



Origin and Evolution of The Gorkhaland Movement

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Abstract: *Darjeeling is a district in West Bengal where the Gorkha or Nepali of this district are demanding a separate state for regional interest. An atmosphere of fear is observed in the minds of the Gorkha community in Darjeeling. The 1950 Indo-Nepal treaty of peace and friendship did not make a clear distinction between Indian Nepalese citizens and citizens of the state of Nepal. The Gorkhas were often portrayed as settlers, outsiders, and intruders denials. In the 1980s, anti-foreigner movements began in the Northeastern states of India. Gorkhas were expelled from this state. this led to an identity crisis among the Gorkhas. In the 1980s, a violent movement for a separate Gorkhaland state began under the leadership of Subhas Ghising of the Gorkha National Liberation Front. The Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council was then formed, but ultimately it could not play its important role. Then, a violent movement for a separate Gorkhaland state began under the leadership of Bimal Gurung of the Gorkha Janmukti Morcha. Finally, the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration was formed.*

key words: Gorkhaland movement, Gorkha National Liberation Front, Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council, Gorkhaland Territorial Administration.

Introjuction-

The tendency of the Gorkhaland movement has been noticed since the Independence of India. The Gorkhaland Movement started in the past not today. There was a movement with the demand for recognition to the Nepali language.

The British Government began to appoint Nepal people in the second half of the Nineteenth Century. The Nepali people were more credible, skilled and courageous than the people of the plain land. Work opportunities and a pleasant environment attracted Nepalese people to Darjeeling. The policy of separating the British Government in Darjeeling Created social distance from the Bengalis. one of the reasons for the migration of Darjeeling was established in the Gorkha dynasty in Nepal at the time of holes. The king used to exploit the people of upper Castes, In Such a Situation the people of Nepalese or Gorkha took the opportunity of the British work and started hiking in Darjeeling, outside People's Contact with Gorkha on Nepali People

was stopped. when Nepalese or Gorkha workers and farmers met outsiders the people, they would immediately be banned, from the tea garden work. From the beginning of the twentieth Century, the people of Darjeeling demanded the separation of Bengal.

the All India Gorkha League demanded to be Separated from bengal. The Nepali Language began to demand recognition The Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF), led by subhas ghising Separated from Bergal. The Darjeeling Gonkha Hill Council(DGHC) was then Created to meet the allegations of people of the hill. After the Failure of the DGHC, the movement Started for a Separated Gorkhaland led by Bimal Gurung of Gorkha Janomukti Morcha. on 18 July 2011, the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration was Signed between the Gorkha Janmukti Morcha, the Central Government and the State Grovernment.

Objective-

- 1) How did the Gorkhaland movement originate?
- 2) What was the role of the Gorkha National Liberation Front in the Gorkhaland Movement?
- 3) What was the role of the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council?
- 4) How did the Gorkha Janmukti Morcha emerge?
- 5) Why was the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration Created?

Research Methodology:-

I followed the descriptive analytics method to write my research paper. This study is based on secondary data. I have used various books and Journals, which are mentioned in the references, in preparing my research paper.

Language Movement of Darjeeling Gorkhas:-

The movement for language recognition is important to protect the identity of Nepalis or Gorkhas in Darjeeling. The Gorkhas or Nepalis wanted the Nepali language to be included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India. The Gorkha or Nepalis of Darjeeling were conscious of there language long before India's independence. Parashmani Pradhan was an important person in Darjeeling's language movement history. He published the first Literary magazine in Nepali called Chandrika from Darjeeling. The diverse groups of Darjeeling found expression diverse gr in Nepali Sahitya Sammelan founded by Parasmani Pradhan in 1924. (chakladar, 2004, P-80). The Provincial Government conceded their demand and introduced

Nepali as medium of instruction up to the level of Middle school and appointed the Nepali Textbook Committee in 1930 for catering to the needs of Nepali students. (Chakladar, 2004, P-80).

Since India's independence, Nepalis have started a movement for the recognition of the Nepali language. Nepalis held meetings and processions for the language movement. Sometimes they called for strikes. However, overall, it can be said that the movement was peaceful. B.G. Kher, who was the chairman of the language committee, referred to Nepali as a foreign Language. The Gorkhas or Nepalis had no loyalty to any foreign country. The patriotism of the Gorkhas or Nepalis towards India was deep. The Gorkha army joined Netaji's Indian National Army.

