hindi as lingua franca in the Terai.
7. End to internal migration of Pahadis (hill people) to Madesh.

8. End to discrimination against Nepali Muslims and official recognition of madrasas.

#### **Terai-Madesh Loktantrik Party (TMLP) (2008)**

1. Constitutional guarantee of autonomy with the right to self-determination for the Terai-Madesh region.
2. Formation of a new independent commission to probe alleged atrocities during the Madesh movement.
3. Recruitment of Madhesis into the Nepali Army proportional to their population.
4. Budget allocation based on population to the Terai-Madesh.

#### **Janatantrik Terai Mukti Morcha (JTMM) (mid 2000s)**

1. Autonomy of the Terai.
2. Tax revenue collected from the Terai to be spent only in the region.
3. New Census in the Madesh to be conducted by Madhesis.
4. Appointment of only Madhesis in citizenship distribution teams (Source: Bennett et al., 2013:106).

#### **5.4.Strategies Used by the Gorkhaland and Madhesi Activists to Achieve Their Goals**

82.60 percent of the respondents of the Gorkhaland movement were of the view that non-violence was the appropriate method of carrying forward the movement. While 17.39 percent of the respondents believed that the oppressors should be reacted with violence and terror. On the other hand 95 percent of the Madhesis argued that non-violent, peaceful and moderate ways were appropriate for demanding a separate state. While 5 per cent argued that violence was the ultimate method to charge the oppressors.

The ideologies, values used in the movement that are used in the movements are as follows. The Gorkhas claim themselves to be Indians whose mother tongue is Nepali. They are ethnically Nepali but they stress that their nationality is Indian. But owing to their close socio-cultural, geographical and historical proximity with the nationals of Nepal mixed with the open border policy between India and Nepal, they are often

mistaken as the citizens of Nepal. During the 1970's and 80's many Nepalis who were residing and working in north eastern states of India were forced to leave these states. Similarly, in the early 1990's the Nepalis living in the southern part of Bhutan who are referred to as 'Lhotsampas' were also driven out of the country if they did not compromise to assimilate with the Drukpa national culture of Bhutan. These incidents have troubled the security of the Nepalis in India. They feel they may also face similar situations and compelled to leave the land in which almost five generation of their ancestors have lived. They feel that if they do not voice their demands then they may also face similar evictions like the Nepalis of north east and Bhutan had experienced. Therefore, in order prove themselves as authentic Indians the Nepalis of Darjeeling tried differentiating themselves from the nationals of Nepal or the Nepalese and called themselves Gorkhas or the Indian Nepalis.

Moreover, the Indian federalism based language also troubles the Gorkhas because most of the communities are recognized by the language and their state. Different linguistic communities like the Punjabis have their state Punjab, Tamils have Tamil Nadu, Gujratis have Gujrat but the Gorkhas do not have a state of their own. They live in the northern most region of West Bengal and majority of them are alien to Bengali language which is the state language. It was also argued by the respondents that when they go out of Darjeeling hills for educational or job opportunities to other Indian states they are asked about their home states or addresses and when they say Darjeeling from West Bengal they are looked down with doubt and suspicion. Therefore, in order to end this plight the Gorkhas demands Gorkhaland.

On the other hand the Madhesis of Nepal live in the Terai region and they share more socio-cultural affinity with the communities who inhabits in the other side of the border in the Indian states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. They like the Gorkhas are mistaken with regard to their nationality and loyalty towards the nation. The Madhesis are viewed as Indians by the hill caste Nepalese of Nepal. The respondents argued that in most cases when they visit the government offices for getting some documents, rights or justices then they are strictly interrogated and their documents are verified carefully so that they are not Indians. The Madhesis claim that they are Nepalese and not Indians but the

standpoint of hill communities regarding them is that they are Indian migrants. Therefore, in order to end this confusion the historically marginalised Madhesi community of Nepal, taking India as the role model has been demanding for setting up a federal autonomous province for them in the democratic Nepal but this has been viewed differently by the hill caste Nepalese.

David Gellner (2007) has observed that the Nepali high caste groups namely the Bahuns and Chhetris together had a population of just 31 per cent of the total population. They had two-thirds of the jobs, whereas hill janajatis (excluding newars and tharus), with 22 per cent of the population had just 7 per cent of the jobs, and Madhesis with 31 per cent of the population had only 11 per cent of the jobs. The high caste groups are more than 50 per cent of the total population in 15 districts out of the total 75 districts.

The Madhesis are particularly bitter about the way they have been treated as a potentially disloyal fifth column within Nepal for so many years, about the facile way in which Nepalese nationalism has been built on the symbols of hill culture and antagonism to India, thus excluding them from full participation in the nation. The bureaucracy and the army are dominated by parbatiyas, and Madhesis feel disrespected by both. For many years the Nepali Congress has treated the Terai as a vote bank without ever offering proportionate leadership positions to Madhesis. During the 1990s the government set up commissions to deal with the inequalities faced by women, by janajatis, and by dalits, but no recognition was given to the exclusions faced by Madhesis. One Madhesi slogan which targeted this cultural inequality demanded that both the 'dhoti' and the 'topi' (the hillman's cap) should receive equal respect.

The recent violence in the Terai has been concentrated mainly in the eastern Terai, where Madhesis are concentrated. In the western Terai there are more Tharus and fewer long-established areas of settlement. The Maoists recognised these historical and cultural differences when they designated the western Terai as the autonomous Tharuwan and the eastern Terai as Madhes. Part of the violence has pitted armed Madhesi groups (they are charged with being supplied and recruited in part from over the border, as well as with being supported by revanchists in the palace) against the Maoists, who are identified by many in the Terai with the hill people. The bottom line is that this is a time of political

transition and of a virtually collapsed state. Everything is being renegotiated and the people of the Terai finally decided that they must act now and at last be heard at the centre (ibid).

Respondents of both the movements agreed that their region contributed much economic revenue to the state but the funds issued by the government in their region was comparatively less than their economic output. Darjeeling has 86 tea gardens and the revenue generated from this industry along with tourism is very high but the annual GTA grants is only 200 crores for a region with a population of more than 10 lakhs. Similarly, the Madesh is considered to be the economic centre of Nepal as all the major industries and trade centers are located there. Madhesis claimed that more than 60 per cent of the national revenue was generated from Nepal but the economic aid given by the government was not even 10 per cent of its economic contribution to the state.

Similarly, in case of political representation also the Gorkhas and Madhesis believed that they were under represented. Darjeeling sends one MP and 3 MLA's in the Union parliament and state legislative assembly. On the other hand the Madhesis who constitute more than 40 per cent of the total national population claims that they do not have enough representation in the parliament to place their issues. Therefore, in the wake of their movement for autonomy they are also demanding for the proportionate electoral system where the representatives are allotted according to the size of the population.

They were in a way incompetent with other groups in terms of socio-political and economic developmental indices. Moreover, these two groups lived in different and distinct geographies which are located in peripheral areas from their political centre. The Gorkhas were mostly populated in the hilly region of Darjeeling while the Madhesis were inhabitants of the plain areas in Nepal. The capital cities of Kolkata for the Gorkhas and Kathmandu for the Madhesis were located in a distant place from their habitation. In order to make any simple legislation, supporters of Gorkhaland argues that if Gorkhaland is created then it will be a permanent solution for the plight of Indian Gorkhas. It will also be one of the richest states as the region has 4 international borders. It has potential to function as a state. Similarly, Madhesi claim that Terai is the economic centre of Nepal but it is a political periphery. The state is exploiting the region culturally, economically

and politically. If Madesh Pradesh is formed then it would also end the ethnic and regional problem of Madhesis in Nepal and thrive as one of the richest provinces in Nepal.

These hill people of Darjeeling and the populace of the Terai region of Nepal claimed to be backward in terms of economy, education, socio-cultural representation and political participation. These factors compelled the people of these two regions to seek for autonomy. The participants of both the movements have been proposing for a separate autonomous administration for a very long time yet the government in both the countries have not fully agreed and delivered them their demands.

Strategies in social movements are very much instrumental and important for attaining success or failure. Various ideologies and approaches are used by the participants of social movement to achieve their goals. Some major means are through peaceful demonstrations and dialogues while some opt for armed struggles to claim their goals or objectives. When we look into the case of Gorkhaland and Madhesi movements then it is evident that both the movements have used both peaceful and violent strategies to accomplish their objectives.

The Gorkhaland movement of 1980's led by Subash Ghishing began peacefully as a non-violent movement but when they started to demonstrate in an anti-national fashion by involving in acts like burning the Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship 1950, as a part of their protest in 1986 then police shot down the protestors at Kurseong. The repercussion of the police firing was the movement turned violent and the movement under Ghishing and his party GNLF turned to be an armed movement.

Similarly in case of Madhesis their movement began as a non-violent movement. As the participants of the movement started to protest the government by burning the interim constitution in 2007, the state deployed police and armies to control such anti-national acts. When these armed forces tried to douse the movements by using arresting, beating and shooting the protesters then it also turned violent. In case of Madhesi movement the two factions of Janatantrik Terai Madeshi Morcha (JTMM), one under Jwala Singh and another under Goit have picked up arms to fight against the state for the creation of



autonomous Madesh. The group led by C.K Raut demands for the creation of new country out of the present Terai of Nepal. His groups is viewed as the secessionist by the state and he was home arrested by the police force.

In case of Gorkhaland movement in the year 2014, two GJMM cadres were caught by the police in the Assam Bengal border with arms and ammunitions. The state government perceives that the GJMM also has some connections with the militant forces of North East Indian states. But the GJMM party denies such allegations made by the state and views it as a ploy of the state to end the Gorkhaland movement.

Both the Gorkhaland and Madhesi movements have been dependent on the national parties in demanding autonomy. The GJMM strongly supports the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) as this party had earlier formed three new states in 2000. The GJMM in 2009 and 2014 supported the BJP candidates in General Assembly elections with a hope that the party would create a new state of Gorkhaland after it comes to power. Similarly, most of the Madhesis had also supported their national parties particularly Nepali Congress and Maoists with anticipation that they would create autonomous Madesh. But when these national parties failed to deliver them their demands they started to form their own regional parties.

In both the movements all the regional parties had the agenda of separate state or province. Therefore, during the peak period of both the movements all the regional parties including apolitical bodies supporting the idea of federalism were seen to form a collective organisation for achieving their demands. In Darjeeling various political parties like GJMM, CPRM, AIGL, BGP and other political and non-political bodies came together and formed the Gorkhaland Joint Action Committee (G-JAC) in 2013 but it was short lived as there was internal problems among them.

Similarly, in 2017, also various political and social organisaitons came forward and formed the Gorkhaland Movement Coordination Committee (GMCC) but this group also could not pose any intense pressure to the state as there was lot of problems among themselves. Similarly in 2008 United Democratic Madeshi Front (UDMF) was formed by the like minded Madhesi parties comprising of MJF, Sadbhavana party, TMDP and

others but this group also bifurcated when Bijay Kumar Gacchadar, the Tharu leader formed his own Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (Democratic) in 2010. However, the UDMF as compared to GJAC or GMCC was very much successful in pressuring the government in 2008, when it compelled the government to sign an agreement with regard to federalism, proportionate electoral representations, reservation facility for the Madhesis in government and administration. Even in 2015 the UDMF successfully carried out their six months strike by blocking the major entry points in the Indo-Nepal borders for almost six months. This compelled the government to amend the constitution, amendments related with the issue of federal province and proportionate electoral representation was accomplished.

It was also observed that both the movements started to move towards the centre or the capital city in order to intensify the movement. In case of Gorkhaland movement the strikes were called up in the region and the central committee members of the GJMM started to go to New Delhi for negotiations. Likewise, the Madhesis also called for strikes in the Terai region, blocked the borders and the main leaders started to focus at Kathmandu for political discussions and meetings. Both the movement activists also carried out protest rallies in New Delhi and Kathmandu at their respective national capitals.

