

POLITICS OF THE UTTARAKHAND MOVEMENT

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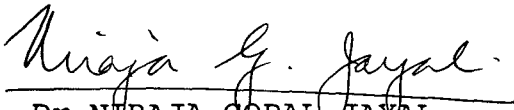
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Certified that the dissertation entitled "**Politics of the Uttarakhand Movement**" submitted by Mr. ANOOP SUKUMARAN in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this or any other university. This is his own work.

We recommend that this dissertation may be placed before the examiners for evaluation.


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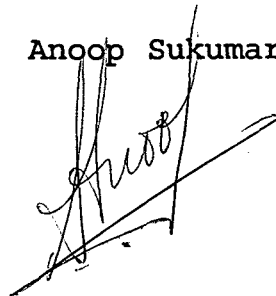
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Contents

	Page
1. Introduction	1-6
2. Chapter - I The Struggle : A Historical Perspective.	7-37
3. Chapter - II Socio-economic Factors of Uttarakhand.	38-52
4. Chapter - III Uttarakhand : Perspectives of Political Organizations	53-81
5. Chapter- IV Development Perspectives	82-103
6. Conclusion	104-108
7. Bibliography	109-117

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

A land known in ancient times as Devasthanam or Dev Bhoomi. Today this area of the Himalayas is known as Uttarakhand. Uttarakhand consists of eight hill districts of Uttar Pradesh namely Chamoli, Uttar Kashi, Almora, Tehri Garhwal, Pauri Garhwal, Nainital, Pithoragarh and Dehradun. A newly created district of Haridwar is also included by many as being part of Uttarakhand.

Uttarakhand is a land where every rock seems to have some mythological significance. It has been part and parcel of the Hindu mythology. Some of the most sacred sites in Hinduism are to be found in Uttarakhand. The inhabitants of this region were known their valour, their warmth and peace loving nature. In 1994 region was aflame with the demand for a separate state of Uttarakhand. The demand seemed to emerge out of no where. It was linked to the announcement of the then Chief Minister of Uttar

Pradesh, Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav to implement the Mandal Commission Recommendations for Reservation of Backward Classes, in the hill areas. The demographic character of the hills is drastically different from that of the rest of the state. Nearly 80 per cent of the population of Uttarakhand are upper caste. The spontaneous movement was therefore seen more as anti-reservationist in nature, and the demand for statehood was born out of this very caste-ist stand.

The implementation of the Mandal Commission Report acted as a spark needed to ignite a gun powder keg. Uttarakhand, unknown to most in the country was a dormant volcano waiting to explode. The demand for a separate state can be traced as back as 1938. However it was in 1956 that P.C. Joshi of the undivided Communist Party of India put forward the demand for a separate state of Uttarakhand before the States Reorganization Commission. Ironically, it was a Kumauni, G.B. Pant who was against the idea of a separate state of Uttarakhand and was instrumental in making the region part of Uttar Pradesh.

The reasons for the simmering discontent run deep and have been increasing every passing year. The rising

population an increasing pressure on fragile resources, along with negligible employment opportunities, have forced people to migrate to eke out a living. The all pervasive poverty has led to migration for survival. Hence the hill economy has become synonymous with the money order economy. The sex ratio in Uttarakhand has been high. In fact it has been significantly higher in many districts than the state average. Unlike Kerala, the reason for high sex ratio in the region is consequent upon the flight of main work force rather than a social indicator of development.

There is a very low level of urbanization varying between five and nine per cent. Except in Dehradun and Nainital the rate of growth is much below the national average. The very low figure of 'net sown area' and low 'gross cropped area' reflect the low state of agricultural development. Infrastructure in the region is poorly developed, reflected in poor road linkages. Resulting in many areas remaining in inaccessible. A lot of investment has gone into infrastructural development, but the efforts seem to have been misdirected and misused.

Uttarakhand with an area of 51,000 square kilometers

and a population of 60.2 lakhs has a comparatively low political representation with only 19 MLAs and 4 MPs. It is the lowest figure among the hill states of Mizoram, Manipur, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Himachal Pradesh. Himachal Pradesh with 55.7 thousand square kilometers area and a population of 51.7 lakhs has representation of 68 MLAs and 4 MPs. The poor representation in the State Assembly has left the region politically unattractive in the eyes of opportunistic political regimes. The seeds of awakening among the masses were sown by the Chipko Movement which inspired similar forms of grassroot movements in the Gandhian style all over the country. This spontaneous movement which emanated from the grass roots vehemently opposed the colonial exploitation of resources.

The fragility of the Himalayan ecology makes the movement all the more significant. It is a movement that demands a right to safeguard the forests with which they (the people) are so inextricably linked. A relationship which has been sought to be destroyed. A need to look at alternative modes of development are demands made by the people. These demands, however may not be as clear cut as expected.

Much of the literature on the movement is largely in the form of pamphlets, booklets and articles. Many of which are given out by the various political organizations which espouse the cause. Their writings are therefore rhetorical and openly biased. However, these handbills and pamphlets are important as they demonstrate the depth of feeling for a cause. Apart from this, these pamphlets also have a profound effect in changing public opinion.

Only a few books have been published which deal with the Uttarakhand movement in any measure. There is the tendency in the literature on the area to use a 'historical narrative'¹ to portray the cohesion among the various communities, even if they have been thrown together by historical chance and administrative necessity. Ramachandra Guha in his book 'The Unquiet Woods' has traced the origins of peasant struggle in the hills of Uttarakhand. He locates the Chipko Movements within the paradigm of the peasant struggle against colonialism. It is probably the only available authentic work on peasant struggles in Uttarakhand. Doctor Shekhar Pathak's 'Uttarakhand Mein Kuli Begar' is a scholarly work on the Kuli Begar system

1. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

that prevailed in Uttarakhand during the British Raj. P.C. Joshi's 'Uttarakhand : Issues and Challenges' is a collection of his articles and lectures on Uttarakhand. He reiterates the development projects which were applied from above without taking into consideration the socio economic context of the region, through an uninformed bureaucracy has led to the destruction of traditional socio-economic structures of the region which were hitherto self reliant. He sees the Uttarakhand Movement as "One of those rare movements when the people have forged ahead, taking charge of the destiny and leaving national intellectuals and politicians far behind".²

2. P.C. Joshi, *Uttarakhand : Issues and Challenges* p. 32 .

CHAPTER ONE

The struggle: A historical perspective

Uttarakhand has had a legacy of struggle, some documented while most have entered the realm of legends and folk songs. The immensity of the whole exercise has made it impossible to deal with protest movements beyond a narrow frame. The frame would therefore begin from the period the British had taken over Kumaoun and Garhwal.

