

POLITICAL SCENARIO IN SIKKIM

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Abstract

In 1947, after the British withdrew from India, a special treaty was signed with the Indian prime minister, Jawahar Lal Nehru giving Sikkim special status. In 1955, democratic progress brought about the institution of the Sikkim council as a legislative body, under the 1955 constitution, consisting of a president nominated and appointed by the ruler and councillors. The crown prince travelled to America, Hope Cooke. The wedding was performed in Gangtok according to strict Buddhist rites. The old ruler Tashi Namgyal died in 1963 and the crown prince Palden Namgyal ascended the throne in 1964 who also died of cancer on 30th Jan 1982 in America. Troubles arose in 1973, that had been brewing a year earlier, when the Sikkim National Congress demanded fresh elections and more representation for the Nepalese. Riots in front of the palace led to a request to India for protection, and the election of Kazi Lendup Dorji never popular with the Chogyal.

Viewed objectively in terms of historic antecedents, the geographical center, cultural emblems etc., the three major communities of Sikkim, the Lepchas, Bhutias and the Nepalese, can be generally accepted as three ethnic groups. Coupled with this is the subjective self-ascribed awareness of separateness and recognition by others as a distinctive group. Hence to understand ethnicity, class and politics in their proper perspective, a cursory glance at the historical evolution of political institutions vis-à-vis the administrative policy is inevitable. Because, these are the things that moulded the inter-ethnic relationships in Sikkim. This chapter would bring out an account of the shaping of political institution in the state, highlighting its impact on intercommunity intercourse in different phases of history.

Introduction

Races to state assembly were led toward the finish of 1979. The Kazi's party was adequately beaten and he excessively lost. An upstart, Nar Bahadur Bhandari, who had mounted a forceful campaign against "Kazi and Co." and named them 'des bechwas' (those, who had sold the nation, Sikkim), got the most extreme seats in the assembly. What's more in the ensuing decisions, in 1984 and 1989, it was Bhandari, who cleared the surveys winning practically every one of the seats in assembly. He was welcome to frame the public authority. Bhandari established the Sikkim Janata Parishad in 1977. This party won the state gathering political decision in 1979, and he turned into the central clergyman interestingly on 18 October 1979. In 1984, he likewise served momentarily as individual from parliament from the Sikkim electorate in the eighth Lok Sabha as an autonomous competitor. In 1984, Bhandari broke up Sikkim Janata Parishad and framed another party called Sikkim Sangram Parishad (SSP). This party ran in the gathering decisions in 1985 and won, and Bhandari turned into the main pastor for the second time. In 1989, SSP got back to drive by winning the get together elections. In an uncommon example in Indian public governmental issues, the SSP turned into the solitary party in the Sikkim legislative assembly, winning every one of the 32 seats in the house. In 1994, Bhandari lost a demonstration of approval in the state get together, and he surrendered as boss pastor. Afterward, he filled in as an individual from the authoritative get together from 1994 to 2004. Bhandari's long system of 15 years was famous for charges of defilement, failure, and oppressiveness.

The records of political development in Sikkim may be divided into 4 stages: (i) pre-monarchy era; (ii) the length of theocratic-monarchy; (iii) feudal technology and (iv) the sunrise of modernity.

The records of pre-monarchy generation is shrouded in obscurity, in absence of any written scripts and languages of the indigenous human beings. However, it's miles maintained that the aboriginal population, the Lepchas, lived alongside the tribes like Limbus and Magars, before the establishment

of bhutia nation. In limbu subculture all of these tribes had been covered in kirati inventory, ruled by their tribal chiefs, 1 approximately hundred years lower back. Risley has enlisted limbu as one of the 3 ethnic stocks dwelling in Sikkim. Even though now not an awful lot is understood about the magars, their presence in Sikkim along side the lepchas at the least from the seventeenth century can be drawn from risley's reference to an incident. It narrates the lepchas and the magars, who witnessed phuntsog namgyal (the primary chogyal) and his fans passing thru y angang, driving on ponies with the in shape.,lock weapons, informed others that they rode on large logs carrying sound producing sticks.²