### **5.5. Reaction of the State towards the Movements**

When social movement emerges, in order to draw their attention of the state, it tries to affect the functioning of the government by organising protest rallies and other forms of demonstrations directed towards the government. In case of Gorkhaland and Madhesi movements the protestors have tried to draw the attention of the government by burning government treaties and interim constitution, organising strikes or bandhs, rubbing off the name of the governments and replacing it with Gorkhaland or Madesh Pradesh in the signboards of government offices and other places, displaying black flag days or observing black flag days and so forth.

In case of Gorkhaland movement the GNLF went on strike for 40 days in 1986 and the GJMM declared 44 days strike in 2013 and the longest was the 104 days strike in

2017. Similarly, the Madhesi movement also called a strike for two weeks in 2007 and 2008. In 2015, Madesh was on a strike for almost 6 months. These strikes affected the proper functioning of the government and caused a lot of problems for the members of the civil society. The government on the other hand considered such strikes as illegal and called the dissent groups for talks to solve their problems. But when the demand of the protestors and the decision of the government fail to match then the state starts using police and armed forces to suppress the movement. Many a times the dissents groups would not go for attending talks called by the state as the state was firm on the ground that they would not accept or discuss the issues of formation of Gorkhaland and Madesh Pradesh.

It was also observed that the state would label the agitators as having support from external forces or armed groups. The Gorkhaland protestors were often judged as having a support from Nepal and China. At times the state claimed that these forces were supported by the militant forces of North East India. The Madhesis were also tagged as having an affiliation with the Bihari politicians and being funded by the Indian government. It is here that the notion of Greater Nepal that is expansion of Nepal through the inclusion of hills was found in discussions and debates. Likewise, the Madhesi movement was also viewed by the anti-Madhesi groups as a secessionist movement or a separatist movement who were being facilitated economic funds from India for the creation of Akhand Bharat or Undivided India.

The protestors of both the movement argued that their demands were democratic and peaceful but the state police and armed forces were undemocratic and inhumanistic in dealing with them. The police and the armies shot the movement martyrs not on areas below one's stomach but most of the killing took place by direct firing mostly on head. The protestors of both the movement argued that the government was biased in their approach to obliterate the movements. During the Madhesi movement of 2015, movement for creation of federal states was also initiated in Jumla and Surkhet, in the far western hill regions of Nepal by the high caste hill groups. It was argued that the government used water cannons and rubber bullets to derail the protestors in those regions while such security mechanisms were not used in case of Madhesis. The national

leaders of Nepal also abstained from visiting the violence hit Madesh during the time of agitation.

Similarly, in case of Gorkhaland movement also rubber bullets were unused. During summer of 2017, when Gorkhaland movement was resumed, communal violence between the Hindus and Muslims also occurred in Bashirghat region in South Bengal. The agitators in Bashirghat were not fired by the police and only 3 contingents of armed forces were deployed in the region. But in case of Gorkhaland movement 15 companies of armed forces were used to suppress the movement. It was also noted that the national political leaders of BJP visited Bashirghat and none of them visited Darjeeling during the time of violence and killings. It was also noted that both UDMF and GJMM demanded that the people who had died while participating in the movement to be declared martyrs and they also demanded the government for compensating the families of these martyrs.

The level of violence was very high during the Gorkhaland movement of mid 1980's as both the protestors as well as the police and armed personals were using arms and ammunitions while fighting with one another. In case of the Gorkhaland movement led by GJM, violence was considerably low but the state armed forces were deployed in the major areas where the movements were taking place. The level of violence was visible in an escalated form during the Madhesi movement in 2015. The agitating Tharus chopped off almost seven police forces when their demand was not given significance by the government.

Samanta (2000) claims in between the years 1986 and September 1988, 283 people were killed and 615 injured, 509 houses were burnt and destroyed in 1986, 270 in 1987 and 385 in 1988. About 3000 people were detained by the police and even school going children were not spared. 120 were detained under the Anti-Terrorist Act.

The states deployed armed and police forces in the areas affected by these movements. The police were firing and killing the protestors in both the cases. In 1986 to 1988 in the first phase of Gorkhaland movement under GNLFF almost 1200 people lost their life and homes in the violent agitation (Chatterji 2007). However, it is to be noted that the level of violence under GJMM was much more less but the protestors had burnt

government buildings, vehicles and public properties. In February 2011, three Gorkhaland protestors out of which one was a woman were killed in Shibus in Dooars while participating in the Gorkhaland movement. In 2017, almost 12 people were reported to have been killed by the armed forces and one assistant sub-inspector Amitava Mallik was killed by the dissent forces. In case of Madhesi in 2007 and 2008, 30 people lost their life at the hands of police and police armed forces while more than 800 people were injured. During the Madhesi movement of 2015, almost 56 people lost their life which also included the ten state armed force members.

### **5.6. Results of the Movements**

Both the Gorkhaland and Madhesi movement had the goal of creation of autonomous federal states of provinces. The Gorkhaland movement of 1986 to 1988 resulted in the formation of the autonomous Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC). While accepting this autonomous body it was made clear that GNLf was dropping the demand of Gorkhaland. The Gorkhaland movement led by GJMM and Bimal Gurung after 2007 was easily co-opted by the newly formed TMC government under Mamata Banerjee. In 2012 the GTA agreement was signed in between the representatives of the central, state governments and GJMM. However, one thing should be kept in mind that when GJMM accepted GTA another autonomous body in 2012 then it was made open to the public that GJMM accepted GTA, an interim autonomous body but it was not dropping the demand of separate statehood.

On the other hand after the 2007 Madhesi movement the Nepali politicians and the members of the civil society came to recognise the Madhesi as having a special political position in Nepal. The results of the 2007, Madhesi movements compelled the government to come up to the public and declare the issues of federalism and proportionate representation. Although the parliamentarians had accepted this view but they remained silent after the promulgation of the Nepalese constitution. Similarly, the six month *bandh* which was organised by the UDMF and Madesh Pradesh supporter in 2015 resulted in amending the constitution regarding the issue of federalism and proportionate electoral representations. But the 104 days strikes called by the Gorkhaland activists were planned spontaneously and it did not bring many striking changes.

The state is also seen to co-opt the leaders and put a halt on the movement. In case of Darjeeling GJMM started the demand of Gorkhaland since 2007 when CPI (M) was in power in Bengal. The left government was willing to extend powers and functions of DGHC but GJMM did not want to accept it at all. When the TMC government led by Mamata Banerjee came into power then GJMM willingly accepted the new autonomous body the GTA. The then spokesperson of GJMM has claimed that GTA was a state within the state and the first stepping step towards the creation of Gorkhaland. This move of GJMM was looked as a co-optive measures of the state.

In case of Madhesis when they garnered almost 30 per cent votes in the first Constituent Assembly (CA) elections then their political significance was felt for the first time. The state tried to please the leaders of Madesh Pradesh by giving them high portfolio national jobs. Ram Baran Yadav was made the President, Upendra Yadav became the External Minister while Ramesh Mahato was given the responsibility of Ministry of Industries. These were also looked by several Madhesis as the co-option of the Madhesi leaders and the end of Madhesi movement.

In 2013, when Gorkhaland stir resurfaced once again after the formation of Telengana the GTA councillors had all resigned from their jobs and started to demand the creation of Gorkhaland. Unfortunately, the most important leaders' names appeared in the murder case of Madan Tamang. It was argued that West Bengal government. Was using the Tamang's case to silence the GJMM. Soon the Chairman who had resigned from the Chairman post of GTA again took an oath of the GTA Chairman and soon his party councillors joined him. Then after, GJMM claimed that from then on wards they would not do the agitation targeting the state but they would be doing in the national capital. Madan Tamang murder case has become an important tool for the state to silence the GJMM, the prime party demanding the creation of Gorkhaland.

Like wise, in 2017 it was seen that when the Gorkhaland movement reiterated after the CM's claim of making Bengali a compulsory language across hills, all the local parties criticised it and GJMM the dominant party of the hills called for an indefinite strike, during this time also Madan Tamang murder case was called on and the top

leaders of GJMM was arrested. In the course of actions some bombs were also exploded in the town. It was during this time that the GJMM chief Bimal Gurung was charged the Unlawful Activities Preventive Act. As a consequence he went on a hiding. When he was unable to come to the hills the Deputy Secretary of GJMM Benoy Tamang and Anit Thapa the GJMM councillor from Kurseong were co-opted as they were made the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the GTA by the state led by Mamata Banerjee. Soon the strike for Gorkhaland was called off and development projects funded by the state were given emphasis under the GTA 2.

It is also to be noted that in present times the use of internet and social media has been used extensively in both the movements. The internet helped the protestors to convey the information about the movements in a much more broader manner. The Madhesis and Gorkhas who were living outside their hometown or state were mostly following the course of the movement. They were also supporting it by spreading the news of these movements to other people. In case of Gorkhaland movement internet and local channels including the national Nepali news channel ABN were banned from 18 June onwards. This was protested by the activists as the violation of right to freedom of expression.

The national media's were also focused in these movements and reported ceaselessly. However, some of the Kathmandu centric news channels in case of Madhesi movement and Bengali news channels in case of Gorkhaland movement were reported by the activists to have covered fake news and gave a bad image to these movements.

Lastly, the emergence of these movements also gave rise to groups to counter them. In case of Nepal the people of hill caste formed the Chure Bhawar Ekta Samaj (CBES) protested the formation of autonomous Madesh. In case of Gorkhaland the pro-Bengali groups like Bangla Bhasa Bacho Committee and Amra Banglai groups of Siliguri organised rallies and protested the demand of the Gorkhaland.

It was also seen that the other plain communities like the Tharus, the mongoloid groups living in both the plains and hills of Nepal were supportive of the demand for setting up federalism in Nepal. All these groups blamed that it was the continued domination of the hill elite groups that had resulted in the emergence of the movements. Gellner (2007) has given a clear account of how the hill upper caste dominates the rest of other groups in Nepal in government, administration and other major sectors. When the Madhesi went on for a strike and blocked the border entry point to Nepal in the Terai region, the government blamed the Indian government for supporting the Madhesi movement and the blockade. The Nepalese government went to the heights of maintaining better relations with the Chinese government. In this regard one of the results of the Madhesi movements was it tends to affect the Nepal-Indo bilateral relationship.

On the other hand the Gorkhaland movement was supported by the neighbouring state of Sikkim which is populated by almost 80 per cent of the Nepalis. In 2017, The Chief Minister of Sikkim Pawan Kumar Chamling openly came forward and supported the movement. He even wrote a letter to the Home Minister Rajnath Singh in this regard. The West Bengal government believes that the Chinese and the Nepalese government have a hand in the Gorkhaland movement. They views that the violence which was done in Darjeeling hills was done by bringing the Maoists from Nepal. Therefore, in this manner the Gorkhaland movement also tends to damage the bilateral relationship of India with Nepal and China.

The state is of the opinion that Darjeeling is located in a politically strategic location, it is economically unviable for the region to function as a state and politically with 3 MLA's and 1 MP, a state cannot be formed. In case of Madesh Pradesh the state is not positive with its formation by adding the three eastern most district of Terai because if all the southern region is given into Madesh Pradesh as a federal province then the geography, economy and ethnic unity cannot be maintained. So, the state is of the view that nation will be divided vertically and not horizontally as preferred by the UDMF.



## **Chapter 6**

### **Conclusion**

In this concluding chapter an overview of the major elements related for Gorkhaland and Madhesi movement has been addressed. It also makes a comparative analysis of Gorkhaland and Madhesi movements in the backdrop of pertinent issues related with these movements.

#### **6.1. The Foundation of Gorkhaland and Madhesi Movements: Retracing the History**

Gorkhaland and Madhesi movements began in different historical settings, under different political frameworks and socio-economic conditions with a common objective of creation of separate state or autonomous province for Gorkhas and Madhesis in India and Nepal respectively. As the process of democratisation developed and started to become mature in India and Nepal, these movements have become more evident and uninterrupted.

When we look into the demographic composition of India and Nepal then both are multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-cultural societies with a high degree of diversity. India with a total population of 1.3 billion has twenty nine federal states mostly formed on the basis of language and there are twenty one officially recognised languages under the Eight Schedule of the Indian Constitution. While in Nepal there are more than one hundred ethnic groups within a 26 million population. These figures give us a basic idea about the heterogeneous and plural character of Indian and Nepali society.