Tehri-Garhwal was a princely state independent of the British empire. Historical accounts indicate that the kings in the region had derived their power from dominant persons who in turn owed their power to their respective kin-groups.³ In Tehri-Garhwal the king over the centuries had come to be identified as the representative of Lord Badrinath, whose shrine used to be within his territory. His royal title was therefore 108 *Badricharayaparayan, Garhaj Mahimendra, Dharmabaibhab, Dharma Rakshak, Shirmani*.⁴ The relations between the King and his subjects were etched in custom and practices. A sort of father-son relationship was believed to be existing between the King

3. Maheshwar.P.Joshi. *Uttaranchal Himalaya: An essay in Historical Anthropology*, Almora, 1990, pg83

4. Ramachandra Guha. *The unquiet woods: Ecological change and peasant resistance*. Delhi, OUP, 1991, pg64.

and the people. It was probably due to this patriarchal relationship, Guha opines, that any ire against unfavourable taxation or any rule or law was never directed at the King, but against the officials. It was seen by the populace as a means of helping the king restore *nyaya*(justice). The form of protest that was resorted to, was known as *Dhandak*. *Dhandak* usually meant non-cooperation with the officials, not providing 'begar'⁵ and often non-payment of taxes. Usually *dhandaks* were resorted to only when conditions were particularly oppressive or the new laws threatened to alter substantially age old patterns of livelihood. The *dhandaks* were also a means of alerting the king of their plight. *Dhandaks* usually continued till the King intervened and the 'erring' official either removed or punished.

Till the arrival of the British there is not much reference to *Dhandaks*, and even after the arrival of the British almost a century elapsed before any significant protest took place. The industrial revolution fuelled the need for wood. The forests of Uttarakhand were therefore looked upon by the British as a vast repository of raw

5. Begar, begar coolie, utar = Forced labour.

material for timber and turpentine. In order to feed their need for wood and turpentine, they introduced commercial forestry. Hitherto the forests around a village were the property of the village, and the villagers met their fuel and fodder needs from these forests. The forests around them were not seen as a source of raw material but part and parcel of their livelihood and therefore the forests were nurtured and cared for. Commercial forestry meant that large tracts of forests be declared as reserved forests and the access to these forests to the local villagers denied or restricted. Commercial forestry alienated the people from forests they regarded as their own. Commercial forestry was therefore resented and despised.

The princely state of Tehri-Garhwal was equally affected by these developments. The demands of scientific forestry and the traditional rights of the villagers came into conflict and which found expression in the Khassi Patti dhandak of 1921. This dhandak gained notoriety because the face of the Conservator of Forests was branded with an iron rod. This was unique because traditionally dhandaks were peaceful affairs. According to Guha, Dhandak in Tehri-Garhwal encompassed two forms of protest. "First, peasants refused to cooperate with the new rules

and the officials who enforced them. Alternatively when the demands were backed by force, villagers fled into the jungles or into British territory—a classical form of protest."⁶ Dhandaks because of their inherent peaceful nature (violent incidents like the one described above were exceptions rather than the rule) therefore represented a democratic means of registering protest. These methods of registering protest were quite obviously not based on any ideological basis but were born out of tradition, an attitude that has become ingrained in the society.

The famous dhandak of Rawain (1930) reaffirms the deep roots of democratic forms of protest among the Garhwalis. The dhandak at Rawain was precipitated because of the revision of the forest settlement based on the recommendations of the German expert Franz Reske. Discontent had been brewing even before the revision of the forest settlement, by moves like banning the household brewing of liquor and a ban on poppy cultivation. Rumours about the curbs that would be put on the people under the revised settlement spread among the people of Rawain. Representa-

6. Ramachandra Guha. The unquiet woods, pg 67

tions to the King fell on deaf ears. To worsen the situation the king left for Europe. Two leaders of the dhandakis were arrested and sent to Tehri when they were proceeding to discuss their problems with an ex-Dewan Harikrishna Raturi. Villagers stopped Raturi while he was taking the leaders away to Tehri, in the ensuing struggle Raturi shot two men. The news of the Raturi firing episode gave fresh impetus to the dhandak. Hari Sing was appointed as the leader of the dhandakis. Villagers were also asked to sign blank papers called *Dharmpattas* to affirm their support. The dhandakis convened an azad panchayat at Tialdi. The dewan Chakradhar Juyal alarmed by the turn of events conferred with the British resident commissioner, who advised Juyal to take punitive action. Juyal sent the army to Tiladi under his own command and ordered firing at the assembled peasants. An indeterminate number of peasants were killed in the Tiladi firing.⁷ The Rawain dhandak entered the realm of folklore. Juyal represented the epitome of what R. Guha calls 'the motif of the wicked official'.⁸ Dr. Suresh Chandola opines that the Rawain Dhandak can be seen as the first mass movement in Uttarak-

7. *ibid*, pg 77

8. *ibid*, pg 65

hand.⁹ Later movements in the regions built upon the methods used in the Rawain dhandak. Moreover the Tiladi firing provided a motivation in the movements in later years.

In 1939 large tracts of forest between the Bhilagna and Bhageerathi rivers caught fire. Many heads of cattle and a few peasants who were trying to put out the blaze were killed. The Tehri darbar refused to pay compensation to the affected peasants. The Dewan Juyal introduced a new tax called 'Pauntoti' a form of customs duty levied on the belongings of the subjects as and when they entered or left the state. As by now a large number of Garhwalis were dependent on employment outside the state the duty (Pauntoti) caused much resentment. A cess on potatoes was introduced as well, in Tehri-Garhwal a major potato producing state the cess on potatoes was almost like adding fuel to the fire. ¹⁰The **Tehri Rajya Praja Mandal**, which had been set up under the influence of the nationalist movement, took up issues of begar and pauntoti. Sridev

9. Dr. Suresh Chandola. Rawain ka jan vidroh, Dhad, vol 1, pg 289

10. A . S . Rawat. Political movements in Tehri Garhwal, State, Uttarakhand Bharati, 1977.

Suman a leader of Tehri-Garhwal praja mandal (TRPM) and also a member of the Indian National Congress and an important functionary of the All India States Peoples conference was able to rouse the students of the state to go on strike. His hunger strike outside the Tehri police station attracted much attention among the people and support for the movement grew. He was externed out of Tehri-Garhwal and was later jailed in Agra. Upon his return from jail, he toured extensively in the villages of the state. He was arrested again and jailed in Tehri. He went on a hunger strike again which lasted for 84 days, he succumbed to pneumonia and heart failure. The martyrdom of Sridev Suman gave great propaganda value for years to come.

In the same year of Suman's death the durbar embarked on fresh land survey and settlement. The officials immediately had to contend with non-cooperation by the peasants who refused to submit to the survey. Thousands of peasants joined the peasant rallies and meetings. The meetings and rallies were mainly organised by the TRPM. However there were other meetings which were autonomous of the TRPM. At Narendranagar a jatha led by an ex-INA soldier Lachman Singh Bist were arrested. The Indian National Congress stepped to mediate between the peasantry

and the durbar. An agreement was reached wherein the TRPM was registered and would be allowed to hold meetings and processions. The agreement also envisaged the release of political prisoners from jail. The terms of the agreement however were not kept by the durbar. Though a number of political prisoners were released, the praja mandal president was not released and he later made a dramatic escape.