Col. Mainwaring has said of a lepcha punu (king) turve, who reigned around 1425 a.d³ when, he guessed, became the time the lepchas entered the us of a. With 3 more succession, the closing being tur-agek, the reign of punus ended. With his death a new generation ushered in Sikkim while the throne become usurped by means of the tibetans.four all through this period the lepchas had developed legends approximately their ancestry and vocabulary to understand places and objects/ marking the youth of the cultural evolution of lepchas. The ancient lepcha book 'chunakh- akhen' offers the reference of lepcha punu lower back to 330 to 320 b.c.⁶

The homes of the lepchas- the moderate, quiet, indolent and solitude loving ethnic organization of Sikkim, are observed in the most inaccessible locations. Although they profess buddhism now, in the beginning they were animist, worshipping the spirit of the mountains, rivers and forests, a natural final results in their surroundings. The lepchas had a easy maternal tradition with a subsistence economy primarily based on looking and collecting. Agriculture changed into at a primitive level with lessen and bum type of rotational cultivations of rice, maize and millet.⁷ with the land in abundance the lepchas, rather than fighting with the intruders, were given mixed up with them or moved on to new pastures.

The lepchas commenced organizing themselves in social order with the passage of time. The village become the most important territorial unit in the social device of the tribal clans.eight hereditary management of the clans began with i the influential village headman assuming the position. Inter-marriages with other tribes like limbus, magars and bhutias have been no longer uncommon, since the • lepchas favored to keep away from inter-extended family and inter-tribal feuds. "The most important competition changed into the worship of the kanchenjunga summit, because it changed into seemed as the dwelling house of the spirit of the lepcha bon faith. Bongthing, the animistic priest, had a enormous function in all social ceremonies.

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The lepcha mythology says that after the. Usurpation of the throne via the tibetans, the lepcha animistic clergymen ~'have been tricked into bringing all their writings to the (buddhist) lamas, who mercilessly burnt the manuscript and poisoned them."nine then, they translated their very own mythological works into lepcha underneath the call of 'tashi sung' (records of tashi), which signifies the 40 all-seeing, omniscient and omnipresent lord. 10 this indicates how the easy, native and animistic lepchas had been treated harshly via the proselytizing lamas. With the establishment of bhutia state, with the consecration of the primary • bhutia ruler in 1642, the lep~ha's subservience and the bhutia's dominance began to take a company root.

Gyabumsag (khye-bum-sa), the ancestor of the first ruler of Sikkim, who came to Sikkim at some stage in early bhutia migration, advanced 'friendship of blood brotherhood' with the lepcha chiefthe-kongtek.¹¹ it's far said that the alliance marked the start of conversion of the rong-people to buddhism under the have an effect on of the tibetans. Later, in the first half of the 171 h century, 3 celebrated lan1as belonging to nyingmapa sect (pink-hat-sect) of the tibetan lamaism, who needed to go away tibet due to warfare with the yellow hat sect, entered Sikkim by way of exclusive routes and met at 'yaksam' ¹² to decide the spiritual head and consecrated phun-tso-namgyal of khe-bhumsa's dynasty to be the first ruler of sikkim in 1642 ad and gave the identify of

chos-r-gyal (dharma-raja or religious king), 13 with both non secular and temporal strength. The dalai lama recognized the first ruler as a canonized buddhist saint and. Honoured him "with a complimentary letter, spotting him as the ruler of the sacred land, alongwith the ceremonial gift of silken headband bearing dalai lama's seal, the mitre (hat) of the guru rimpoche, the satan dagger (phurpa), and the valuable. Sand photograph of guru."14 seeing that then, the newly hooked up bhutia nation were given tied to tibetan theocracy and continually sought the protection and resource of tibet in case of aggression.

Due to docile nature of the lepchas and their non secular conversion into buddhism, the tibetan immigration expanded unopposed. Other than 'perpetual friendship of blood brotherhood' the bhutias established matrimonial family members with the lepchas and presented them important administrative positions. This type of calculated technique of 'cooperation and patronage' progressively delivered the lepchas under the whole domination of the bhutias. King chador namgyal also studied the lepcha language and invented a new script, in which his very own rituals had been written. 15 these types of incidents show how the lepchas have been overshadowed by means of the culturally greater dominant bhutias.