Phadnis and Ganguly (2001:18) has pointed out that ethnic pluralism in South Asia is primarily because of three factors namely, conquests and annexations, European colonisation and decolonisation and population migration. This conceptualisation is very much applicable in the context of India and Nepal as well. In such type of multi-ethnic states the moderation school of ethnicity points out that “states cannot be both stable and democratic”. The ethnic problem in South and Southeast Asia is therefore viewed as an

inseparable “governance problem” (Ganguly 2012:1) and it is very much relevant in the context of India and Nepal.

When we look back in the history of India and Nepal then it is apparent that these nations have been formed through the process of conquests and annexations, colonisation and decolonisation, and human migration. India as a democratic nation emerged after the decolonisation, from more than 550 small principalities which was colonised by the British for almost 200 years (Guha 2007) while Nepal developed from more than 55 tiny princely states that was conquered, annexed and unified by the Shah rulers (Pradhan 2009).

The foundation cause of ethnic and regional identity formation of Gorkhas and Madhesis and their need for separate states in present times lies in the history when modern day India and Nepal were yet to be formed. India was under the colonial rule of British from 1757 till 1947 and the Shah dynasty ruled Nepal since 1769 followed by the Rana from 1846 till 1951. The British and Shah Rule started more or less in a same period. Both of them were motivated by territorial expansionism. In their pursuit for expanding their geographical territory and developmental missions, Gorkhas and Madhesis were also involved. The Gorkhas and Madhesis were attracted to shift from one region to another and their borders kept fluctuating on the decision made by their administrators. These communities benefitted initially through the imperialistic and developmental actions of British and Rana kings but later these migrant groups became the victims of ethnic identity and nationality when the British and Rana rule came to an end in India and Nepal respectively in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. The economic migrants who had come for developing Darjeeling and Terai had settled down as permanent residents by then and they had habituated and developed an attachment with region for approximately two to three generations.

Although the question of migration is often used as a whip stick to provoke the identity and nationality of Gorkhas and Madhesis in present times but it cannot be ignored either. The reasons for migration was primary economic in nature. The Gorkhas did come to Darjeeling to work in tea gardens, developmental projects and also as agriculturists during the British rule. The monarchical rule in Nepal was characterised by

despotic authority and demanded high revenues from the citizens. As a consequence, the Gorkhas were compelled to come to India as the British needed them for their industrial and developmental projects (Samanta 2000).

Similarly, the Madhesis came to Terai of Nepal during the Rana period primarily as agriculturalists and cattle herders as the population in the northern Indian plains were growing incessantly putting a pressure on land ownership and farming. Yadav (1984:42-44) argues that the Ranas developed the policy of settling the Terai with two major objectives. Firstly, to maintain good bilateral relation with the British India and secondly, to expand the economy of the country by utilising the Terai. The hill people could not live in the Terai as it was affected by malaria. As a consequence the Ranas had no other choice than to accept the migrants from India to develop the Terai. The first to migrate from India were the Ahir caste followed by the Kurmis and later the Muslims also started to join them. Immigration from India was encouraged by the Ranas and they also gave certain facilities and concessions like free agricultural plot, home site and hut construction materials to the migrants for coming forward to develop the underdeveloped region.

The colonial rule in India and the monarchical rule of the Ranas in Nepal came to an end by 1950's. During their rule for almost 200 years, many wars were fought, territories were seized, captured, gifted, territorial borders were redrawn and many treaties and agreements were signed between the British and the kings of Nepalese. Apart from migration, the political interactions and contradictions between the British administrators in India and the Nepali kings have also been responsible for the contemporary political plight of Gorkhas and Madhesis. The framing of these communities as migrant groups by both the states have been denied by them. The protestors have the frame that they came along with their land. The Gorkhaland activists preach that historically Darjeeling was never a part of Bengal and the Madhesis propagate that Madesh was also not a part of Nepal earlier. Both the groups claim that they did not cross the border but the border crossed them.

The labelling of these communities as migrants have greatly troubled, tormented and threatened their existence and identity. This has been the major cause of these

movements. Both the groups claim that their regions are also economically resourceful but the state has treated them as colonies and exploited them socially, economically and politically. Both the government of India and Nepal have similar frames that these regions are important strategically and politically sensitive. When these movements had reached their climax then the states in both the contexts had argued that accepting the demands of these groups would open up other several problems. If Gorkhaland is granted in north Bengal then the adjoining region of Cooch Behar habituated by tribal people will also demand for their separate state of Kamptapur and another separate seeking movements across the nation like Bodoland, Harjit Pradesh, Vidharba and other will also have to be declared. This way the movements for separate states will affect the peaceful governance and smooth functioning of the nation. In case of Madhesi movement the state has a frame that if federal states are created on the basis of ethnicity then there are more than hundred ethnic groups. Granting all these groups federal states will led to communalism and break the cord of integrity of the small country.

However, these dissent groups have been making an effort to achieve a separate state of their own time and again. They argue that only a separate state will solve their crisis of identity. Both the groups claim that they are not anti-nationals but pro-nationals who are demanding their constitutional rights and want to be recognised as a citizens of their respective nations in a more rightful manner. Both the groups believe that with a separate state they will also have an identity of their own which at present is at stake. Apart from political opportunities neither the centre nor the state government seems to be in favour of Gorkhaland as both advocate that the region is highly sensitive with four international boundaries and low economic output. But the Madhesi community has been successful in achieving a province for them but all the proposed districts have not been included in their province. This has been the issue of contestation between the Madhesis movement leaders and the state.

## **6.2. The Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship:**

Apart from the issues of history and migration the Peace and Friendship Treaty which was signed between India and Nepal is also another element which has caused problem to the identity of Gorkhas and Madhesis. The historical agreement was signed to

promote socio-economic and cultural co-operation and harmony between the two nations but it has affected the very existence of Gorkhas and Madhesis. Although the pact also successfully facilitated in making India and Nepal the only countries in South Asia to have an open border marked by significant historical and cultural linkages. Unfortunately, the very article VI and VII of the Treaty jeopardised the issue of national identity of Gorkhas and Madhesis. Article 6 of the treaty states “Each Government undertakes, in token of neighbourly friendship between India and Nepal, to give to the nationals of the other, in its territory, national treatment with regard to participation in industrial and economic development of such territory and to the grant of concessions and contracts relation to such development.” While Article VII of the treaty states “The Government of India and Nepal agree to grant on, reciprocal basis, to the nationals of one country in the territories of the other the same privileges in the matter of residence, ownership of property, participation in trade and commerce, movement and privilege of a similar nature.”

Unlike, the Nepalese from Nepal who are nationals and citizens of Nepal, the Nepali speaking population in India who are Indian citizens have over the years evolved themselves as calling themselves as Gorkhas, Indian Gorkhas or Indian Nepalis. These expressions are used because Nepali is a language, nationality and broadly a race for the nationals of Nepal whereas for the Nepali speaking Indians Nepali is only a language and also broadly connotes a race or ethnic group in India like Bengalis, Tamils, Nagas, Marathis, Gujratis and so on. However, this term Nepali has created serious problems as like in Nepal , Nepali citizens who come to India under the India-Nepal Peace and Friendship Treaty of 1950 also call themselves Nepalis thereby giving the impression that whoever speaks Nepali and says he\she is a Nepali by ethnicity are all citizens and nationals of Nepal. Due to this reason the Nepali speaking Indians discard themselves from calling Nepalis and instead call themselves Gorkhas. Gorkhas are demanding Gorkhaland solve the identity confusion and for socio-economic and political empowerment.

The Madhesis have also been living in the lowlands of Nepal much before the introduction and implementation of Nepalese Citizenship Accord in 1951. However, due

to the ethnically orientated nature of the Nepalese government the Madhesi community was not granted citizenship until the *Jan Andolan* of 1990's. The Madhesis of Nepal face a common problem of identity like their Gorkha counterparts in India. The Madhesis in Nepal are treated as immigrants from the Indian soil, who have migrated under the treaty of 1950. Although the new constitution of Nepal is federal and granting an autonomous province but the Madhesis are unhappy because they have been demanding for 'One Madesh, One Pradesh' comprising of 20 plain districts but the state has conferred an autonomous province for them that comprise of only 8 plain districts. The Tharus who had earlier joined hands with the Madhesis and fought together for 'One Madesh, One Pradesh' broke alliance and have started to demand for their own province after 2010. Although the Madhesi leaders did not appreciate the splitting away of Tharus yet they have recognised the federal aspiration of Tharus. At present they are demanding the creation of Madesh Pradesh with the 8 allotted plain districts and inclusion of the three eastern most district of Jhapa, Sunsari and Morang.

The major problems related with Article 6 and 7 of the Indo-Nepal Peace and Friendship Treaty of 1950 are as follows:

- (i) The Treaty of 1950 was signed between the Government of India and Rana rulers of Nepal. The Rana rule came to an end immediately after 3 months from signing of the Treaty. The treaty was not abrogated in the hands of new administration. 67 years has passed by since the signing of the Treaty and the treaty has never been reviewed since then. However, the present Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his visit to Nepal in the month of July 2014 gave an interest to review the treaty.
- (ii) Treaties are related with places, borders, trade, demarcation of the region and so forth but the treaty of 1950 between India and Nepal directly addresses the people. It is one of a few treaties which directly implies to people, citizens.

- (iii) The Citizenship Act of both India and Nepal were formulated in 1951 i.e. after the implementation of the India-Nepal Peace and Friendship Treaty of 1950. Under such circumstances the very definition of citizenship of the Treaty of 1950 becomes questionable.
- (iv) The Treaty of 1950 and the existence of an open border between India and Nepal has seriously affected the issue of identity of the Gorkhas in India and Madhesis in Nepal as it promotes free flow of citizens across border without any vigilance. As a result other crimes like human trafficking, illegal trade, terrorist activities are likely to find a fertile ground to carry out their activities in the border between India and Nepal. So, the Treaty which was signed almost 67 years ago to promote co-operation and harmony between the two countries, at present times is somehow facilitating disturbances in socio-economic and political contexts.

In 2016, the government of India and Nepal formulated a group comprising of four eminent intellectual, administrators and scholars from each country known as the Eminent Persons Group (EPG). This body is now reviewing this particular treaty and would come up with its final report in 2018 (Himalayan Times 29/06/16). Therefore, to safeguard the identity of Gorkhas and Madhesis and also to control the illegal activities in the border region there is a dire need to review the India-Nepal Peace and Friendship Treaty of 1950 and thereby strengthen the relationship between India and Nepal in broader terms.

The Gorkhaland activists particularly during the 1980's under Ghising and GNLF demanded for cancellation of the 1950 treaty. In case of Nepal, the Maoists felt that this treaty was benefitted by India more than Nepal and demanded for its abrogation. However, the Madhesis have not demanded for the termination of this treaty because it is through this treaty that they can travel to India for business, trade, market and maintain their social ties with relatives across the border. Although majority of the respondents claimed that they benefitted from the treaty but at times the border police forces of Nepal

thoroughly inspected them while crossing the border points and many times mistakes them as Indians.

### **6.3. Changing Outlook of the Gorkhas and Madhesi:**

The Gorkhas are Nepalis speaking Indians and the Madhesi are Nepalese who mostly speak Maithili, Bhojpuri and Awadhi languages that are closely related with Hindi. In case of Gorkhas the respondents claimed that owing to their cultural and ethnic proximity with the Nepali citizens of Nepal they were considered to be Nepalese in India. However, this group of people identified themselves with India more and accepted themselves as Indians and not Nepalese. Similarly, the Madhesi of Nepal were also seen as people from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar state of India. They also claimed that they were Nepalese and not Indians. The ethnic and racial profile of both Gorkhas and Madhesi confused their national identity in the eyes of mainstream Indians and Nepalese. The presence of nations with a cultural, ethnic and linguistic dominance has affected the Gorkha and Madhesi communities and their political fate and future.