In Saklana, a major potato producing region, peasants had been protesting against the extortion by the contractors to whom the darbar had sold the sole rights of collection and sale of potatoes. The police arrested the striking peasants, as a result of which the movement gained wider currency. The Police raided houses and beat up the residents. The angered peasantry joined hands and marched towards Saklana forcing the officials to flee the town. The victorious peasants declared the area as an 'Azad panchayat', it also abolished taxes and declared that each cultivator had ownership rights over the land he titled. The Saklana movement spread and many more azad panchayats were formed in many *pattis*. In Kirtinagar, thousands of peasants collected and the town was cleared of all officials and declared an azad panchayat. In response to these events the durbar sent an

armed force led by Baldev Sing Panwar. The army opened fire on the procession with bullets and teargas in which a young communist Nagendra Saklani and a couple of others were killed. The enraged crowd chased the army which fled. Tehri was declared an azad panchayat. Even the king was refused entry as the peasants closed the bridge over the river Bhageerathi. The King thus had lost his control over his subjects, the closing of the bridge was almost a symbolic representation of the gulf that had developed between the monarch and his people, a gulf that was by now unbridgable. He called the TRPM for discussions as a result of which a ministry under Dr. Gairola was established which held office till the merger of the state with Uttar Pradesh.

In the Kumaon region the revolts were of a different nature as compared to those in Tehri-Garhwal. This was probably due to the fact the Kumaon was under the British and the traditional legitimacy the King of Tehri enjoyed from his subjects was absent here. However till the advent of scientific forestry, the conflict between the peasants and the British administration was slight, because of which there is very little documentation of peasant struggle and revolt in the first century of Brit-

ish rule.

The beginning of this century saw the need for the expansion of railways throughout the length and breadth of the country. Initially wood was imported from Europe, however the enormous cost involved in the import for wood forced the administration to look out for substitutes in local wood to make railway sleepers. The Chir Pine was found to be most suitable for the purpose. The first World War accelerated the demand for wood, and therefore the forests of Kumaon and Garhwal were seen as vast repositories of precious raw material. Scientific forestry was a natural corollary to the demand for wood. Scientific forestry upset the traditional rights of the peasants over the forests. The peasants expressed their anger against their alienation from the forests by setting fires in the forest. In the early phase protest was registered by refusal of Begar and Bardaish to officials and travellers.¹¹ The advent of scientific forestry was deeply resented added to which the practice of begar and bardaish continued. The signs of unrest were seen early by the

11. Shekar Pathak. *Uttarakhand Mein Begar Pratha*, 1987.
Bardust providing free provisions & fodder to officials & travellers

British Commissioners. Wyndham, commissioner of Kumaon (1919) pleaded that the forest officials use pack ponies and end begar as the continuance of begar might lead to unrest. The system itself was not scrapped but reforms were introduced. Coolie agencies were opened, who were to be paid for their services. Officers were advised to camp at specified places and procure grain from merchants subsidized by the government. However these reforms were like treating the symptoms rather than the disease itself. In 1916 many malicious fires were reported in the newly constituted reserved forests, The damage reported was exclusively in the Chir forests. 28,000 trees were burnt and had to be felled prematurely. These 'acts of incendi- arism', as the British called it, were certainly methods of unorganised peasant protest against scientific forest- ry.¹²

At the organised level the Kumaon Parishad was estab- lished in 1916. It was vehemently against the begar system. The Kumaon Parishad established *sabhas* in the villages. The Uttaraini mela was used by the Kumaon parishad to gather support. Ex-soldiers of the Indian

12. Ramachandra Guha. The unquiet woods, pg 75.

Army who had been discharged from the army after the world war I had played a vital role in helping the Kumaon Parishad establish sabhas in the villages. The Kumaon Parishad now began to spearhead a hitherto unorganised protest movement. In 1929 the Kumaon Parishad, beginning at Totashilling resolved to put fire to the forests. The campaign was particularly intense in the Almora district. When villagers were called to put out the fire, which they were bound to do according to section 78 of the Forest Act, the villagers helped spread the fire. Almost all areas being logged were wiped out. Nearly 350 square miles of forest was destroyed¹³. The 1921 movement sent shock waves through the administration and in the wake of the 1921 movement the Kumaon forest grievances committee was set up. There was however widespread dissatisfaction over the composition of the committee.

The committee did not have any representative of the people, and villagers boycotted its sittings. However after touring three districts, the committee came up with recommendations of dividing the forests into two divi-

13. Shekhar Pathak. Jan diya kuli begar, PAHAD, Nainital, 1996, p.21. (Hindi)

sions.

1. Class-I containing forests of little or no economic importance.

2. Class-2 forests stocked with commercially exploitable trees. However, despite the implementation of the recommendations, deliberate firing of the forests continued. In fact in the period between 1930-31 the cases of forest fires had become the highest.

The national movement had by this period gained ground in the Kumaon region. On may 19, 1927 Mahatma Gandhi had visited Tadikhet to participate in an annual festival there, he was greeted by hundereds of people, an indication of the spread of the fame of Gandhi and the support for the Indian National Congress in the region. The salt satyagraha had its effects in Kumaon region as well. In April 1930 salt was made in Chamkana, Ubhra and Hatuli of Sulth. On 17 August 1930 'Malguzars' of the region resigned en masse. Malguzars of village revenue officers were the back bone of the British revenue admin-



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stration.¹⁴ The events caused the administration to station police batallions in Sult town. The villagers had previously decided that they would blow the 'ransinha' (a kind of horn) to assemble in case of need. In september 1930 the S.D.M. of the region Rabiburahman marched to Sult with a contingent of policemen of around 60. They surrounded a village, Dangula, and in the pretext of searching for Congress workers looted the village. When the neighbouring villages came to know of the incident the 'ransinha' was sounded. The villagers in their hundreds marched to the place where the SDM had camped and forced him to pay a compensation for the damages. During the same period in Moulekhal a sabha was organised where it was decided that inorder to save the populace from further atrocities by the police the leaders would themselves court arrest. On 24th october 1930 Purshottam Upadhayay, Mathuradutt Joshi, Dharmsingh and others proceeded from Sult to Ranikhet to court arrest.¹⁵ They were accompanied by a massive procession, which marched through a curfew bound Mall road in Ranikhet to court arrest. On 30 Novem-

14.Devendra Upadhyay, *Kumaon ki Bardoli*, DHAD, vol I,..ed Suresh Nautiyal, pg 284.

15. *ibid*, pg 284

ber 1930 a Jungle satyagraha was embarked upon, in which 404 satyagrahis marched to the Mohaan 'Dak Bungalow' where auctions of the forests were to be held. The police posted here, lathi-charged the satyagrahis, in which 58 satyagrahis were injured and arrested. They were later interned in the Moradabad jail without trial. ¹⁶ By 1942 the freedom movement had reached a feverish pitch. In the Kumaon-Garhwal region as well there were Congress sabhas in almost all places, organised rallies and demonstrations were taking place all over. In September 1942 SDM Johnson marched with a battalion of policemen with the explicit intention of raiding the Congress strongholds in Khumand. When Johnson reached Khumand he was met by a massive assemblage of people who had blocked the road and were shouting slogans. Johnson threatened the crowd with dire consequences, when the crowd remained unmoved, he ordered firing on the unarmed gathering in which many were injured and two died.