But even then, Nepalis had to listen to foreign immigrants and settlers, etc. Then, the Indian Nepalese or Gorkhas agitated for the recognition of the Nepali language. The movement for the recognition of the Nepali language in Darjeeling began in earnest in 1956. Hence, in 1956 Ananda Singh Thapa, editor of Jagat Gorkha, sent a memorandum to the official language Commission for its inclusion in the Eighth schedule. But it was turned down by the chairman of the Commission (Chakladar, 2004, P-82). If we consider the State government's role in the Nepali language movement, it can be seen that Bidhan Chandra Roy initially resisted the language age movement and asked them to wait until the 1961 census. Then, in 1961, the West Bengal government recognized Nepali as an official language of the state.

The state government could not suppress the movement for recognition of the language of the people of Darjeeling. The movement Continued from 1970 to 1992. The language movement gained, momentum around 1990.

The movement got a new dimension when the Sikkim government, headed by Nar Bahadur Bhandari, threw its weight behind the movement and founded a new organization called Bharatiya Nepali Rashtriya Parishad in June, 1990) (Chakladar, 2004, P-82). Thus the language movement gained momentum during which various political parties and their leaders supported the movement for the recognition of the Nepali language. A section of the GNLF Leadership spoke of recognizing the Gorkhali language instead of Nepali. Finally, Nepali language was the recognized. The members of parliament accepted the argument of the parishad and unanimously passed the seventy first (Amendment) Act on 20 august, 1992 incorporating Nepali along the Konkani and Manipuri in the The Eight Schedule of the Constitution. (Chakladar, 2004 P-83). The recognition of the Nepali Language in the Eighth schedule of the Constitution can be called a major victory, for the people of the hills of Darjeeling.

The demand of the Gorkhas of Darjeeling for a separate Gorkhaland was observed long before India's independence. In 1907, the hill people of Darjeeling submitted a memorandum to the

British government demanding a separate administrative unit. During World War II, the All India Gorkha League demanded self-rule for the Darjeeling district in 1943. Even after India's independence, the hill people of Darjeeling did not forget their demand for separation. The hill people of Darjeeling felt that they were exploited and neglected in terms of educational development and employment. Therefore, they raised the demand for a separate Gorkhaland in the interest of regional security. In this very situation that in 1980, Gorkha National Liberation Front leader Subhash Ghising came forward to protect the Gorkhas. The people of Darjeeling had started a massive movement for Gorkhaland. At that time, the Nepalis were very scared for their safety.

The reason for this is that Nepalis were expelled from Assam and Meghalaya. These expelled Nepalis were pushed to the border of West Bengal and Nepal. The Nepalis complained at this time that the West Bengal Government was not sympathetic towards them. The Nepal government also did not provide any assistance to them. Such a situation created panic in the minds of the Gorkha community of Darjeeling. Due to this fear, Gorkhas or Nepalis raised the demand for a separate Gorkhaland state. In the 1980s, the leader of the Gorkha National Liberation Front Subhash Ghising came forward to intensify the Gorkha demand.

The proponents of the Gorkhaland movement raised several issues.

1. The Indo-Nepal Peace and Friendship Treaty does not make any clear discrimination between Nepalese citizens and Indians Citizens. Apart from voting rights, Nepalese citizens were given rights to education, employment, business and purchase of property, etc. This resulted in an identity Crisis among Indian citizens. Subhash Ghisingh strongly protested against this.
2. In 1956 the states Reorganization Commission began recommending separate States on the basis of language. Nepalis claimed that the linguistic statistics of Nepalis in the 1951 census were incorrect. As a Result, the demand for separate state on the basis of language was not accepted.
3. The Gorkhas were unhappy with the behaviour of the Indian state Government. Anti-foreigner movements started in Assam and Meghalaya. Nepalis were attacked in Manipur. Then the Nepalis took refuge in West Bengal. Unlike the Bengalis of West Bengal, the Gorkhas or Nepalis didn't receive the Same level of sympathy from the West Bengal government.

4. The Gorkhas were loyal to the Indian state. Gorkha Soldiers Joined Netaji's Indian National Army. Major John Bahadur Thapa and Captain Durga Malla were hanged by the British for Participation in the INA. Despite the Sacrifices made by Nepalis an Gorkhas for freedom, they were described as foreigners after India's Independence.
5. Another major reason for the Gorkhaland movement was regional inequality. The economy of Darjeeling district or the hill was dependent on tea plantations and tourism. The Number of tea gardens was decreasing, resulting in a large number of workers becoming Unemployed. Without. Proper afforestation, the trees in the mountains were Cut down, thus Causing massive losses to the timber industry.