The Gorkhas are popular in terms of bravery and many serve in the Indian army. Whenever the police or Central Reserve Police Forces (CRPF) shots the agitators then the Gorkha mass yells “we protect the national borders from terrorists and provide security to the nation and here in Darjeeling we are being shot down like the terrorists”. Gorkhas boasts about their bravery and warfare skills and time and again utter the popular statement given by Col. Manekshaw about the Gorkhas that is “If a person says that he is not afraid to die then he is either lying or a Gorkha”. The same community is also popular in terms of tea cultivation and production. However, their tea production skills are not highlighted and boasted much as compared to their choice over bravery and military. Darjeeling district has about 86 tea gardens and they produce world famous tea often termed as “Champagne of Tea”. However, talking about tea gardens and their conditions is not quite respect worthy. The tea garden worker earns a daily wage of one hundred thirty rupees. They work for eight hours a day from 8 a.m. till 4 p.m. despite a very low daily wage of 130 rupees per day, they still do maintain their living conditions by engaging in subsidiary agricultural cultivations, running small stalls, animal domestication and so forth. Most of the youngsters do not prefer to work in tea gardens as



the work is tedious and tough, wages are too low. Therefore many of the youngsters after completing their education or after quitting schools out-migrate to major metropolitans cities like New Delhi, Bangalore, Mumbai and Kolkata. The recent trend is many of they are also immigrating to Gulf countries like Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Bahrain including Israel to work in hotel industry, house-keeping and as security personals.

Although the government claims that Darjeeling is economically inviable for a state the activists claims that the place is economically viable. They argue that the revenue generated from tea, tourism and trade would be sufficient to run the state. The state advocates that Gorkhaland as a state would be too small but the activists argues that proposed region of Gorkhaland is much bigger than the states of Sikkim and Goa.

Presently education has become an important asset for the Gorkhas. They are now sending their children to good schools which were earlier meant only for the British or Europeans. Even the person who works in a tea garden and earns a low income aspires and commits himself/herself in giving good education to their children. The educational and lifestyle level has related increased among the Gorkhas. They do not prefer to be tagged as porters, guards and other low and odd job doers which they were historically well known for. In this regard, many Nepalese comes to India and perform most of these menial jobs in the Indian cities and the Gorkhas tries to distance themselves from them.

The Madhesi community dominantly inhabits in the “Bread Basket” that is the Terai region of Nepal. They are mostly involved in agricultural activities and livestock herding domesticating. It is this community that plays a most important role for production of rice, wheat, sugar, jute, lentils and other consumable necessities. Without them they claim Nepal would die of starvation and hunger. They have contributed much towards the export of agricultural products mostly to India. Many Madhesis mostly belonging to economically viable families are getting education in India and many of them have also migrated to Gulf and South East Asian nations including America, Europe, Japan and Australia. However, the number of Nepali hill caste groups outnumber the Madhesis in terms of immigration to other countries. The primary reason for this is many Madhesis do not have citizenship documents. Although they are seen by the hill caste groups as Indians but many Madhesis do not have an Indian citizenship as

well. They are living in Nepal and due to linguistic barriers including economic and educative constraints, mixed with lack of awareness, they are not able to get citizenship documents for themselves. However, the Madhesis are also giving importance to education and sending their children to schools and colleges.

The Madhesis claims that their state should be divided horizontally on the basis of region and identity but the government views that if their proposition is followed then there would be lot of problems as there are more than 100 ethnic identities in Nepal, all of them would be demanding federal states. Moreover, dividing the state horizontally would divide the country ethnically and geographically. Moreover, this would result in concentration of all the resources in some provinces while some may be deprived of all the resources. Therefore, the state believes in forming federal states vertically on the basis of ethnicity and capability where all the states gets all the geographies and equal distribution of resources to all the citizens is possible.

The inclined attention on education on the part of Gorkhas and Madhesis have increased the literacy rate of these communities and they are now becoming much more argumentative, more conscious regarding their identity, gaining confidence that they can administer themselves and knows that they have the democratic rights to demand separate states for themselves which they have been deprived of. Majority of the hills have people living and working in tea garden areas while in Terai majority of the people are living in rural areas. These groups are economically vulnerable and the region is backward in terms of basic amenities like employment opportunities, health care centres, schools, colleges, centres for higher learning, road conditions, transportation facilities, water and electricity facilities. When they compare with their fellow citizens in their developed capital cities and neighbouring states the members of these communities feel dissatisfied and deprived. Both the groups believe that their region is economically well off but the economy is exploited by the West Bengal government and the hill caste hill Nepalese who takes all the revenues and hands out minimum development funds. Along with their ailing economic conditions their representatives in the decision making bodies are government is underrepresented. Therefore, the Gorkhas demand to be equals with the Bengalis and the Madhesis at par with the high hill caste groups of Nepal.

#### **6.4. Gorkhaland and Madhesi Movements: Similarities and Differences**

Gorkhaland and Madhesi movements have many parallels. The issue of identity problem of Gorkhas and Madhesis starts from the Anglo-Gorkha war of 1814 to signing of the Segauli Treaty of 1816, and the treaty of Peace and Friendship has further complicated and worsened the identity of these two communities.

The state in both the case tries to allege the Gorkhas and Madhesis as migrants when their movement becomes very vocal and the state in both cases selects an original indigenous community in the region like Tharus in Terai of Nepal and Lepchas in Darjeeling hills. Both the groups have formed alliance of political parties for achieving their statehood demands. The Madhesis had UDMF which got divided in 2010 and the Gorkhaland seeking parties had formed the G-JAC in 2013 and GMCC in 2017. As compared to UDMF the G-JAC and GMCC was unsuccessful as there were problems among the Gorkhaland seeking parties. UDMF on the other hand had successfully pressurised the government and made them agree on the issues of federalism and population based constituency.

The caste played an important role in the politics of Madhesis. The political parties are also formed on caste lines. This has also affected the strong unification among the Madhesis and all the people living in Madesh like the Tharus and Muslims do not preferred to be labelled as Madhesi. While on the other hand caste was not an important element in politics but the different sub-castes of Gorkha community was given tribal development boards by the state government. It was after this that the politics of caste has gradually penetrated into the hills as well. However, GJMM frames this as a political tool of the state to end their movement.

Apart from similarities there are also few differences between Gorkhaland and Madhesi movements. The strategy used by the Gorkhaland and Madhesi movements varies in the sense that the Madhesis are now themselves fighting for their statehood demands without depending much on the national parties and owing to their population size and geography they seem to be capable of doing so. While in case of Gorkhaland movement the activists continues to support the national parties and seek favour from

them. The Madhesis have also been successful in making President, Vice President and other important cabinet ministers from their community but the Gorkhas have been able to send their community members only up to the post of Minister of Parliament in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.

The geography of the proposed state of Gorkhaland includes both hills and Terai region as Gorkhas inhabit in both the places while in case of Madhesis the proposed land falls only in the Terai region and they are also willing not to take the hill regions as they hardly live in there. The Gorkhas on the other hand live across the country and whenever there is a demand for Gorkhaland there are protests rallies are organised across the country but in case of Madhesis their political activities are concentrated only in the plains.

The language of the Gorkhas that is Nepali has been recognised by the Indian government but the Madhesis are fighting demanding for the recognition of their language in Nepal. The Indian government and the government of West Bengal had also given the autonomous council to the Gorkhas in 1988 and another one in 2011. However, the leaders of Gorkhaland argue that the state does not allow them to function in an independent manner and always tries to intervene in its functioning while such autonomous councils or boards have not been formulated for the Madhesis in Nepal.

The Gorkhaland movement of 1980s and 2007 did not achieve their goals of separate state but it led to the formation of autonomous bodies namely the DGHC and GTA. The GJMM activists and party leaders argue that they have been successful in including the term Gorkhaland in their new autonomous council and it was the just a temporal body. They anticipate that their separate state would soon be formed by BJP. Similarly, the Madhesi movements of 2007 and 2008 gave them their recognition in the politics of Nepal which was earlier absent. After that they have been capable of asserting their demands in a much more vocal manner.

Lastly, it can be argued that both these movements have emerged to be more pertinent and challenging in the democratic set up. Although these movements claim to be non-violent, lot many lives of protestors and state forces have been lost, both private and

public properties worth crores of rupees have been damaged, social relationships between the activists of Gorkhaland and Bengalis in India and Madhesis and hill caste groups in Nepal have been negatively affected. Despite of all the social pathologies, social movements are basically an expression of democratic nations for its self growth and development as claimed by Alain Touraine (Oommen 2008). As the historically marginalised, economically backward, and politically underrepresented groups becomes conscious through education and broader interactions they also prefers to be equals with the majority and dominant groups in terms of administration, governance and decision making procedures.

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## **40 Point Demands Memorandum Submitted by the Maoists to the Government of Nepal**

Right Honourable Prime Minister  
Prime Minister's Office,  
Singha Darbar, Kathmandu

### **Sub: Memorandum**

Sir,

It has been six years since the autocratic monarchical partyless Panchayat system was ended by the 1990 People's Movement and a constitutional monarchical multiparty parliamentary system established. During this period state control has been exercised by a tripartite interim government, a single-party government of the Nepali Congress, a minority government of UML and a present Nepali Congress-RPP-Sadbhavana coalition. That, instead of making progress, The situation of the country and the people is going downhill is evident from the fact that Nepal has slid to being the second poorest country in the world; people living below the absolute poverty line has gone up to 71 per cent; the number of unemployed has reached more than 10 per cent while the number of people who are semi-employed or in disguised employment has crossed 60 per cent; the country is on the verge of bankruptcy due to rising foreign loans and deficit trade; economic and cultural encroachment within the country by foreign, and especially Indian, expansionists is increasing by the day; the gap between the rich and the poor and between towns and villages is growing wider. On (lie other hand, parliamentary parties that have formed the government by various means have shown that they are more interested in remaining in power with the blessings of foreign imperialist and expansionist masters than in the welfare of the country and the people. This is clear from their blindly adopting so-called privatisation and liberalisation to fulfil the interestes of all imperialists and from the recent 'national consensus' reached in handing over the rights over Nepal's water resources to Indian expansionists. Since 6 April, 1992, the United People's Front has been involved in various struggles to fulfil relevant demands related to nationalism, democracy and livelyhood, either by itself or with others. But rather than fulfil those demands, the governments formed at different times have violently suppressed the agitators and taken the lives of hundreds; the most recent example of this is the armed police operation in Rolpa a few months back. In this context, we would like to once again present to the current coalition government demands related to nationalism, democracy and livelihood, which have been raised in the past and many of which have become relevant in the present context.

## Our demands

### *Concerning nationality*

1. All discriminatory treaties, including the 1950 Nepal-India Treaty, should be abrogated.
2. The so-called Integrated Mahakali Treaty concluded on 29 January, 1996 should be repealed immediately, as it is designed to conceal the disastrous Tanakpur Treaty and allows Indian imperialist monopoly over Nepal's water resources.
3. The open border between Nepal and India should be regulated, controlled and systematised. All vehicles with Indian licence plates should be banned from Nepal.
4. The Gurkha/Gorkha Recruitment Centres should be closed. Nepali citizens should be provided dignified employment in the country.
5. Nepali workers should be given priority in different sectors. A 'work permit' system should be strictly implemented if foreign workers are required in the country.
6. The domination of foreign capital in Nepali industries, business and finance should be stopped.
7. An appropriate customs policy should be devised and implemented so that economic development helps the nation become self-reliant.
8. The invasion of imperialist and colonial culture should be banned. Vulgar Hindi films, videos and magazines should be immediately outlawed.
9. The invasion of colonial and imperial elements in the name of NGOs and INGOs should be stopped.

### *Concerning people's democracy*

10. A new constitution should be drafted by representatives elected for the establishment of a people's democratic system.
11. All special privileges of the king and the royal family should be abolished.
12. The army, the police and the bureaucracy should be completely under people's control.
13. All repressive acts, including the Security Act, should be repealed.
14. Everyone arrested extra-judicially for political reasons or revenge in Rukum, Rolpa, Jajarkot, Gorkha, Kabhrc, Sindhupalchowk. Sindhuli, Dhanusa, Ramechhap, and so on, should be immediately released. All false cases should be immediately withdrawn.
15. The operation of armed police, repression and state-sponsored terror should be immediately

stopped.