The support for the Congress, according to Guha, did come from the peasants but not because they believed in the ideology of 'purna swaraj' but were using the vehicle of

16. *ibid*, pg 285

nationalism to recalcitrant their lost forest rights.¹⁷ The forest administration had introduced an hitherto alien concept of property to the forests and thereby destroying the communal protection of the forest. The British had reduced the forests to raw material far from the sacred position it enjoyed within the communities of the hills. ¹⁸

Independence and thereafter:

Independence brought along in its wake a rapid expansion of forest industries to feed the needs of the nation's rapid pace of industrialisation. Development in the hill regions was seen in terms of building roads and rail links. This kind of development had the unfortunate side effect of opening up new areas of forest to exploitation. The opening of roads have had a negative impact on the economy of the region apart from being the harbingers of ecological destruction. Roads have made the local produce unable to compete with produce from the plains. As the cost of production of grain in the hills is much

17. Ramachandra Guha. *The unquiet Woods*, pg 82

18. Vandana Shiva. Lecture in JNU on *Development & Environment*
24/2/96

higher than those in the plains, the local farmer finds that his produce has lost its traditional clientele. ¹⁹ In 1958 the Forest Research Institute found that chir waste could be used to make paper, ²⁰ the information was used by the forest department not only to sell the Chir waste but to sell large tracts of forests containing chir trees affected by twist which were earlier spared the axe. The colonial hangover did not seem to subside after the British had long left our shores. This can be gauged from the restrictions placed on the local populace on collecting timber and firewood from the forest. The policy of the government to give large tracts of forests to 'outside' contractors was not only deeply resented but loathed. As in the colonial period the villagers refused to co-operate with the forest officials to put out forest fires despite the fact that they were bound to do so under the Forest Act. As a matter of fact there were no large scale changes made in the Forest Act after independence.

The Uttarakhand region was hit by major floods in

19. Joshi (B.K), *Infrastructure and development in the hills*, March 1992, pg 112-19

20. S.R.D.Guha, *Chemical pulps and writing and printing papers*, Indian Forester, vol 84,pg 235-40

1971, which caused extensive damage to life and property. The full impact of the floods were borne by the peasants of the region. It was later proved that one of the main causes of floods was the extensive deforestation of the hill slopes. Lack of tree cover had caused massive land slides, the victims of which were the peasants who lived below. The painful realization of the ill effects of deforestation and need to assert their rights over the forests led to the famous Chipko Andolan. The lead in this was taken by Dashauli Gram Swarajya Sangh (DGSS), a co-operative organization based in Chamoli. They organised major public gatherings in Gopeshwar and Uttarkashi demanding the replacement of the contractor system with Forest Labour Cooperatives.

In 1973 the DGSS asked the forest department for the allotment of Ash trees for making farm implements. The request was rejected and they were offered Chir trees instead which was unsuitable for the purpose of making implements. At the same time a sports company, the Symonds and company, were allotted Ash trees in forests of Mandal. After many discussions on the issue the DGSS under Chandi Prasad thought of embracing trees in order to prevent the felling of the trees. The villagers of Mandal

led by their headman resolved to do just that, as a result of which the agents of the company could not fell a single tree. The Chipko movement was born. Despite protests the government went ahead with the yearly auction of forests. One of the plots to be affected was Reni, in the Alaknanda valley. This area had experienced the floods of 1970. Nearly 2000 trees were marked for felling, ironically the labour for marking came from the villagers themselves. However after they had meetings with the DGSS it was decided that the Chipko technique would be used. The fellings were due in the last week of March 1974. On the 25th of March hundreds of students from the college in Joshimath organised massive demonstrations threatening to use Chipko if the fellings were not cancelled. The conservator of forests tried to get the opposition out of the way by duping them. He promised to meet the DGSS leader Chandi Prasad at Gopeshwar, while on the same day the men of Reni and the neighbouring villages were called to Chamoli to collect compensation for the lands appropriated by the Indian Army during the 1962 war. In the meantime the contractor and his lumbermen proceeded towards Reni, they stopped short of the village to escape detection but were spotted by a girl who alerted the women of the village. The women led by Guara Devi marched into the

forest to persuade the workers from cutting the trees. When their entreaties fell on deaf ears, they embraced the trees. The labourers had to leave without felling a single tree.²¹ After the Reni incident the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, H.N. Bahuguna instituted a committee to investigate into the problems in the hills. The committee found that the major cause of the floods was the extensive deforestation of the slopes. As a result commercial logging was banned in the Alaknanda valley for a period of ten years. A second committee headed by K.M. Tiwari found that rules for resin tapping were being regularly flouted. There were irregularities regarding the depth and width of the cuts, such mal-treatment of the trees; the committee concluded, would render the trees vulnerable to lightning and strong winds.

In Kumaon the Chipko movement gathered momentum after the landslides of 1977. Young activists of the Uttarakhand Sangharsh Vahini (USV) opposed the government auction of forests which were taking place despite the Tawalghat landslides. October 1977 large demonstrations were organised in Nainital. Several USV activists were arrested. In the

21. Ramachandra Guha, *The Unquiet Woods*, pg 156

Bhyunder valley, adjoining the valley of flowers 621 oak trees were marked for felling to feed the fuel needs of Badrinath during the pilgrim season. Appeals against the proposed fellings to the forest officials went unheeded. On the 5th January 1978 women of the village went in nearly 40 cms of snow and prevented the workers from cutting the trees. In December 1978 the andolan to stop logging the the Malgaddi forest began, it gained momentum after Sunderlal Bahuguna went on a hunger strike on 9 January 1979 in a disused shepered's hut in the middle of the forest. The villagers rallied around him. Over 3,000 men, women and children participated and logging by night was foiled by villagers taking turns on night duty. Bahuguna was carried away by the police on the night of 22nd January and interned in the Tehri jail, where he continued his fast. Even after the physical removal of their leader from the side the peasants continued to hold on against the logging and eventually the contractor and the administration had to concede defeat and abandon the tree felling programme.²²

The Chipko andolan stirred the fire of protest, as it

22. Ibid, pg 157

were, in the women of the region. The andolan gave the platform for women to demand a say in decisions that affected them. In many 1981 due to mining dust falling on standing crops, the crops were destroyed in a village called Khurakot. The mining operations had commenced in the area when a mining company, the Khaatiyar Minerals, had taken 14001 hectares of land on lease next to the village for mining limestone. With the commencement of mining operations the forests near the village were cleared, the nearby sources of water soon dried up. To make matters worse the pack mules which were used to transport limestone, grazed on the limited pasture available. The pack mules were in their hundreds and soon there was acute shortage of fodder for the domestic animals of the village.