The role of the Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF) in the Gorkhaland movement in the 1980s :-

Various types of dissatisfaction led to anger among the Gorkhas. In 1980, the Gorkhas of the Darjeeling district of West Bengal started a movement for Gorkhaland, demanding separation. At this time GNLF leader Subhash Ghisingh led the Gorkhaland movement. The GNLF announced an 11 point Program at a meeting held in Ghum on March 13, 1986 and through this Program the Gorkhaland movement gained strength.

The movement began with 11 point program Subhash Ghisingh's capable Leadership created a stir in the minds of the people of Darjeeling. It won the hearts of young students and intellectuals. The Gorkhaland movement led by the GNLF in the 1980s was divided into three phases. The movement led by the GNLF may be divided into three distinct stages. They are a secessionist movement, movement for statehood within the framework of India and movement for autonomy within west Bengal (Chakladar 2004, P-85). The separatist phrase may be characterised by intra-party conflict. The first phase (April- October 1986) is marked by inter-party clashes (Sarkar 2013, R-73). At this stage, it is doubtful whether the Gorkhaland movement wanted Gorkhaland within India but their real intention was revealed from the content of the Memorandum that they submitted to the king of Nepal, Birendra Bir Bikram shadeo. The copy of this memorandum was sent to the secretary General of the United Nations Organization (UNO) and to the various heads of states including USA, USSA, UK, Pakistan, PRC, Bangladesh etc (Chakladar, 2004, P-86). This can be called a Donacien in Separatism.

Subhash Ghisinghe Speech on 13th April 1986 instilled Courage and direction in the minds of Nepali youth. The GNLF adopted various strategies to born Gorkhaland. GNLF Created a sense of fear and insecurity in the minds of Nepalis by Protesting the incidents in Assam and Meghalaya. An attempt was made to increase ethnic Sentiments. The youth were Created to be inspired or motivated. The black flag Protest began on 13 April 1986 in accordance with the 11 point plan. The Gorkhaland movement took a violent turn through rallies and strikes. The police arrested and fired on the Protesters. The Gorkhaland Movement took a deadly violent turn in 1986 and 1987. Those who opposed the idea of Gorkhaland were seen as enemies. Political Party Parties in the hills were seen as enemies. Ana da Pathak and his relatives and others Party Cader house were gutted beside numerous CPI(M) followers were Killed while thousands came down to the lowlands of Siliguri (Sarkar 2013, P-74). This is how the first phase of the Gorkhaland movement Went.

The second phase (November 1986 - April 1987) started with the Counter movement Spearheaded by the CPI(M) men to Combat the armed attack of the GNLF with Similar Counter offensive measures (Sarkar, 2013 P 74). At this Time, The GNLF abandoned the demand for a separate State. They demanded a separate Gorkhaland state Within the Indian state. The GNLF intensified its Violent movement. The CPI(M) mounted a counter-resistance to Conter the this movement Killing and Counter killing marred hill Politics for some moment. In the Process of maintaining Peace in the region state armed Police were engaged and several Police men were also killed in the mayhem (Sarkar, 2013, P-74).

The Central government Pressured the GNLF to abandon its Separatist and Violent Policies, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi held the state government responsible for maintaining law and order. According to Rajiv Gandhi, The issue could be tackled by taking effective steps for improving the economic condition of the People of Darjeeling which was the responsibility of the state government (Majumder & Singh, 1997, p-263),

The third phase of the Gorkhaland movement in the 1980s was quite violent, and during this phase, the GNLF extensively destroyed West Bengal government offices and Properties located in Darjeeling. It was the turn of state that characterised the third phase (June 1987- till the Signing of the accord in August 1988) (Sarkar, 2013, P-74),

The state government deployed armed police and the central government deployed BSF to suppress the movement. Finally, Subhash Galising agreed to suspend the movement and sit for talk. The GNLF received an invitation from the centre for talk and was given three Conditions.

These were (a) The GNLFF must declare that it did not want division of the state (b) denounce violence and (c) withdraw the letters sent to the UN and other foreign country. Ghising agreed to these conditions (Majumder & Singh, 1997 p-265) The GNLFF was forced to finalize the decision through negotiations. Several rounds of negotiations were held between the central government, the state and the GNLFF. After several rounds of talks between the state and the Central a Common approach was developed for normalising Darjeeling situation and ultimately the decision was finalised by the month of June 1987 in favour of a development Council with required amount of autonomy of Darjeeling hill (Sarkar, 2013, P-75-76), Then due to Subhash Ghising's compromise with the Central government and the state government, factionalism began within the GNLFF.