Phutshok-namgyal had to administer a large region, typically the size of the existing Sikkim. The region included limbuan (now in nepal), choombi valley in tibet, part of the western bhutan, extending upto titaliya on the bengal-bihar border with darjeeling. 16 hence to establish a feasible administrative structure was his instantaneous undertaking. The bhutia ruler sought favour of the lepchas, the 'sons of the soil' who had the complete land in their ownership, and prevented all possible conflicts. He changed into a success in dating the lepcha loyalty by recognizing the 12 important lepcha chiefs as the dzongpens (governors or directors of the forts) and by using dividing the united states of america into 12 dzongs (districts).

The political records of Sikkim might be incomplete without reference to a council referred to as 'lho-guys-tsong', 18 which the ruler had made to win the self belief of the present kirati tribes and to keep a cordial inter-ethnic relationships. In a meeting of all of the tribal chiefs, he seasoned. claimed the Sikkim bhutias (the positive lhopas), the membas or the monpas (the lepchas), and the tsongs (the limbus) as one circle of relatives representing the father, mom and sons respectively. Moreover, the magar chiefs, who did not come to phrases with bhutias had been not noted of the council.

The cordial relations had been no longer destined to remaining long. The records of Sikkim has witnessed many inter-tribal conflicts, raids and wars, though sporadically, at some stage in the five successive rulers. Although the lepcha chiefs had been content to align with the bhutia rulers, the 'limbu' and 'magars' were no longer subdued effortlessly. The bhutias decided to win over the limbus by marital alliances, 19 and non secular conversion. The king tensung namgyal himself married the daughter of a limbu leader. The practice, therefore set, was enthusiastically accompanied via the kalons (ministers) and the dzongpens. 20 a dozen rulers, seven married limbu ladies from limbua. 20 but, the incidents of revolts and expression of discontent persisted sporadically and many of them, unable to preserve their independence in opposition to the bhutias, migrated to the neighbouring nations.

The reign of gurmed-namgyal, the fourth king, turned into full of issues. There have been many attacks from bhutan. Even as making fortification in his capital against those assaults, he displeased tsongs and magars, who have been used as pressured labour. Most of them fled to limbuan and nepal and have become adverse to the bhutias. Some other incident forty two that throws light' on bhutia-limbu's strained dating turned into the assassination of sri junga devasi,21 a limbu, by means of the bhutia tachhang lama of pemiongchi monastery in 1741, when he revived the kirati mudhum religion. The limbus had proven their vengeance against the bhutias by overlaying the roof in their shed, tearing the pages of . Treasured tibetan literature, once they had been assigned

work to construct garrisons throughout the Sikkim-nepal struggle. 22 i a careful scrutiny of the course of occasions brings to mild the below c~rrent of anxiety behind the apparent cordial relationship among the lepchas and the bhutias. The records of tibet records many instances while the lepcha 'sorcerers' attempted to solid spell over the bhutia kings .. To quote an instance, an try to enhance a standard rebellion by using an 'evil spirit' become made, which had brought ill luck and misfortune to the Sikkim in fashionable and to the raja and his connections mainly. First he had entered the rubdentse palace, from in which he attempted to diminish the prosperity of Sikkim nation and later took refuge in rinchenpong, wherein he conspired a preferred riot. Having failed in this too, he went returned to pasok to acquire a body of 14 male and girl bijuas and bijuanis of the lepcha race called bonbons and hired those sorcerers to work mischief by means of black artwork. However this produced no impact at the raja.23 the individual as a result possessed became sooner or later enslaved and engaged in fetching water, splitting fuel and so on. 24

As in line with any other incident recorded in history of Sikkim, 5 lepchas pretending to be the incarnation of remarkable lepcha wizard guru t eshe aspect, succeeded in convincing the king in their supernatural power and almost tried to convey the king under their• have an impact on. The buddhist lamas, who were no longer to be taken so without difficulty, but, proved that they did not own any supernatural power at all. In the end, the trapas of the pemiongche monastery stoned them to death. 25 but, an open rebellion towards the bhutia ruler occurred in 1725, whilst tasso bidur, a lepcha chief aroused a feeling of patriotism among the lepchas. Claiming himself because the incarnation of the guru rimpoche (padma sambhav§2 he exhibited some outstanding power and bought a big quantity of fans. He additionally stopped sending revenue to the ruler from siliguri vicinity and sought the help of the neighbouring magar chief for his riot in opposition to the bhutia king. But, his riot changed into overwhelmed by way of yangthang desit, a bhutia courtier.