The company had won over the males of the village by giving them jobs and providing donations on festivals. The women took up the cudgels against the company. With the active support of the USV they were able to drum up support of the USV against the company, and mining opera-

tions in the area²³ Under pressure the company abandoned the site but without conducting the required aforestation in the mine areas as required by the mining regulations.

Prior to 1994 movements in the Uttarakhand region were mostly confined to issues of a local nature and which were to a large extent environmental. When the whole of north India was aflame against the implementation of the Mandal Commission report in 1989, the hill districts of U.P. were comparatively quiet and peaceful. However in March 1994 the U.P. Chief Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav decided to implement the Mandal commission report, which reserved 27 per cent of the jobs in the government and seats in schools and colleges for the economically and socially backward castes and classes. A move which was seen as the last straw by the people of Uttarakhand. Only two percent of the entire population of Uttarakhand fall under the OBC category. The hill districts have a much higher literacy rate than the rest of the state and according to government estimates there are 30,000 applications in the employment exchange annually and only 3000

23. Vinnapani Joshi, *Uttarakhand ki samajik halchalo mein mahila ki bhumika*, DHAD, Vol 1, 1994.

jobs in the organized sector are created annually. The implementation of the Mandal Commission Report therefore was seen as creating much greater unemployment and also would flood the hills with OBC's from the plains, who would take advantage of the reservations given the dearth of OBC's in the region. "The implementation of the 27 per cent reservation would destroy the demographic balance in Uttarakhand and destroy its culture."²⁴

The popular anger expressed itself in the support for the demand for a separate hill state which till now was a more or less dormant. The demand for a separate hill state can be traced back to 1938 when Jawaharlal Nehru had conceded in a Congress Party meeting in Srinagar (Garhwal) that the hill people have a right to decide what they wanted themselves. Ironically it was a Kumaoni, G.B. Pant who as the Chief Minister of the United Provinces, had argued against a separate hill state on the grounds that it would be economically unviable. In 1952 during the final rounds of the states reorganization commission, P.C. Joshi of the then undivided Communist Party of India put

24. *Memorandum for the formation of a hill state of Uttarakhand to the President of India, Uttarakhand Andolan Sanchalan Samiti, 31st August 1994, New Delhi.*

forward the demand for a separate hill state of Uttarakhand.²⁵ The Uttarakhand Kranti Dal (UKD) was formed with a lone MLA in the UP Assembly. The UKD had a specific agenda of achieving statehood. In 1971 the Uttarakhand Rajya Parishad was formed and held a rally at the Boat Club lawns in Delhi, and presented a memorandum to the Prime Minister. On 7th June, 1972, the Uttarakhand Parishad was formed with the demand for a separate state, as the region has remained backward under U.P. In 1982, Uttarakhand Rajya Nirman Parishad was formed, which reiterated the demand for a separate state. In July 1987, the Students Federation of India and Akhil Bharatiya Naujawan Sabha (U.P. Branches) held a dharna in Lucknow demanding a separate state of Uttarakhand. In October 1988 supporters of Uttarakhand prevented a successful flagging off of the Himalayan car rally by lying down before the cars at the starting point in the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, shouting pro Uttarakhand slogans.²⁶ In 1989 on 11th February an Ekta Sammelan was organized in Delhi where the Uttarakhand Pragatisheel Yuva Manch, All India Students Federation, Uttarakhand Yuva Shakti Manch, Uttaranchal Pradesh Sang-

25. Manisha Aryal, *Himal*, Vol.7, no.6, Nov-Dec 1994, pg 12.

26. *Times of India*, 24 October, 1988

harsh Samiti and Yuva Janta Dal participated and it was decided that for a united struggle they will join hands to form the Uttarakhand Sangharsh Samiti.²⁷ The Uttarakhand Jan Parishad and the Uttarakhand Pragatisheel Yuva Manch joined hands with Uttarakhand Sangharsh Vahini on the 19th of January 1989, to form the Uttarakhand Jan Sangharsh Vahini. Samsher Singh Bisht was elected President.²⁸ The year 1990 saw a massive rally at the Boat Club demanding a separate state of Uttranchal, in April. This and the call to close all offices in the hill districts was given by the Uttranchal Pradesh Sangharsh Samiti. In December, Akrand organised a region wide 'Uttarakhand Kranti march' led by Aeri. In 1991 the Uttarakhand Mukti Morcha came into existence. Apart from the demand for separate state of Uttarakhand, they also made attempts to bring together the various groups which had mushroomed over the year. On the 16th of July, 1994, students met in the town of Pauri in Garhwal to discuss the Mandal Commission recommendations and the government plans to redraw village boundaries. The protests began two days later, when students gathered together to collect college

27. *The Hindustan Times*, 12th February, 1989

28. *Samkaleen Janmath*, 20 January 1989.

admission forms in Pithoragarh. The decision of the U.P. government to implement the Mandal Commission report had roused the anger of the people of Uttarakhand. By the end of July, Kumaon and Garhwal had seen numerous strikes and rallies and *chaka-jams* which brought highway traffic to a halt. On the 8th of August, police arrested UKD leaders who were on a hunger strike. In the stone pelting and lathi charge which followed one person was killed.²⁹ As if to add fuel to the fire on 17th August the Chief Minister of U.P., made a statement to the press, stating that since his government was not elected to power by the people of the hills, he would not compromise on the reservation issue.³⁰ The statement inflamed the already enraged populace and the movement against reservation became the catalyst for the region-wide spread of the demand for a separate state. Sangharsh Samitis mushroomed all over Uttarakhand. Government vehicles were stoned and sometimes set afire. Schools and Colleges were closed, thousands of pilgrims were stranded as roads were blocked. Civil servants and bank employees also joined the protests.

29. *Times of India*, 18th August, 1994

30. *Shayad Sambhavana*, September, 1995

The movement had transformed itself into a mass movement as it included people from almost all walks of life. On the 1st of September, 1994, nearly 10,000 people brought out a procession in Khatima, in the Nainital district. It was a peaceful procession on which the police opened fire killing four people. Even before the people could recover from the Khatima incident, the very next day in Mussoorie, police opened fire on a peaceful crowd that was demanding the release of activists who had been arrested. Seven people were killed in the firing including a police officer who was lynched by the enraged mob. Spontaneous bandhs were organized all over the hill districts. Uttarakhand came to a virtual standstill.

A month after the Khatima and Mussorie incidents, thousands of activists from all over Uttarakhand planned to come to Delhi and gherao the Parliament building on the 2nd of October, so that their demand could be heard all over the country. Nearly 500 buses left Uttarakhand, most of these buses reached safely but those which took the Roorkee-Muzzafarnagar route were stopped by the Provincial Armed Constabulary (P.A.C) a few kilometers before the

Muzzafarnagar town. On the pretext of looking for explosives, the people were forced out of the buses. After which the police attacked the unarmed people with lathis, teargas and bullets. The P.A.C. chased the people through the sugar cane fields. Many women were raped and molested by the jawans of the PAC in the sugar cane fields, which adjoined the highway. About nine people were killed in the police firing, and many others were arrested.³¹ The Muzzafarnagar incident shocked the country with the brutality of the PAC. The incident further cemented the demand for a separate state. People now began to look at the U.P. state as oppressive and detrimental to their interests as the incidents in Khatima, Mussorie and Muzaffarnagar seem to prove. The movements after 1994 were different from the earlier movements specially because there has been an increased violence on both the sides.