The GNLFF declared a 40 day strike on February 10, 1988 to protest the police firing in Kalimpong. As a result of the movement, many people fled and took refuge in Siliguri. Those who were stuck in the hills faced various difficulties including food, water, and fuel. In such a situation, everyone wanted an end to the Gorkhaland movement. The GNLFF was enthusiastic about the formation of a separate Gorkhaland state. But the west Bengal made it clear that there

would be no negotiation of an issue of statehood (Chakladar 2004, P-96), So the GNLFF had no choice but to sit in on the talk. After several rounds of bilateral and tripartite meetings held in Delhi and Calcutta, GNLFF President Subhas Ghising had agreed to sign the accord for the formation of Darjeeling Gorkha hill Council (DGHC). The DGHE Accord was finally signed in August 22, 1988 by Subhas Ghising, C.G. Somaiah (as the representative of the Central government), and Ratan Rathin Sengupta, the chief Secretary of West Bengal (as the representative of state government) (Sarkar, 2013, P-77). All things considered, it can be said that the GNLFF had dropped the demand for a separate Gorkhaland and instead accepted the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council.

Origin and Activities of the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council:-

The Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC) was formed in 1988 for the social, economic, educational and cultural advancement of the people living in Darjeeling district. The Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council was formed in two parts (a) general Council and (b) an executive Council. The General Council consists of 42 members of which 28 are elected by adult suffrage and 14 are nominated. The term of office of the General Council is five years. The General Council has executive legislative, financial and judicial power, subject to the regulation of the state government (Chakladar, 2004, P-98).

The Executive Council was formed to supervise and implement the work of the General Council in a planned manner. The executive Council consists of the chief Executive Councillor, the vice-chairman, and fifteen other Councillors of whom thirteen are nominated by the chief Executive Councillor from among the elected Councillors, and two are nominated by the state government from among the nominated Councillors (Chaklader, 2004, p. 100).

The DGHC was formed for the purpose of autonomy. Anti- Ghising Camps had been growing intermittently in the 1990s. The DGHC was being maligned. Subhash was very aware of this and was ready to respond to the opposition. On 25 August 1996, Five national and regional Parties, namely AIGL, Congress (I), Prant Parishad, Democratic Front and BJP came together to form a joint front known as the Gorkhaland People Front. It was formed to consolidate the movement for a separate state of Gorkhaland. The GENLF again raised the demand for a separate Gorkhaland in 2000. However, Ghising never wanted the Gorkhaland demand to be divided into separate groups. In early 2001, Ghising and his followers were criticized for failing to manage the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council operations.

The DGHC was criticized for Corruption, nepotism, and failure to carry out its daily operations. The DGHC requested the state Government for the Postponement of the elections and also to examine the Various issues and implications of holding the elections in the hill area of Darjeeling without consulting the D.G.H.C (Kaushik, 2013, p. 121). When the GNLf was about to take a final decision on the Sixth schedule of the Darjeeling Hill in a meeting between the Central Government and the State Government, the Gorkha Liberation organisation threatened Subhash Ghising and his Councillors to resign by December 31, 2000 and Join the fight for the creation of Gorkhaland. But no one resigned. on February 5, Subhash Ghising house was barred from leaving the tripartite meeting in Delhi. Subhash Ghising attended the trilateral meeting in Delhi on 5 February 2000. It was on his way back to Darjeeling 10, February 2000 assassinating attempt was made against Subhas Ghising Killing two from his Convoy and severely injuring him too, at chilawney Dara, Pankhabari Road about 50 km. away from Darjeeling. It was alleged that the master mind behind the attempt to kill Subhas Ghising was none but the GLO chief Mr. Chhatra Subba who soon was imprisoned (Sarkar, 2004 P-89),

Subhash Ghising was interested in the earlier claim for status under the sixth schedule of the Darjeeling Hills. He ruled the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill council alone without calling any member and without holding any sessions. Ghising's opponents began to condemn him from this time. At this time, factional conflict began between political parties in the hills. At this time Subhash Ghising was under so much pressure was afraid to come before the people. He was in the favour of delaying the DGHC elections. Public opinion in the hills was not against the Darjeeling

Gorkha Hill council but was beginning to gain the anti-Ghising tag. Local political parties and the people were in favour of the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill council elections which were pending for a long time. On the other hand, state government was extending Ghising's team as caretaker to appease Ghising's party. The government tried to keep the situation stable but after 2007, the politics of Darjeeling hills began to change radically. Ghising was ousted from hill politics. The Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council collapsed. The state government refused to extend Ghising's the post of caretaker Chairman of the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council after March 2008.