FINDINGS

The•controversy concerning the succ.ession ofthe throne in 174027 bears another testimqny of strained relation. The fourth gur-med namgyal sparked off a forty three controversy by way of • asserting that a infant born of a nun would be his next inheritor. When a bhutia minister chagzot tamding refused to renowned the legitimacy of the little one ruler, it changed into chagzot karwang of barmoik property, a lepcha minister, who sayed the infant ruler. The period witnessed several quarrels and bloodshed, because the tug of conflict . Among agencies went on for 3 years. In the end, the lepcha faction in favour of toddler ruler won electricity and chagzot tamding changed into compelled to escape lhasa to plead his case earlier than the tibetans. Round 1750,28 rapden sharpa turned into deputed by the tibetan to research the dispute of succession of throne. The 'magar' chief of Sikkim became outraged by means of the discourtesy proven to him through the Sikkim darbar .(court docket) and is stated to have persuaded the deb raja of bhutan to attack Sikkim. This become the parting of the ways among the bhutia rulers and the magars, who have been behind lepchas in aid of the infant ruler . .there was an strive by the limbus to rebellion in 175229 but that changed into suppressed via the bhutia ruler. Even at some stage in the Sikkim-nepal battle, the lepchas, the bhutias and the limbus had their separate garrisons, which .were blended beneath chutup and deba takaspo. Throughout the perid, the expansionist layout of gurkhas led to a chain of raids of Sikkim, especially the• tista 'valley and terai, underneath the leadership of the gurkha preferred kazi damodar pandey.

Following the anglo-nepal struggle of 1814, which saw the defeat of gurkhas, the east india organisation occupied Sikkim as an best friend. The british had been activate in assessing the " strategic significance of Sikkim and the commercial possibilities with tibet. In line with the treaty of segauli (2"d december, 1815), signed among organization and the nepal at the conclusion of conflict, the southern part of Sikkim- the morang strip on the foot of the Sikkim hills become surrendered to the british. The morang strip was at the start a part of Sikkim however it became

annexed through nepal during 1788-ninety.30 ultimately, the british agent at the pumea frontier concluded a treaty with the agent of chogyal tsungpsud namgyal on 10 february 1817/1 at titalia. This treaty demarcated the boundary among Sikkim and nepal along the mahanada and mechi rivers and the singilela mountain variety. 32 on 7~ april 1817, the governor widespread lord moira granted all of the low lands, located east-ward of the meitche river and westward of the mahanadi, formerly possessed through the raja of nepal, to the Sikkim raja but the Sikkim raja had to acknowledge the supremacy of the british authorities over the said land. 33 the Sikkim raja, who changed into sandwiched between nepal and bhutan, had his territories restored, however beneath british manage and protection. This became a very high priced deal for Sikkim because the east india enterprise assumed the location of lord paramount.

At the same time as fighting towards the aggression of bhutan and nepal, the lepchas usually remained inside the vanguard. But the safety against the foreign aggression ' couldn't cease the old feuds among the bhutias and the lepchas in Sikkim. The bhutias resented the lepchas and limbus, who rose to prominence as village chiefs, with the help of the management in the course of the reign of gurkhas. As soon as these parts have been restored after the 'treaty of sugoulee', the bhutias began harassing them once more. Trafficking of lepcha- and limbu ladies as slaves in bhutan and chumbi, attack, murder and many others. Have become the commonplace functions. 34 the lepcha leader minister chagzot boleak, who was one of the lepcha kazis, couldn't stay a silent spectator to those atrocities. The gazetteer of Sikkim offers an account of the quarrel between the raja tsug-phud namgyal and his very own maternal uncle chagzot bho-lod³⁵ in 1819, which ultimately resulted in treacherous homicide of the lepcha chief minister and his circle of relatives close to tumlong (the then capital of Sikkim) in 1826. Bho..lod's cousin yuklhat-grup fled Sikkim fearing a similar destiny and took refuge in elam (jap nepal) along side 800 of his lepcha tribesman.