16. The whereabouts of citizens who disappeared in police custody at different times, namely Dilip Chaudhary, Bhuwan Thapa Magar, Prabhakar Subedi and others, should be investigated and those responsible brought to justice. The families of victims should be duly compensated.
17. All those killed during the People's Movement should be declared martyrs. The families of the martyrs and those injured and deformed should be duly compensated, and the murderers brought to justice.
18. Nepal should be declared a secular nation.
19. Patriarchal exploitation and discrimination against women should be stopped. Daughters should be allowed access to paternal property.
20. All racial exploitation and suppression should be stopped. Where ethnic communities are in the majority, they should be allowed to form their own autonomous governments.
21. Discrimination against downtrodden and backward people should be stopped. The system of untouchability should be eliminated.
22. All languages and dialects should be given equal opportunities to prosper. The right to education in the mother tongue up to higher levels should be guaranteed.
23. The right to expression and freedom of press and publication should be guaranteed. The government mass media should be completely autonomous.
24. Academic and professional freedom of scholars, writers, artists and cultural workers should be guaranteed.
25. Regional discrimination between the hills and the tarai should be eliminated. Backward areas should be given regional autonomy. Rural and urban areas should be treated at par.
26. Local bodies should be empowered and appropriately equipped.

*Concerning livelihood*

27. Land should belong to 'tenants'. Land under the control of the feudal system should be confiscated and distributed to the landless and the homeless.
28. The property of middlemen and comprador capitalists should be confiscated and nationalised. Capital lying unproductive should be invested to promote industrialisation.
29. Employment should be guaranteed for all. Until such time as employment can be arranged, an unemployment allowance should be provided.

30. A minimum wage for workers in industries, agriculture and so on should be fixed and strictly implemented.
31. The homeless should be rehabilitated. No one should be 'relocated until alternative infrastructure is guaranteed.
32. Poor farmers should be exempt from loan repayments. Loans taken by small farmers from the Agricultural Development Bank should be written off. Appropriate provisions should be made to provide loans for small farmers.
33. Fertiliser and seeds should be easily available and at a cheap rate. Farmers should be provided with appropriate prices and markets for their produce.
34. People in flood and drought-affected areas should be provided with appropriate relief materials.
35. Free and scientific health services and education should be available to all. The commercialisation of education should be stopped.
36. Inflation should be checked. Wages should be increased proportionate to inflation. Essential goods should be cheaply and easily available to everyone.
37. Drinking water, roads and electricity should be provided to all villagers.
38. Domestic and cottage industries should be protected and promoted.
39. Corruption, smuggling, black marketing, bribery, and the practices of middlemen and so on should be eliminated.
40. Orphans, the disabled, the elderly and children should be duly honoured and protected.

We would like to request the present coalition government to immediately initiate steps to fulfil these demands which are inextricably linked with the Nepali nation and the life of the people. If there are no positive indications towards this from the government by 17 February, 1996, we would like to inform you that we will be forced to adopt the path of armed struggle against the existing state power.

Thank you.

Dr Baburam Bhattarai

Chairman

Central Committee, United People's Front, Nepal

Source: Thapa, D. (2003:391).



## **11-point demands of the United Democratic Madhesi Front (UDMF)**

1. There should be delineation of autonomous provinces, including two autonomous provinces in Terai/Madhes region from Mechi to Mahakali, based on historical background and identity in accordance with the Interim Constitution-2007 article 138, 1 (a), past agreements with marginalized communities including Madhesi, Indigenous and Janjatis and reports prepared by the Committee on State Restructuring and Distribution of Powers formed through the first Constituent Assembly in 2008 and High Level State Commission on State Restructuring. The autonomous provinces with high power have to be guaranteed.
2. Under fundamental rights chapter, ensure a separate article with a clear provision of proportionate inclusion for the marginalized communities.
3. Guarantee proportionate inclusion in all the state organs, levels, agencies and service commissions in all state organs at all level, including federal and provincial structures as well as service commissions.
4. Determination of population-based constituencies for the election of House of Representatives and mixed electoral system as provisioned in the interim constitution. Formation of National Assembly through single transferable electoral system from the votes of elected representatives of Provincial Assembly on the basis of population and compulsory representation from each province.
5. For the marital citizenship, there should be a clear provision in the constitution itself, not in federal law, and their representation in the constitutional bodies has to be either through nomination or as per the provision of the interim constitution.
6. Restructuring of judiciary in accordance with fundamentals norms of the federal state, and appointments in the Supreme Court, High Court and Local Court in accordance with proportionate inclusion. Appointments of judges in the high courts and local courts on the basis of provincial laws.
7. Execution of multilingual policies in all federal, provincial and local bodies.



8. Formation of Inclusion Commission with representatives from all the communities and all other commissions with their clear jurisdictions. Also, ensure the provision of representation from each province in the natural resources and financial commissions.

9. Formation of local bodies and special structures as per the provincial laws.

10. Democratization of the Nepal Army, giving it a national shape, and guarantee of proportionate inclusion in all security agencies including Nepal Army.

11. Nepal should be defined as a multi-national state and not as a monolithic national state.

## Memorandum of Agreement

Whereas the Gorkha Janamukti Morcha (GJM) has been demanding for quite sometime past a separate State of Gorkhaland for the hill areas of Darjeeling district including some areas of Siliguri Terai and Dooars (hereinafter referred to as the Region) ;

And

Whereas both the Government of India and the Government of West Bengal have repeatedly emphasized the need for keeping the region as an integral part of the State of West Bengal ;

And

Whereas after several rounds of tripartite meetings at the ministerial and at the official levels, the GJM, while not dropping their demand for a separate State of Gorkhaland, has agreed to the setting up of an autonomous Body (hereinafter referred to as the new Body) empowered with administrative, financial and executive powers in regard to various subjects to be transferred to the said Body for the development of the region and restoration of peace and normalcy there at;

And

Whereas the objective of this Agreement is to establish an autonomous self governing Body to administer the region so that the socio-economic, infrastructural, educational, cultural, and linguistic, development is expedited and the ethnic identity of Gorkhas established, thereby achieving all round development of the people of the region ;

And

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Whereas all issues including issues relating to transfer of subjects to the new Body have been agreed in various tripartite meetings at the official level;

And

Whereas after several round of Tripartite discussions between the Government of India, the Government of West Bengal and the GJM, an agreement was reached in respect of all the issues;

Now, therefore, the Government of India, the Government of West Bengal and the GJM, keeping on record the demand of the GJM for a separate State of Gorkhaland, agree as follows:-

- 1) An autonomous Body, which shall be called the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA), will be formed through direct election. A Bill for this purpose will be introduced in the West Bengal Legislative Assembly ;
- 2) While under the provisions of the Constitution transfer of legislative powers to the new Body is not possible, the power to frame rules / regulations under the State Acts to control, regulate and administer the departments / offices and subjects transferred to the new Body will be conferred upon the new Body ;
- 3) The administrative, executive and financial powers in respect of the subjects transferred will be vested in such a way that the new Body may function in an autonomous and effective way ;
- 4) The subjects alongwith all Departments / Offices to be transferred to the new Body is appended as Annexure – ‘A’.
- 5) The area of the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration shall comprise the areas of the entire sub-divisions of Darjeeling, Kalimpong with extended areas of Kurseong. In regard to transfer of additional areas of Siliguri Terai and Dooars to the new Body, a

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High-Powered Committee will be formed comprising four representatives of GJM, three representatives of the State Government (one from the Home Department; the District Magistrate, Darjeeling; the District Magistrate, Jalpaiguri); the Director of Census Operations representing Government of India, apart from the Chairman of the Committee to be appointed by the State Government. The Chairperson of the Board of Administrators, DGHC will be the convener of this Committee. The Committee will look into the question of identification of additional areas in Siliguri Terai and Dooars that may be transferred to the new Body, having regard to their compactness, contiguity, homogeneity, ground level situation and other relevant factors.

The Committee will be expected to give its recommendations within a short period, preferably within six months of its constitution.

- 6) The work of this High-Powered Committee will run parallel to the electoral process which will be based on the existing area delimitation. However, the empowering statute will have a provision for transfer of the additional areas from Siliguri Terai and Dooars that may be agreed upon, based on the recommendation of this Committee.
- 7) In regard to transfer of all forests including reserved forest, it was agreed that the State Government will make a reference to the Central Government on the issue of reserved forest as the power delegated to the State Government under the Central statute cannot be delegated to any other authority straightaway. However, all offices catering to the unreserved forests under the jurisdiction of GTA would also be transferred to GTA.

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- 8) Regarding Tribal status to Gorkhas except the Scheduled Castes, the GJM or any organisation representing the Gorkhas will make an application to the Backward Classes Welfare Department of the State Government, which is the authority to process such claims. The Department, upon receiving such application supported by necessary documents will conduct a study through the Cultural Research Institute, Kolkata. After examination by the Department, the matter will be referred to the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes. The recommendations already submitted to the National Commission will be followed up by the State Government. The Government of India will consider for granting ST status to all the Gorkhas excepting SC.
- 9) In regard to regularization of all ad-hoc, casual, daily wage workers of DGHC, regularization by way of outright absorption is not feasible due to the current legal position as enunciated by the Hon'ble Supreme Court. However, those employees who have put in 10 years of continuous service would be guided by the Finance Department's order of 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 2010. Those outside this ambit would be extended an enhancement in wages. This would be equivalent to 75% of the remuneration admissible under the order of the Finance Department subject to a minimum of ₹5,000/- per month for those who have not completed 10 years of continuous service. As and when they complete 10 years of continuous service, they will be eligible for the full benefit in terms of the order of 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 2010. The employees will, however, have the liberty to apply for normal recruitment to any other posts of State Government. It was also agreed that the State Government will make necessary financial provisions for bearing the additional non-plan expenditure for this purpose.

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- 10) There shall be a GTA Sabha for the GTA. There shall be a Chairman and Deputy Chairman to conduct the business of Council. The GTA Sabha shall consist of forty-five elected members and five members to be nominated by the Governor to give representation to members of SC, ST, women, and minority communities. The M.Ps, M.L.As, and Chairpersons of municipality(s) of the region shall be Ex-officio Members to this GTA Sabha. The term of the GTA shall be five years.
- 11) The Executive Body shall consist of a Chief Executive who will nominate fourteen members out of the elected / nominated members as Executive Member. One of them shall be the Deputy Chief to be nominated by the Chief Executive.
- 12) Every member of the GTA shall before taking seat make and subscribe before the Governor or one of the elected members appointed in that behalf by him an oath or affirmation. The Chief Executive shall be administered an oath or affirmation by the Governor.
- 13) There shall be a Principal Secretary of the GTA, who shall be of the rank of the Principal Secretary/Secretary to the State Government and who shall be selected by the Chief Executive from the panel sent by the State Government and shall be paid from the GTA Fund such salaries and allowances as may be fixed by the State Government. The Principal Secretary once deputed to the GTA shall not be transferred for a period of at least two years without the consent of the GTA.
- 14) The Government of India and the Government of West Bengal will provide all possible assistance to the GTA for the overall development of the region. The Government of India will provide financial assistance of Rs. 200 crore (Rupees Two Hundred Crore) per annum for 3 years for projects to develop the socio-economic

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- infrastructure in GTA over and above the normal plan assistance to the State of West Bengal. A list of projects which may be considered to be taken up by the GTA is at Annexure 'B1'. List of projects to be separately taken up by the GTA with the State/Central Government is at 'B2'.
- 15) The Government of India/ State Government will provide one time financial assistance required for development of administrative infrastructure viz., GTA Sabha House, Secretariat Complex and the residential quarters for the elected members of GTA and the senior officers.
  - 16) The allocation sanctioned in the budget of GTA and all funds sanctioned by the State or the Union Government which remain unspent at the close of the financial year shall be taken into account for the purpose of providing additional resources in the Budget of the following year or years and the fund requirements will be met on a yearly basis.
  - 17) The Government of West Bengal shall provide formula based plan fund with 60 per cent weightage on population and the balance weightage on area backwardness, hill areas and border areas in two equal installments every year for executing development works.
  - 18) The Government of West Bengal shall provide Non-plan grant including provisions for bearing the additional Non-plan expenditure for existing employees payable in two installments in respect of the offices / departments transferred to GTA.
  - 19) The fund received from the Government of India shall not be diverted and the State Government shall release the fund in time.