Bimal Gurung was a councillor of the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council. He was a young leader of the GNLFF. On 4 October 2007, Bimal Gurung was suspended from the GNLFF for anti-party activities for his speech against the sixth Schedule on 1 October 2007.

Gorkha Janmukti Morcha and Gorkhaland Movement:

On 7 October 2007, a new political party, Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha, was formed under the leadership of Bimal Gurung, which was enough to permanently expel Subhash Ghising from Darjeeling hill politics. Bimal Gurung, like his predecessors, was in favor of not paying taxes, electricity and telephone bills; Various offices of the West Bengal government were asked to write Gorkhaland instead of West Bengal.

In July 2008, Gorkha Janmukti Morcha activist Pramitu sharma was allegedly killed by GNLFF leader Deepak Gurung. In protest, the house of GNLFF leaders were looted and burnt. On May 21, 2010, AIGL chief Madan Tamang was assassinated in broad daylight. There was a movement for Gorkhaland during Bimal Gurung's time, but it was not as violent as in 1980. In the 2011 assembly elections, Bimal Gurung Gorkha Janmukti Morcha supported the Trinamool Congress alliance in three hill seats and won the elections.

Structure and functions of the Gorkha Territorial Administration: The tripartite Agreement on the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration, which was signed between the Gorkha Janmukti Morcha, the Central Government and the State Government on 18 July 2011. A Bill was passed in the West Bengal legislative Assembly for this purpose. It is said that the GTA will be formed through a direct election. The GTA will consist of 50 members, out of which 45 members are elected members and five are nominated by the Governor. The GTA has an executive body consisting of fourteen members. The executive body has a chief executive and an assistant executive. The GTA agreement stated that the GTA would exercise its powers under the law of the state Government.

The main goal of the Gorkha Territorial Administration is to establish the ethnic identity of the Gorkhas by continuing overall development of the people of this region, including economic, social, infrastructural, educational, cultural and linguistic development.

Looking at all aspects, it can be said that within a few years of the formation of the GTA, there have been major changes after that, Gorkha Janmukti Morcha president and GTA CEO Bimal Gurung said in a statement that there was no meeting between the West Bengal government and the Gorkha Janmukti Morcha. Bimal Gurung also said that the Bengal Government has never cooperated with the GTA and we will only talk to the Central Government.

Then in June 2017, the Gorkhaland movement was launched by declaring an indefinite forest in the hills under the leadership of Gorkha Janmukti Morcha chief Bimal Gurung. The police searched Bimal Gurung's house and office and recovered a large quantity of Weapons such as explosives, wooden barks, arrows, large bows, Knives, etc.

To encourage the youth to join the movement, Bimal Gurung Said that the movement would continue until he died. Bimal Gurung and all the members resigned from the GTA. The G.J.M initially resorted to bandhs, hunger strikes and non-payment bills to further their demand. It was enough to get the attention of the state government, who invited them to Kolkata for bipartite talks. G.J.M. refused to attend the talks as the state Government had set preconditions that they would discuss development issues but not Gorkhaland (Kaushik, 2013, P-151). In this way. Bimal Gurung's Group continued the movement.

If we look closely at the Gorkhaland movement, we Can See that the 2017 movement lasted far more than three months. During this time, the members of the Gorkha Janmukti Marcha participated in the Gorkhaland Movement in large numbers. The Participation rate of other Political parties was very low. It can be show that there was no Unity among the political Parties.

Then it was seen that three months after the movement started, it was withdrawn and the hill returned to normal, After the movement was withdrawn, Bimal Gurung war absconding. During the 2020 Sharad Utsav, he appeared in Kolkata in a car with Jharkhand stickers and confronted reporters, saying that he had faith in the Bengal Chief minister accused the centre of breaking their trust.

Conclusion:

Considering all aspects, it can be said that the movement does not always have the last word. For a separate state of Gorkhaland, it is necessary to think about their infrastructure and source of income. We have seen the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council and observed their work. However, in any case, development is a big thing in the case real purpose any autonomous organization.

This is fulfilled only by fulfilling the grievances of the the people. Movement is not the only way.

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