The lepchas often raided western Sikkim, causing numerous frontier disputes between nepal and Sikkim. Sikkim referred the matter to the east india agency for arbitration in terms of the provisions of 1817 treaty. This gave an possibility to the british to influence the path of events in the strategic region of Sikkim. The frontier disputes have been settled with the british intervention in 1828, when j:w. Provide and captain george william a. Loyd were deputed to Sikkim. All through their visit darjeeling drew their interest as a capacity fitness inn and as a destiny political and commercial centre. But the organization had to wait until 1833, while the lepcha infiltrators from nepal made incursion in sikkim.36 the british received "all land south of the extraordinary rungeet river and east of the balasun, kahil and little rungeet river and west of rlungpo and mahanadi river"37 on 1 february, 1835. Although it changed into an unconditional switch out of friendship of the sikkimese ruler with the british governor popular, an annual supply first of all of rs. 3000/- according to annum, which become raised to rs. 6000/- in 1846/8 turned into constant for the sikkimese ruler.

It need to be mentioned that with the emergence of belligerent gurkha state inside the 18th century, the indo-tibet exchange direction, which become via kathmandu valley, got here to be managed via the nepalese. Sikkim with the bhutia rulers, who had been theoretically underneath the tutelage of dalai lama and socially and politically aligned with the tibetan aristocracy, occupied a completely unique function between tibet and india in phrases of strategic, political and commercial implications:-• the relationship between the british and Sikkim started worsening, whilst the former undertook the programme of growing darjeeling. Darjeeling provided several centers at no cost trade in mercantile commodities and in labour, its great wooded area lands which may be reclaimed for cultivation attracted the massive variety of the lepchas and the nepalese to migrate and calm down. Such developments no longer simplest threatened the privileges, historically loved by positive bhutia households of Sikkim for example - their monopoly of

alternate on this a part of the himalayas, but also disturbed the age-antique population stability and inter-tribal members of the family in Sikkim. It have become a supply of embarrassment to Sikkim in her relations with bhutan, nepal and tibet. .in 1844 the ruler of Sikkim and paro .penlop of bhutan clashed at phari in tibet. The authorities of tibet gave vent to its displeasure by way of limiting the Sikkim ruler's visit to lhasa to as soon as in eight years and additionally by using curbing the grazing rights that the sikkimese on the border had constantly loved in tibet. In 1847, consequently, the ruler of Sikkim appointed one tokhang namgyal popularly known as (pagla dewan or the mad chief minister), a tibetan of robust antibritish conviction as his chiefminister.

CONCLUSION

The hostility among the tibetan-bhutia aristocracy and the british led to various ofbritish army expeditions to Sikkim between 1850 and 1860. The Sikkim raja changed into not satisfied with the british for over lording him. An internal conflict broke out in 1847/40 among the bhutia faction led with the aid of anti-british tokhang namgyal and lepcha faction led by using seasoned-british chebu lama. The sickness turned into in addition aggravated because of raja's retirement to the spiritual existence resulting in factional competition at the question of succession to the throne. The relationship among british . India and Sikkim further irritated In 1848,41 when the Sikkim government flatly refused the gove.rnor preferred's expectation that dr. Joseph hooker, an english naturalist, might be allowed to pursue his forty six researches in Sikkim, on the plea that no foreigner could be allowed to travel •in Sikkim. This glaringly was because of the impact of pagla dewan, who had monopoly over Sikkim's alternate with tibet. Raja's discontent in opposition to the british culminated in 1849, on the second visit of hooker, who changed into followed through dr. Campbell, the superintendent of drujeeling. On accomplishing the tibetan border to investigate the feasible change routes, they had been arrested and escorted again to tumlong.

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