31. *Shayad Sambhavna*, September, 1995

CHAPTER TWO

Socio - Economic factors of Uttarakhand

The socio-economic indicators in Uttarakhand are peculiar and rather unique. This uniqueness has quite justifiably been understood to stem from the geographical peculiarities of the region. Factors that are commonly acknowledged to be contributing to the backwardness of Uttarakhand are 1) small and scattered land holdings; 2) lack of irrigation and modern techniques of farming and 3) lack of Industrial development. In a population where nearly 70 percent of the population is engaged in agriculture, the relative infertility and the inability to apply modern methods of farming are an added burden on the already beleaguered peasant.

Unequal development is a natural corollary to the pattern of development embarked upon by the Indian state. The five year plans have not quite been able to achieve their objectives. The 'trickle down' effect which was envisaged by the first two plans led to the formation of islands of prosperity in a sea of poverty. The later attempts at mitigating these after effects have not quite achieved their targets. The fact that these policies have not altered inter-regional disparities is widely accepted.

The process of central assistance to areas declared as 'backward' have been termed by many scholars as unsatisfactory. According to B.N. Juyal³² 1) The outlays for special assistance belies the critical minimum effort needed to bring a backward area to the take off stage. 2) The spread effects produced by such little drops of investment will hardly equal or neutralise the backwash effects generated, which so in itself becomes part of the interlocking relations by which, in the cumulative process, poverty becomes its own cause.

The approaches to rural and regional development have been influenced by the writings of Nurkse & Hinshmann who have argued on the question of initiating growth in the backward regions. Their writing emphasised on the backward and forward linkages as a means of promoting viability of diversity of the region in question; so that the various economic activities of the region become integrate to produce the maximum rate of growth. In India two schools of thought have dominated the theorising of

32. B.N. Juyal : *Inter-regional inequality & the process of National development : The case of Uttarakhand*; in T.N. Popola ed., **Development of Hill areas: Issues & Approachers**. pg. 59.

regional development. The first school was led by Dr. Gadgil and associates from the Gokhale Institute of Economics & Politics, Pune, alongwith Lalit K. Sen & associates from the National Institute of Community Development, Hyderabad. This school was called the Gadgil- Sen school. The second school was called the Rao school after V.K.R.V. Rao. The difference between the two schools are subtle. The former suggests a vertical integration between a hierarchy of human settlements with the hope that such a link up will transmit to the lowest point in the hierarchy, growth impulses from the top growth centres. The latter school however support a horizontal linkup among the villages themselves so that they support each other funtionally in a manner that the whole cluster of villages becomes a viable unit. However the approaches do not preclude the pull of the market forces. It is argued by scholars that market forces tend to aggravate the existing disparities; economic growth will tend to centerate in relatively richer regions and private savings of the poorer regions will go to the richer regions.³³ A

33. Abdul Aziz, *Approaches to integrated rural development Some reflections.* pg. 69.

2. R.P. Mishra, K.V. Sundaram, and V.L.S. Prakasa Rao, *Regional development planning in India,* pg. 25.

kind of core-periphery relationship develops which tends to foster the already existing inequalities rather than ameliorate them.

The case of Uttarakhand therefore can be seen within the above perspectives. However those are differences which exist in Uttarakhand which marks Uttarakhand as separate and unique. To begin with the differences between other backward regions of the country and Uttarakhand reveals that; firstly the literacy rate in Uttarakhand is fairly high compared to the state average, around 59.58 % as compared to 33.69% respectively according to the 1991 Census. Literacy as an indication of development therefore does not play a role in Uttarakhand and in fact gives credence to the idea that the region is not backward. Secondly, the sex ratio in the region has been much higher than the state average for a few decades. According to the 1991 Census there are 955 females per 1000 males in the region. In many districts within the region the sex ratio has actually been positive, and thirdly the density of population in the hill districts is much lower than that of the state average. Therefore as an average the number of schools and colleges and hospitals within the region show a better ratio than the rest

of the state. Lastly, the number of SCs and STs are marginal in the region.

Then what makes Uttarakhand to be deemed a backward region? It is precisely this deviation of Uttarakhand from the accepted norms of backwardness that makes Uttarakhand unique.

The region of Uttarakhand is a land, of which 64% of the area is covered by forests and only 12.49% of the total land area is available for cultivation. The net sown area is only 4.07% of the net sown area of the state. Of the net sown area in Uttarakhand only 31% is irrigated. Insufficient and fragmented data about the hill economy and agriculture played a big role to the backwardness of agriculture in the Uttarakhand region. "The problem of off-farm sources of income being an important element to the farmer's incomes has been identified as the major one.³⁴ Small land holdings are a characteristic feature of the hills make an extremely small land-man

34. Figures derived from Agricultural Census of India 1984-85
Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India.

2. Report of the Expert group on National policy for integrated development in the Himalayas. pg. 25.

ratio. About 90% of the land holdings in Uttarakhand are below one hectare in size. The land holding of the average farm was scattered over about 8 locations on an average there are about 3 fields per location each measuring about 0.03 hectares.³⁵ Irrigation of these lands hardly exist and are often difficult to irrigate because of the locations of the plots of lands. Almost 98% of the irrigation is done through 'guls' or channels. Of late there have been efforts to irrigate more lands but these have been largely confined to the terai areas of the hill districts. Some efforts have been made through Jawahar Rozgar Yogna for building concrete channels in the hilly regions,³⁶ but there is very little available information on this activity. The agricultural cropping pattern in the region has shown a shift towards Wheat and away from Rice. In terms of area under cultivation under various crops, wheat has been the largest space holder in all the districts. This is particularly true after 1958-59. This shift coincides with the introduction of High Yielding

35. S.L. Shah; *Fragmentation & Scatteredness of holdings in Uttarakhand; Rural Development*, G.B. Pant University of Agriculture, Pantnagar, pg. 59, 1979.