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- 20) The GTA will have the power of creating Group B, C and D posts with the approval of Governor. The recruitment to Group B, C and D posts will be through a Subordinate Service Selection Board to be set up for this purpose.
- 21) The State Public Service Commission shall be consulted for the recruitment of Group 'A' officers.
- 22) The State Government will set-up a separate School Service Commission, College Service Commission; open an office of the Regional Pension and Provident Directorate; and set up an office for Registration of land, building etc., marriage, society etc. in the GTA area, subject to extant rules and regulations.
- 23) The Governor of West Bengal shall obtain a report on the functioning of the GTA and cause that report to be laid on the table of the West Bengal Legislative Assembly annually.
- 24) The Government of West Bengal will initiate action to re-organize / re-constitute the territorial jurisdictions of sub-divisions and blocks.
- 25) The GTA, once established, will separately take up the issues relating to grant of incentives, subsidies, waiver of taxes and tariff and other benefits as appropriate to the region's backwardness, with the Central and State Governments.
- 26) A three-tier Panchayat will be constituted by elections in the GTA region, subject to the provisions of Part IX of the Constitution of India. Notwithstanding anything contained in the West Bengal Panchayat Act 1973, or the West Bengal Municipal Act, 1993, the GTA shall exercise general powers of supervision over the Panchayats and the Municipalities.

- 27) Since the formation of new authority will take some time and since the developmental works in the hills, which have already suffered badly, cannot be allowed to suffer further, there will be a Board of Administrators in DGHC which would be fully empowered to exercise all the powers and functions of the Chief Executive Councilor under the DGHC Act, 1988 and to decide on the much needed developmental works in the hills. The Board of Administrators will comprise MLA, Darjeeling; MLA, Kurseong ; MLA, Kalimpong ; District Magistrate, Darjeeling and Administrator, DGHC in keeping with the provisions of the sub-section (1) of Section 17 of the DGHC Act as amended vide Kolkata Gazette Notification of 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2005.
- 28) The GJM agrees to ensure that peace and normalcy will be maintained in the region.
- 29) A review will be done by the State Government of all the cases registered under various laws against persons involved in the GJM agitation. Steps will be taken in the light of the review, not to proceed with prosecution in all cases except those charged with murder. Release of persons in custody will follow the withdrawal of cases.
- 30) The GTA youth would be considered for recruitment in the Police, Army and Para Military Forces subject to their suitability for such appointment.
- 31) The implementation of the provision of the Memorandum of Agreement shall be periodically reviewed by a committee representing the Government of India, Government of West Bengal and GJM.
- 32) The Government of West Bengal shall repeal the DGHC Act, 1988 along with formation of GTA to be constituted by an Act of the legislature.

Signed on 18th July, 2011 at Darjeeling in the presence of Shri P. Chidambaram, Hon'ble Union Home Minister and Mamata Banerjee, Hon'ble Chief Minister, west Bengal.

(Dr. G.D. Gautama)  
Additional Chief Secretary,  
Home & Hill Affairs Department  
Government of West Bengal  
for and on behalf of the  
Government of West Bengal

(Shri Rooshan Giri )  
General Secretary,  
Gorkha Janmukti Morcha  
for and on behalf of the  
Gorkha Janmukti Morcha

(Shri K.K. Pathak)  
Joint Secreatry to the Government of India  
Ministry of Home Affairs  
for and on behalf of the  
Government of India

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**Annexure 'A'**

**List of Subjects to be transferred to the GTA**

- (1) Agriculture, including agricultural education and research protecting against pest and prevention of plants diseases; Horticulture, Floriculture and Food processing;
- (2) Animal Husbandry and Veterinary, that is to say preservation, protection and improvement of stock and prevention of animal diseases, veterinary training and practices, cattle pounds; Dairy development;
- (3) Cooperation;
- (4) Information and Cultural Affairs
- (5) School Education including primary education, secondary education, higher secondary education (including vocational training): Physical Education; Government Schools.
- (6) College Education including Agricultural and Technical Colleges, Local Management of Government sponsored Colleges; Mass Education and Physical Education; Engineering, Medical, Management, and Information Technology with Government and Government sponsored colleges for which wings /cells shall have to be created by the GTA for the area under its jurisdiction;
- (7) Adult Education and Library Services;
- (8) Fisheries;
- (9) Irrigation, drainage and embankments, floods and landslide protection;
- (10) Food and Civil Supplies; Consumer Affairs;
- (11) Management of any forest, not being Reserved Forest; [Explanation – 'Reserved Forest' shall mean a reserved forest as constituted under Indian Forest Act 1927 (16 of 1927)];
- (12) Cottage & Small Scale Industries including sericulture, handloom and textiles; handicrafts and Khadi and Village industries;
- (13) Cinchona plantation and settlement of land in possession of the plantation inhabitants: management of lease of cinchona lands etc. under it.
- (14) Woman and Child Development and Social Welfare;

- (15) District Sainik Board;
- (16) "Health including Public Health and Family welfare" including hospitals, dispensaries, health centres and sanatoriums, establishing a Nurses Training School;
- (17) Intoxicating liquors, opium derivatives subject to the provisions of Entry 84 of List I of the Seventh Schedule; distilleries – control and regulation, Bonded House and raising of revenue;
- (18) Irrigation;
- (19) Water Resources Investigation and Minor Irrigation;
- (20) Labour and Employment;
- (21) Land & Land Revenue including allotment, occupation or use, setting apart of land other than land with reserved forest for the purposes of agriculture or grazing or for residential or other non-agricultural purposes to promote interest of the people;
- (22) Library services (financed and controlled by the State Government);
- (23) Lotteries (subject to the provisions of the Entry 40 of the List I of the Seventh Schedule);
- (24) Theatre, dramatic performances and cinemas (subject to the provisions of the Entry 60 of List I of the Seventh Schedule); Sports; entertainment and amusements;
- (25) Markets and fairs;
- (26) Municipal corporation, improvement of trust, district boards and other local authorities; Fire Services;
- (27) Museum and archeology institutions controlled or financed by the State, ancient and historical monuments and records other than those declared by or under any Law made by Parliament to be of national importance;
- (28) Panchayat and Rural Development including District Rural Development Agency (DRDA);
- (29) Planning and Development;
- (30) Printing and Stationery;
- (31) Public Health Engineering;

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- (32) Public Works Department including work relating to State Highways as well as the responsibility discharged by the State Government for maintenance of National Highways within the jurisdiction of GTA;
- (33) Publicity and Public Relations including Regulation of Media – both Print and Electronic media;
- (34) Registration of births and deaths;
- (35) Relief and Rehabilitation, establishing a branch of disaster management in consultation with NDMA under the extant laws/rules.
- (36) Sericulture;
- (37) Small, cottage and rural industry subject to the provisions of Entries 7 and 52 of List I of the Seventh Schedule;
- (38) Social Welfare; including part of SC & ST Development and Finance Corporation under GTA area;
- (39) Soil conservation;
- (40) Sports and Youth Welfare;
- (41) Statistics;
- (42) Tourism: Tourism infrastructure within the jurisdiction of the GTA catering to the area of GTA would be transferred to GTA. However, GTA may set up its own wing of Tourism Development Corporation for the area under its jurisdiction;
- (43) Transport (roads, bridges, ferries and other means of communication not specified in List I of the Seventh Schedule, municipal tramways, ropeways, inland waterways and traffic thereon, subject to the provision of Entry 40 of List I and List III of the Seventh Schedule with regard to such waterways, vehicles and other mechanically propelled vehicles);
- (44) The State Government will consider opening an RTO Office in the GTA area however; powers vested with the DM at present would remain with him only.
- (45) Tribal research institution controlled and financed by the State Government;
- (46) Urban development – town and country planning;
- (47) Weights and measures subject to the provisions of Entry 50 of List I of the Seventh Schedule;

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- (48) Welfare of plain tribes and backward classes subject to the area being under GTA only;
- (49) Welfare of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes;
- (50) Welfare of Minorities;
- (51) Management and settlement of land including markets and market sheds controlled by the Darjeeling Improvement Fund;
- (52) Minor Minerals and Mineral development (subject to the provisions of Entry 23 of List II of the Seventh Schedule);
- (53) Rural electrification;
- (54) Renewable sources of energy including water-power (subject to Entry 56 of List I and Entry 38 of List III of the Seventh Schedule);
- (55) Sharing electricity with GTA subject to evolving a mutually agreeable formula with the State government.
- (56) Pounds and prevention of cattle trespass;
- (57) Management of burial grounds and cremation grounds;
- (58) Regulation of Cable channels; to the extent the powers of Central Act, i.e. the Cable Television Network (Regulation) Amendment Act, 2002 vests with the State government;
- (59) Tauzi: Tauzi Department of the Collectorate.

**Annexure 'B1'**

**LIST OF PROJECTS TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY THE GTA TO DEVELOP THE PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE GTA AREA IN ORDER TO ACCELERATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGION**

1. Comprehensive water supply system in the new body area;
2. Multi-super specialty Medical College and Hospital;
3. Establishment of Hospitality and Tourism Management Institute;
4. Establishment of a College of Nursing;
5. Establishment of a Gorkha House at New Delhi;
6. Establishment of an Institute for Research and Development of the Nepali Language;
7. Establishment of a Cultural Institute to preserve, promote and develop culture, tradition, heritage of the people of the region;
8. Establishment of Research and Development Institute for Tea and Cinchona;
9. Research and Development Institute for Horticulture, Floriculture;
10. Balasan Drinking Water Project to be taken up by the Union Government and be declared as a National Project;
11. Sidrabong Hydro Project has been declared a National Heritage but neglected. Funds for its maintenance and upkeep;
12. Food processing, agro-processing complex and cold storage;
13. Creation and development of the IT industry in this region;
14. A new bridge connecting Dooars to be constructed over the Teesta River as the only Coronation Bridge has become very old and it may collapse any time;
15. Mini and Micro Hydro Projects in GTA;
16. Establishment of Eight Multi disciplinary College different areas of the Region;
17. Establishment of Veterinary Hospitals;
18. High School/Higher Secondary School for every twenty-five villages;
19. Processing plants for Cinchona at Mungpoo;
20. Establishment of Polytechnics for all subdivisions;
21. 2 ITIs / Vocational Institutes in each subdivision;



22. Construction of Multi storied Car Parking at Darjeeling, Kurseong and Kalimpong;
23. Construction of Circular Road connecting Darjeeling Town-Lebong-Pandam-Jorebunglow-Darjeeling Town;
24. Construction of Rope way at Kalimpong( Delo – Relly), at Darjeeling (Tukvar-Singla) and (Batasia-Roack Garden), at Mirik ( Mirik – Kurseong), at Kurseong (Giddeypahar-Rohini);
25. Special Fund for the construction of Super-speciality Hospitals in every Sub-Division;
26. Creation of an Industrial zone in an area of at least 1000 acres in the plain areas of the proposed GTA and to be accorded status of special economic zone;
27. Institute of Capacity Building & Livelihood School.

**Annexure ‘B2’**

**LIST OF PROJECT PROPOSALS WHICH GTA MAY TAKE UP WITH THE STATE/CENTRAL GOVERNMENT**

1. Establish a Central Institute of Technology.
2. Establishment of a Central University;
3. National Institute of Technology (NIT) including IT and Bio-technology;
4. Construction of an alternative National Highway from Siliguri via Mirik along Balasan River to Darjeeling;
5. Establishment of a Fashion Technology Institute;
6. Establishment of a Sainik School;
7. Establishment of National Games and Sports Academy;
8. Establishment of a Tea Auction Centre at Darjeeling;
9. Darjeeling Himalayan Railway to be revitalized for boosting Tourism sector;
10. To establish a Broad-gauge Railway Terminal Station at Sukna;
11. Strengthening and Widening of National Highway 55 and 31 A;
12. Central Government Engineering College funded by GOI;

13. Revival of Trade route to Tibet via Jelep-la from Kalimpong;
14. Reservation of seats for students of this region in College/Institution of higher education including Engineering, Technical, Medical and Management etc all over India;

# Madhesi – United We Stand

## MJF and Interim Government enter into a 22 -point Agreement

*September 3, 2007 at 4:30 pm (<https://madhesi.wordpress.com/2007/09/03/mjf-and-interim-government-enter-into-a-22-point-agreement/>) | 4 comments (<https://madhesi.wordpress.com/2007/09/03/mjf-and-interim-government-enter-into-a-22-point-agreement/#comments>)*

### **MJF and Interim Government enter into a 22 -point Agreement**

By Dr. S. Chandrasekharan

The MJF of Terai led by Upendra Yadav and the Interim Government Talks Team leader Ramchandra Paudel reached a historic 22 point Agreement on 30 August, 2007. For the first time in the history of Madesh (Terai) that had been neglected by the Kathmandu centric government for the last two centuries and more and ignored consistently by India, reached an agreement that gives some political space to the Madhesis who now can go to the people for a mandate in the coming Constituent Assembly Elections.