36. Observations and Interviews with farmers in the hills during the researcher's field trip to Uttarakhand.

variety of wheat in India, however studies show that only 45.53% of farmers in the region used HYV seeds in the period 1969-77 and 81.73 % of the farmers using the HYV seeds had irrigated lands.³⁷ Therefore shift towards wheat cannot be fully explained by the arrival of HYV seeds, however interviews with farmers suggest that the influence of farmers who have attained a degree of success and the change in the food habits have contributed to the shift in cultivation. A community development programme study in 1976 revealed that in the hills irrigated HYV wheat yields around Rs. 1,045.85 per hectare whereas unirrigated HYV wheat yeilds around Rs. 410.14 as per 1976 prices. Therefore the success of HYV is directly linked with irrigation and the ratio of slow percentage increase of irrigation in hills has not helped agricultural development. The input-output ratio of HYV Rice, HYV Wheat and potatoes are given below:-

	Valley	Mid-hills	High-hills
HYV Rice	0.95	0.75	N.A

37. G.C. Pande , Field reports on Socio-economic achievements and emerging issues in Hill Development.

HYV Wheat	1.14	1.04	0.87
Potato	0.64	0.61	1.63

Source: R.S. Tripathy, *Investment, Income & Employment pãttren of Hill farming.*

The table clearly shows that the input-output ratio is much higher for HYV wheat as compared to HYV Rice; Even-though potatoes show a better input output ratio the cultivation of potatoes particularly to the high hills (where the ratio is the highest) it has not shown an increase.

The problem in the Uttarakhand region therefore becomes clearer when one analyses other data on economic conditions. With an annual population increase of nearly 23% from 1981, the pressure on land only increases. Eventhough the population density of the region is only 116 person per square kilometer, way below the state average, the population density changes when one considers only the cultivable land available to around 1,156 persons per square kilometer which is much higher than the state average. As much as 60% of the forest area of U.P. is in the Uttarakhand region and only 40% spread over the state even if the density of population is taken in terms of cultivable land

the density of population falls much below that of the hills.

The ability of the land to sustain such a high population density is therefore questionable. The average yield per hectare of most of the cereals are below those of other regions in the state, a fact which only aggravates the situation. The high literacy rate also naturally puts a pressure for more employment given the evident uneconomical status of farming. Unemployment in the hills has been a chronic problem in the region. There are nearly 70,000 employment seekers at the employment exchanges in Uttarakhand annually, but the average generation of employment is only about 3,000 jobs in the organized sector annually. This lack of employment opportunities within the region has led to tremendous out-migration from Uttarakhand. As a result of which it has been estimated that almost every family in Uttarakhand has at least one member working outside the region.³⁸ This has led to the creation of what has been called the 'money order economy'. P.C. Joshi³⁹ recalled that villages after villages being inhab-

38. Vartaman Uttarakhand, Nov. 95, Pg. 12.

39. P.C. Joshi; *Uttarakhand: Ideas & Issues*

ited by women and old men, because all the men folk had gone outside the region for work. As a result of which much of the burden of cultivation has fallen on the women; who apart from doing their normal household chores like collecting firewood, attending to the children and collecting water have to do back breaking work in the fields. A study by an NGO called INHERE⁴⁰ showed that an average woman in the village works nearly 16 hours daily, and one of the reasons for this the report claimed was the absence of men folk to share the burden. Agricultural productivity has declined and a general reluctance to accept new agricultural technologies have also been observed.

The main industries present in the hills are predominantly forest based industries and limestone mining (Table on industries next page). The presence of a large forest area is an invitation for timber contractors. Much of forest are chir-pine forests which provide resin which is used in making Turpentine and varnish. However there are few factories producing turpentine within the region. The Turpentine factories are located in the plains. The

40. INHERE report on the working hours of women in Uttarakhand.

same goes with timber. Logs are exported out of the region to the plains where the logs are then cut up. The industries therefore do not develop or increase skilled employment but make use of unskilled labour. It has also noticed that many timber contractors employ cheap Nepalese labour for many of these jobs, as a result of which, even local labour is denied employment, apart from ruining the environment.⁴¹

The government of India and the Government of U.P. have had special plans for the hill areas. The U.P. government for instance gives nearly 4% of its budget to the hill districts. The Hill Areas Development Plans, specifically created to cater to the needs of the hill areas have been implemented. Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand share similar geographical features. Himachal Pradesh is only marginally larger than Uttarakhand in terms of area. A comparison between the states of Himachal Pradesh and the Uttarakhand region in terms of allocation of resources will provide a fair idea on the discrepancies between them.

41. Report on rural unemployment, SAHAYOG, Almora, 1992.

The table clearly show that despite the population of Himachal Pradesh being much less than that of Uttarakhand, the plan outlay for the former has been consistently more than the latter. In 1991-92 while the average outlay per person was around Rs. 802/- in Himachal Pradesh it was only Rs. 608/- in Uttarakhand. This is an indication that Himachal Pradesh as a hill state is able to derive more assistance to itself than Uttrakhand which only forms a hill region within a larger state of Uttar Pradesh. Data indicate that for every one lakh people there are 29 primary schools in Uttarakhand, whereas there are 49 in Himachal Pradesh. Similarly for one lakh people there are 17 higher secondary schools in Uttarakhand, whereas there are 22 in Himachal for the same population.⁴² In 1987 for every one lakh population nearly 4712 jobs were created in the organised sector, whereas the figure was 6802 in the case of Himachal Pradesh. The demand for a separate state especially becomes justified if this data is considered. The comparison is important because of the topographical similarities that the two regions share. The comparison of the Uttarakhand region to other regions within the

42. Data from report of Government of UP to Centre on Hill Districts (1989-90).

State of U.P. which are essentially on the plains will not yield the correct picture. Data indicate that the number of primary and higher secondary schools per lakh of the population is higher in Uttarakhand than elsewhere in the state, however this cannot yield the correct picture as it does not take into consideration the average distance to the schools, which is less than 3 Kms to the plains whereas it is above 8 Kms in the hills. This therefore reduces the actual effective area of the schools. In other words one would need more schools in the hills to teach the same number of children taught in the plains by one school. The same goes for banks, co-operatives, hospitals and the like. Despite the adversities that face the hill people to obtain education, where a child on an average walks 8 Kms, to and from school, the level of literacy is much higher than the state average. It can therefore be assumed that with a better school to student ratio the level of literacy will see a leap. The number of schools in region are given below:-

7th Five Year Plan 1985-90

Primary	74277
Senior basic	14549

Higher Secondary	5966
<hr/>	
Total	94792
<hr/>	

Access to health care is another problem faced by the people in the hills. As many villages are still unlinked by roads, the access to the health centre is severely restricted. Moreover there is one health centre for 5086 people, which is not much and adding the factor of terrain, the accessibility of people to health centres for basic treatment itself is difficult. Of the 90,271 villages in the region only 31,483 have been connected by roads. In other words only 34.9% of the villages are connected by roads.

In the overall survey there does exist a great deal of backwardness which has been hidden by the fact that statistics as presented often discount certain very necessary elements and therefore present a very skewed picture. In comparison with Himachal Pradesh only indicates that the potential for greater development exists but its yet untapped.

CHAPTER THREE

UTTARAKHAND: PERSPECTIVES OF POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS:

Uttarakhand's history of protest has added body and shape to the movement as it exists today. The people of the hills have been known for their valour and dedication, it was therefore surprising for many observers that Uttarakhand should be in flames. Eventhough social movements like the Chipko did catch the public eye around the country, political organizations demanding a seprate state of Uttarakhand had begun sprouting at around the same time. However, their agenda had not recieved much support during the initial phases. Differences in the perception of a seprate state had cropped up early in the history of political movements in the region. This is amply illustrated by the sprouting of new political outfits with unfailing regularity. Almost all the political organizations and parties which sprung up from the seventies onwards were united in one aspect; namely the socio-economic factors which contributed to the backwardness of the area.