The agreement has many flaws- it is not all inclusive with many splinter armed groups still on a rampage and the main demand of the MJF- proportional representation has been given up. But we would still call it as a major beginning with many miles to go and yet it is a good beginning.

Salient Points:

The full text of the agreement is not yet available, but the salient points as ascertained are

1. The Interim government has agreed to provide compensation to the families of all those killed during the recent Madhesi movement.
2. Cases filed against the MJF leaders and the cadres will be withdrawn.
3. Both sides agreed to set up an industrial security force.
4. Madhesi language, culture and customs will get national recognition.
5. Dalits to get due recognition by law and job opportunities
6. State would ensure 'balanced' and 'proportional' representation of marginalised communities that would include Madhesi, indigenous/nationalities, disabled, minorities and Muslims in all State structures.
7. The Government agrees to autonomy in a federal system of governance while restructuring the State keeping the country's sovereignty, unity and regional integrity in tact.
8. There will be a three-language formula- with Nepali, English and mother tongue in all official transactions.
9. State agrees to despatch teams immediately to Terai to distribute citizenship certificates to those

deprived.

10. Legal provisions for education up to the primary level, reservation in education and employment and land to the landless and to address the plight of the Dalits.
11. An inclusive commission to be set up for proper representation of all marginalised communities.
12. Announce public holidays in important festivals of the Muslim community.
13. Proportional distribution of the revenue income to Madhesh and the remote areas of the country.
14. Return of properties and personal arms seized by the Maoists to the respective owners.
15. Constitutional Assembly will decide the nature of boundaries and rights of autonomous states under a federal structure on the basis of suggestions received from the State Restructuring Commission.

The Flaws.

- Many of the points are mere wish lists of the MJF and promises from the Government and much would depend on the configuration of the constituent assembly that is formed after the CA elections.
- It is an agreement between MJF and the Interim Government and many of the outfits that have been active recently in Terai have been left out. Some of them are breakaway groups of the Maoists. Some of the active groups in Terai include- Janatantric Terai Mukti Morcha ( Goit), Janatantric Terai Mukti Morcha ( Jwala Singh), Janatantric Mukti Morcha ( Bisfot Singh), Madhesi Mukti Morcha, Madhesi Tiger, Terai Cobra Group, Madhesi Mukti Force, Terai Tiger, AASK Group, Tharu Mukti Morcha, Chure Bhawan Pradesh Ekta Samaj and Janajati Mahasangh. Many more groups that are unknown are emerging. All these groups are creating an adverse law and order situation in Terai that is affecting the general economic activities of Terai. The question is, how to tackle these groups and how to bring them into mainstream to take part in the CA elections?
- Much would depend upon the State which is dominated by the khas people who had not so far understood the emerging Madhesi nationality and their eagerness, not for a separate State but for power sharing at the centre and at all levels of administration including the security forces. The Nepali politicians will have to change their mind set and come to terms of the reality of Nepal being a multi cultural and a multi lingual community and that Nepal belongs to all. It will take time but they will have to understand the “raw anger” of the Madhesis. The current slogan of the Madhesis- “Say with pride that we are Madhesis- the sons of the soil and not foreign immigrants” is very popular and succinctly symbolises the current mood of the Madhesis.

Maoists oppose the Agreement:

It was expected that the Maoists would oppose the agreement. The present agreement takes the bottom of the three major demands of the Maoists for participating in the elections. They are now isolated in their demand for proportional representation and a round table conference of all the deprived communities to solve their problems before the CA elections. What is left now is their demand for declaring Nepal a republic even before the CA elections.

But what was surprising was the vehemence of their opposition. Very soon after the agreement, Prachanda issued a statement that the agreement is “ extremely objectionable, flawed, deceptive and conspiratorial in both content and procedure.” He said that the agreement went against the Maoist demand for “forging of a ‘common concept’ among all parties in the interim constitution by organising an ‘expanded round table conference’”. He described the agreement as a deplorable effort to fool the Madhesi people and establish one group of persons politically when most of the issues mentioned in the 22 point accord have been incorporated in the comprehensive peace agreement as well as in the interim constitution.

In the current situation it is the best that could be obtained.

It looks that Upendra Yadav made the best of what he could get out of the government on the eve of the elections. His popularity in the Terai was waning and he could not have carried out his ultimatum of a protest programme with vigour in the whole of Terai from 31st as he declared. He will now be able to consolidate his position and look for maximum representation in the coming CA elections. He is already having problems from his hardliners led by Kishor Biswas who want to continue with their protest programme.

Climate favourable for CA elections now.

With the Terai protest out of the way, it is expected that law and order situation would improve in the next few weeks to create the right atmosphere for the CA elections. A five-member team of electoral experts sent by the UN Secretary General in their visit from July 27 to August 6 had reported tht the security situation has not improved since its visit in June but with the present agreement, the situation should improve. The UNMIN in Kathmandu had offered to mediate with JTMM if the government approves. Surely this is outside the mandate of the UN team and it is not clear why the UN offered to mediate at all in a matter that is purely internal.

Late Gajendra Narayan Singh:

Our thoughts go back to the late Gajendra Narayan Singh who singlehandedly tried his best to sensitise the mid hill Pahadi elites and the Panchayat regime of the problems of the Madhesis.

He failed then but his efforts have not been in vain. We give as an annexure what we wrote about him in this website when he died. One all knowing ex JNU academic has in one of the seminars said that the Madhesi parties were generously funded by India. This is far from truth and if only India had taken an interest, the NSP, the political party that was started by him will not be in shambles as it is today.

Annexure: Note No. 146 -18. 02. 2002

Nepal Update No. 17: Terain leader Gajendra Narayan Singh passes away

by Dr. S. Chandrasekharan

Gajendra Narayan Singh, President of the Nepal Sadhbahavana Party passed away on January 23, 2002. His body was taken to Saptari Sewa Ashram at Koiladi in Saptari District in Nepal and cremated with full state honours on 25th January.

Unlike other politicians in the region, G.N.Singh led a very simple and austere life and spent most of his time in the Ashram he created in 1991. In July 2001, he created the "Gajendra Narayan Public Welfare trust" and donated all his property and belongings to the trust. The trust was to look after the poor, helpless and the backward communities in the southern districts of Nepal.

G.N.Singh entered politics in 1947 and joined the Nepali National Congress, (presently the ruling Nepali Congress) but left the party in 1980s to form a cultural forum known as Nepal Sadbhavana Parishad, which was turned later into a political party, the Nepal Sadhbahavana Party (NSP).

G.N.Singh went into exile to Dharbanga when in 1960 King Mahendra seized control of the country after putting into prison the leaders of the ruling Nepali Congress in the brief period when Nepal experienced multi-party democracy between 1959 to 1960. Unable to visit his home, he literally lived a life in penury until he returned to Nepal in 1977.

Unlike many other Terain leaders who came into prominence by espousing the cause of Terains, only to ditch them later in pursuit of personal interests, G. N. Singh continued to champion the cause of Terains throughout his political career. He left the Nepali Congress only when he felt that B.P.Koirala and his

party continued to discriminate against the Terains. He continued to wear the traditional Dhoti and Kurta in the parliament while the official dress was the "Daura Suruwal". Despite opposition from the Pahadi parliamentarians, G.N.Singh was not ashamed to speak in Hindi in the Parliamentary debates.

This is not the place to discuss the various forms of discrimination being meted out to the Terains who are otherwise called Madhesis. Till the end G.N.Singh's pet objective was to get full citizenship rights to a majority of Terains who were born and brought up in Terai. From the configuration of electoral districts, regions to recruitment in the army and Police, the Terains were and continue to be discriminated against in every field. G.N. Singh despite being abused by the media, other political leaders and the bureaucracy continued to fight for the Terain cause.

Unfortunate though, G.N.Singh was widely "perceived" to be Indian both in outlook, character and leanings. But this could be said of all the Terains who speak Hindi and who have relatives across the border. Yet he was never liked by the Indian embassy for reasons best known to them but it could be for his very "Indianness".

G.N.Singh on his return from exile believed that the interests of the Terains would best be served by working within the Panchayat system and accordingly stood for elections in 1980 in Saptari district. But the royalty and its stooges decided otherwise. When the counting was going in favour of G.N.Singh, the workers in the counting hall chased away G.N.Singh's supporters and the results were declared in favour of another least known candidate. Undaunted he continued to stand for elections and won in all but one.

One cannot but recall the sufferings undergone by G.N.Singh in his political career. He was not a man of violence and he joined politics only being inspired by the Gandhian movement. Yet soon after the bomb blasts by the Janawadi Morcha of Ram Rajya Prasad Singh near the Palace in the eighties, poor G.N.Singh who had nothing to do with the morcha was arrested and kept in chains for many months. Nepal has produced only two genuine leaders of Terai G.N.Singh and Ram Rajya Prasad Singh. Though both come from the same village they were at the opposite ends of the pole in their ideology and in their quest to change the political system. G.N.Singh is dead and Ram Rajya Prasad Singh is said to be extremely sick in Patna. The Terain cause will certainly suffer.

In spite of unendurable incarceration G.N. Singh held no grudge against Late King Birendra or the monarchy itself. It was his view that the monarchy was the unifying factor and it was only the King who could help the Terain cause. Here he was mistaken.

There is no doubt that there is none who has the charisma, courage and the capacity to continue the Terain cause like G.N.Singh. In the initial stages G.N.Singh had many youngsters who flocked round him and worked genuinely for the cause. They were never given due encouragement and G.N.Singh like a banyan tree held everyone together but never allowed any leader to come up to take his place. There are now two main contenders, the current Vice President of Sadhbhavana party Badri Prasad Mandal and the other parliamentarian Hridyesh Tripathi. It is hoped that the party will break from the past and have an internal election for the post of Presidentship.

source: <http://saag.org/notes4/note400.html> (<http://saag.org/notes4/note400.html>)



Entry filed under: [Articles \(https://madhesi.wordpress.com/category/articles/\)](https://madhesi.wordpress.com/category/articles/).

[How can forest be managed sustainably after Sanghiya Sasan in Nepal? Kamaiyas in pursuit of land rights](#)

## 4 Comments [Add your own](#)

1. Son of Tirhut | September 8, 2007 at 2:15 pm

A request to all Terain Brothers!!!!

Plz terain brothers including Tharus and dalits please let's not be departed from each other. You know these Khasiya central leaders doesn't wish to see our appropriate position taken by terian people. Specially Tharu brothers please don't forget that the position you are in now is because of these Khasiya Bahuns and Kshetris not the people of terai (non-tharus) have put in trouble. See the native Tharus that belongs from chitwan, Banke, Bardia, Kailali, Kanchanpur and Dang and Deukhuri, what is your position in those places?

So please understand thesethings in time otherwise you again have to be slave of those people and have to wait for more 240 years to get your right.

Together we work, survive we will.

Jai Madhes/ Terai!!!!

2. chaudary Saran rana | September 8, 2007 at 2:42 pm

Dear friend son of Tirhut

Very dearing advice.You want to divide Nepal on thr pretext of ethnicity.What will you get by appealing this.Why dont you try to unite people hill and terai together.You alsays go against of Pahere people.Tharu will demand their own land as THARUWAN not Tharuwan with in terai but Tharuwan with in Nepal.

Try to know that we all are the son of Nepal and we dont belive on your baseless advice

Jai Nepal

3. Mr Madhesh | September 8, 2007 at 4:31 pm

dear chaudhary sarn rana

you don't seem to be chaudhary, you are a regressive force, a poppet of the ruling pahadia bahuns and chetris, who have actually even paid you few rupees to put your non sense, and divide and rule comment on this blog. thanx for ur advise for all people from madhes and hill to stay united, but unknowingly your comment on dividing the southern plain, looks like you are really good foreseeier. but u wont succeed, take care of urself, and take care of you neighbours mate have good day

4. Son of Tirhut | September 9, 2007 at 2:34 pm

Dear friend chaudary Saran rana Ji,

I can understand you and your feeling. I also know you people's inner pain. I support your Tharuhat within Nepal in terai. I am also in favour of Aadibasi, Janjati and Dalit as well but not these Khasiya people. As i belong from Mithlanchal (Mid terai) i love my language and Tharu language as well since 90% of our language and culture are same. But we need to have our right reserved. I accept you people as Janjati of Western terai, but don't you know this territory (Kailali, Kanchapur, Banke, Bardia) as gifted by British to Nepal Government 100 years back, so was this area in Nepal forever? I also know that the madhesi people in Western Nepal a re immigrants of India during 1950, so only 50 years gaping between you people.

And up now you people are counted and treated as Madise and Bhaiya in hilly area cities, so there why didn't you compelled them?

As long as you speak your language and conserve you tradition you will be treated as non- nepalies, you know why?

The reason is specially these Khasiya Bahuns and Kshetris dream and wish to have their culture and language dominated as they have done up now. Don't ypu see how these Kahsiya people, Ranas and Shah rulers have captured our lands made us slave till date.

We all are sons of terai and together we can fight against these Kahsiya rulers only, rest all are our brothers since these people are stuggling as well for their right identity.

Jai Terai/Tharuhat/Madhes/Nepal!!!!

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*Translation of the Deed of Grant making over Darjeeling to the East  
India Company dated 1<sup>st</sup> February 1835*

The Governor-General having expressed his desire for the possession of the Hill of Darjeeling, on account of its cool climate, for the purpose of enabling the servants of his Government, suffering from sickness, to avail themselves of its advantages, I, the Sikkimputtee Rajah, out of friendship to the said Governor-General, hereby present Darjeeling to the East India Company, that is, all the land south of the Great Runjeet River, east of Balasur, Kahail, and Little Runjeet Rivers, and west of Rungno and Mahanuddi Rivers.

(Translated)

(Sd.) A Campbell

Superintendent of Darjeeling

and In-charge of Political Relations

with Sikkim

Seal of the Rajah

*Affixed to the document*

Source: Sharma and Sharma (1998:4)

**TREATY OF PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT  
OF INDIA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF NEPAL**

**Kathmandu,**

**31 July 1950**

The Government of India and the Government of Nepal, recognising the ancient ties which have happily existed between the two countries; Desiring still further to strengthen and develop these ties and to perpetuate peace between the two countries; Have resolved therefore to enter into a Treaty of Peace and Friendship with each other, and have, for this purpose, appointed as their plenipotentiaries the following persons, namely,

1. THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA His EXCELLENCY SHRI CHANDRESHWAR PRASAD NARAIN SINGH, Ambassador of India in Nepal.
2. THE GOVERNMENT OF NEPAL MOHUN SHAMSHER JANG BAHADUR RANA,  
Maharaja, Prime Minister and Supreme Commander-in-Chief of Nepal,

who having examined each other's credentials and found them good and in due form have agreed as follows:—

**Article 1**

There shall be everlasting peace and friendship between the Government of India and the Government of Nepal. The two Governments agree mutually to acknowledge and respect the complete sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of each other.

**Article 2**

The two Governments hereby undertake to inform each other of any serious friction or misunderstanding with any neighbouring State likely to cause any breach in the friendly relations subsisting between the two Governments.

**Article 3**

In order to establish and maintain the relations referred to in Article 1 the two Governments agree to continue diplomatic relations with each other by means of

representatives with such staff as is necessary for the due performance of their functions. The representatives and such of their staff as may be agreed upon shall enjoy such diplomatic privileges and immunities as are customarily granted by international law on a reciprocal basis: Provided that in no case shall these be less than those granted to persons of a similar status of any other State having diplomatic relations with either Government.

#### **Article 4**

The two Governments agree to appoint Consuls-General, Consuls, Vice-Consuls and other consular agents, who shall reside in towns, ports and other places in each other's territory as may be agreed to. Consuls-General, Consuls, Vice-Consuls and consular agents shall be provided with exequaturs or other valid authorization of their appointment. Such exequatur or authorization is liable to be withdrawn by the country which issued it, if considered necessary. The reasons for the withdrawal shall be indicated wherever possible. The persons mentioned above shall enjoy on a reciprocal basis all the rights, privileges, exemptions and immunities that are accorded to persons of corresponding status of any other State.

#### **Article 5**

The Government of Nepal shall be free to import, from or through the territory of India, arms, ammunition or warlike material and equipment necessary for the security of Nepal. The procedure for giving effect to this arrangement shall be worked out by the two Governments acting in consultation.

#### **Article 6**

Each Government undertakes, in token of the neighbourly friendship between India and Nepal, to give to the nationals of the other, in its territory, national treatment with regard to participation in industrial and economic development of such territory and to the grant of concessions and contracts relating to such development.

#### **Article 7**

The Governments of India and Nepal agree to grant, on reciprocal basis, to the nationals of one country in the territories of the other the same privileges in the matter of residence, ownership of property, participation in trade and commerce, movement and other privileges of a similar nature.

**Article 8**

So far as matters dealt with herein are concerned, this Treaty: cancels all previous Treaties, agreements, and engagements entered into on behalf of India between the British Government and the Government of Nepal.

**Article 9**

This Treaty shall come into force from the date of signature by both Governments.

**Article 10**

This Treaty shall remain in force until it is terminated by either party by giving one year's notice.

DONE in duplicate at Kathmandu this 31st day of July 1950.

(Signed)

CHANDRESHWAR PRASAD NARAIN SINGH

For the Government of India.

(Signed)

MOHUN SHAMSHER JANG BAHADUR RAN,

For the Government of Nepal

(Source:<http://mea.gov.in/bilateraldocuments.htm?dtl/6295/Treaty+of+Peace+and+Fri> endship accessed on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2016)

## **Treaty of Sinchula, 1965**

On the 11th day of November, 1865

Treaty between His Excellency the Right Honourable Sir John Lawrence, G.C.B., K.S.I., Viceroy and Governor-General of Her Britannic Majesty's possessions in the East Indies, and the one part by Lieutenant Colonel Herbert Bruce, CB, by virtue of full powers to that effect vested in him by the Viceroy and Governor – General, and on the other part by Samdojey Deb Jimpey and Themseyrensey Donai according to full powers conferred on them by the Dhum and Deb Rajahs, 1865.

**ARTICLE I** There shall henceforth be perpetual peace and friendship between the British Government and the Government of Bhootan.

**ARTICLE II** Whereas in consequence of repeated aggressions of the Bhootan Government and of the refusal of that Government to afford satisfaction for those aggressions, and for their insulting treatment of the officers sent by His Excellency the Governor-General in Council for the purpose of procuring an amicable adjustment of differences existing between the two states, the British Government has been compelled to seize by an armed force the whole of the Doars and certain Hill Posts protecting the passes into Bhootan, and whereas the Bhootan Government has now expressed its regret for past misconduct and a desire for the establishment of friendly relations with the British Government, it is hereby agreed that the whole of the tract known as the Eighteen Doars, bordering on the districts of Rungpoor, Cooch Behar, and Assam, together with the Taloo of Ambaree Fallcottah and the Hill territory on the left bank of the Teesta up to such points as may be laid down by the British Commissioner appointed for the purpose is ceded by the Bhootan Government to the British Government forever.

**ARTICLE III** The Bhootan Government hereby agree to surrender all British subjects, as well as subjects of the Chief of Sikkim and Cooch Behar who are now detained in Bhootan against their will, and to place no impediment in the way of the return of all or any of such persons into British territory.

**ARTICLE IV** In consideration of the cession by the Bhootan Government of the territories specified in Article II of this Treaty, and of the said Government having expressed its regret for past misconduct, and having hereby engaged for the future to restrain all evil disposed persons from committing crimes within British territory or

the territories of the Rajahs of Sikkim and Cooch Behar and to give prompt and full redress for all such crimes which may be committed in defiance of their commands, the British Government agree to make an annual allowance to the Government of Bhootan of a sum not exceeding fifty thousand rupees (Rupees 50,000) to be paid to officers not below the rank of Jungpen, who shall be deputed by the Government of Bhootan to receive the same. And it is further hereby agreed that the payments shall be made as specified below:

On the fulfillment by the Bhootan Government of the conditions of this Treaty Twenty Five Thousand Rupees (Rupees 25,000).

On the 10th January following the 1st payment, thirty five thousand rupees (Rupees 35,000)

On the 10th January following, forty-five thousand rupees (Rupees 45,000)

On every succeeding 10th January, fifty thousand rupees (Rupees 50,000)

Source: Sharma and Sharma (1998)

## **Treaty of Titalia, 1817**

Treaty, Covenant, or Agreement, entered into by Captain Barre Latter, Agent on the part of His Excellency the Right Hon'ble, the Earl Of Moira, K.G., Governor General, Etc., and by Nazir Chaina Tenjin and Macha Teinbah and Lama Duchim Longadoo, Deputies on the part of the Rajah of Sikkimputtee, being severally authorized and duly appointed for the above purposes, - 1817.

### **Article 1**

The Honourable East India Company cedes, transfers, and makes over in full sovereignty to the Sikkimputtee Rajah, his heirs or successors, all the hilly or mountainous country situated to the eastward of the Mechi river and to the westward of the Teesta River, formerly possessed by the Rajah of Nepaul, but ceded to the Honourable East India company by the peace signed at Segoulee.

### **Article 2**

The Sikkimputtee Rajah engages for himself and successors to abstain from any acts of aggression or hostility against the Goorkhas or any other State.

### **Article 3**

That he will refer to the arbitration of the British Government any dispute or question that may arise between his subjects and those of Nepaul, or any other neighbouring State and to abide by the decision of the British Government.

### **Article 4**

He engages for himself and successors to join the British troops with the whole of his military force when employed in the Hills, and in general to afford the British Troops every aid and facility in his power.

### **Article 5**

That he will not permit any British subject, nor the subject of any European and American State, to reside within his dominions, without the permission of the English-Government.

**Article 6**

That he will immediately seize and deliver up any dacoits or notorious offenders that right take refuge within his territories.

**Article 7**

That he will not afford protection to any defaulters of revenue or other delinquents when demanded by the British Government through their accredited agents.

**Article 8**

That he will afford protection to merchants and traders from the Company's provinces, and he engages that no duty shall be levied on the transit of merchandise beyond the established custom at the several golas or marts.

**Article 9**

The Honourable East India Company guarantees to the Sikkimputtee Rajah and his successors, the full and peaceable possession of the tract of hilly country specified in the First Article of the present Agreement.

**Article 10**

This treaty shall be ratified and exchanged by the Sikkimputtee Rajah within one month from the present date, and the counterpart when confirmed by His Excellency the Right Honourable the Governor-General, shall be transmitted to the Rajah.

Done at Titalia, this 10<sup>th</sup> day of February 1817 answering to the 9th of Phagoon 1873 Sumbat, and to the 30<sup>th</sup> of Magh Bengalie.

*Sd/-* Barre Latter

Nazir Chaina Tenjin

Macha Timbah

Lama Duchim Longadoo

*Sd/-* Moira

N.B.

Edmondstone



Archd Seton  
Geo. Dowdeswell

Ratified by the Governor-General in Council, at Fort William, this Fifteenth day of March,  
One Thousand Eight Hundred and Seventeen.

*Sd/-* J. Adam,  
Acting Chief Secretary to  
Government.

Source: Sharma and Sharma (1998:1-2)