One of the major factors that fueled the demand for a seprate state was the growing unemployment in the region.

The paucity of jobs in the region has caused the migration of young men to areas outside the region for jobs. These migrants get to see the level of development in other regions. This has been a contributory factor in the spreading of the realisation of the need for a separate state of Uttarakhand as a panache for their aspirations. Lack of industrial development and the woes of unremunerative agriculture are the commonalities which are seen reflected in all agendas of political organizations in the region. The inability of the state government to understand and realise the needs of the people are voiced and reflected upon unanimously, by all the organizations. These organizations however do differ significantly in their perceptions of a separate state and their priority areas. They also differ in their ideological stand points on the understanding and approaches to various issues in the region.

Organizations and political parties can be grouped or classified into three groups. This classification helps towards drawing out a better understanding of their perspective on the issue of Uttarakhand. Broadly they are the following:

(a) Those organizations which are mainly concerned with separate statehood and its administrative design.

(b) Those organizations and parties whose for demand separate state coincides with a demand for an alternative model of development.

(c) Organizations which have an agenda of just separate statehood.

(a) Organizations concerned with separate statehood and its administrative design:

1. The Uttarakhand Kranti Dal (UKD):

The Uttarakhand Kranti Dal was formed on the 24th of July 1979 at Mussoorie. Since its formation in 1979 it has been pursuing an almost single point agenda of the demand for a separate state of Uttarakhand. However till the 1990's UKD's influence was quite limited. It shot into prominence from 1992 onwards. The UKD claims that it (ie, UKD) was the organization which brought the Uttarakhand issue into the national focus, since its formation in 1979.⁴³ This according to the UKD had compelled other political parties within the region to support the demand and who had hitherto been non-committal or had been indifferent to the issue. In a pamphlet issued in 1992⁴⁴, the UKD was

43. Uttarakhand Kranti, **AMAR UJALA**, 3 May 1996, Moradabad, pp.1 (Hindi).

44. UKD Pamphlet, 15th January 1992.

critical of the manner in which the BJP government in UP was dealing with the issue. It claimed that the BJP government had not even consulted or taken into confidence other political parties. The BJP government had not even thought it fit to consult the spearheader of the movement, namely, the UKD on the issue. There was no proper debate in the state assembly either. All that was passed was a two line resolution relating to the issue. According to the UKD, this pointed to the political gimmickry of the BJP on Uttarakhand.

The UKD through numerous pamphlets and reports pointed out the cultural, geographical, economic and political uniqueness of the Uttarakhand region and therefore the justification for the formation of a separate state.

The blueprint of the state of Uttarakhand by UKD:

The Uttarakhand state will consist of nine districts of what is now U.P., namely, Almora, Nainital, Pithoragarh, Chamoli, Tehri-Garhwal, Pauri-Garhwal, Dehradun, Uttarkashi and Haridwar. The UKD states that if other neighbouring areas express their desire to join this new state, their demands will certainly be looked into.

The capital of the state will be in between Dugatoli, Bharandisen, Devalikhal, and Ghairisen. The capital will be called Chandranagar after the freedom fighter Kran-

tiveer Chandrasingh 'Garhwali'. The state will be divided into 23 districts namely Champavat, Didihat, Pithoragarh, Almora, Bageshwar, Ranikhet, Nainital, Pantnagar, Kashipur, Chamoli, Mandakini, Pauri, Lansdowne, Ramganga, Uttarkashi, Swai, Tehri, Pratapnagar, Narendernagar, Dehradun, Vikasnagar, Haridwar and Chandranagar. These 23 districts will come under four divisions. (1) Pithoragarh division (2) Nainital division (3) Pauri division and (4) Dehradun division. Sixty five tehsils will be created as compared to the thirty two now present. There will be around 150 blocks⁴⁵.

Legislative assembly seats and parliamentary seats:

In most Himalayan states excepting the Uttarakhand region there is one legislative seat for every ten to eighty thousand people. In Himachal Pradesh there is one legislative seat (Vidhan Sabha) for every 60 thousand people, Manipur 23 thousand, Sikkim 10 thousand and in Arunachal Pradesh 21 thousand. In contrast to this, in Uttarakhand there is approximately one Vidhan Sabha seat for every 1.5 lakh people. The UKD proposes to remedy this apparent lack of representation by providing at least one Vidhan Sabha seats for every 70 thousand people. The Vidhan

45. *Uttarakhand Rajya Ka Swarup*, UKD, 1992, Srinagar, pp8

Sabha of the state of Uttarakhand will therefore have around 105 seats⁴⁶. The UKD proposes that there will be 15 Parliamentary seats from the new state.

UKD on society:

The constitution⁴⁷ of the UKD states that the state of Uttarakhand will be an exploitation free, classless, socialist and secular state. The scheduled castes and tribes, and minorities residing within the state would be adequately protected. However it remains silent on the kind of protection it envisages. The statement 'adequately protected' is ambiguous and leads to much speculation on the nature of protection, if any. Whether the protection would differ significantly from the already available safeguards, and if so, how and why? It maintains a stoic silence on these seminal questions. The constitution then goes on to say that special emphasis will be given to the empowerment of women. Again the UKD is unclear on the terms of empowerment.

The Economic perception:

The UKD believes that Uttarakhand will be the most self reliant of Himalayan states. It however hastens to

46. *ibid*, pp9

47. *Constitution of the UKD, 1980.*

add that for initial development central assistance would be necessary⁴⁸. The time stipulated in order to make Uttarakhand self reliant would be around ten years. The annual income according to the UKD, of Uttarakhand within U.P. is around 300 crores, UKD claims that this would be raised to 1500 crores in ten years of statehood. Uttarakhand will be self reliant in grains and actually 'export' the surplus to other states in India. It will do us good to note that the estimates given by the UKD are certainly ambitious. But with the apparent lack of any definite programme to achieve the aforesaid targets the credibility of such platitudes stands on somewhat shaky grounds.

On Development:

Decentralization is the mantra for the development of Uttarakhand to the UKD. In the manifesto published during 1990 general elections, the necessity of decentralised administration for more responsiveness has been emphasised. Gramsabhas, Nyay Panchayaths, Zilla Parishads will be given greater powers. At the village level there will be administrative units. Development of forests will be given importance. Commercial forestry and forest produce will be developed along with forest based industry. Atten-

48.op.cit..pp12

tion will also be given to environmental concerns. There should be necessary amendmends made in the Forest Act, Wild Life Act and Mining Act. This view of the UKD becomes important because of the ecological fragility of the Himalayan region. The low priority given to ecological concerns by the UKD in its agenda is therefore note worthy. The amendments in the Act's raise questions as to why the UKD are arguing for the removal of restrictions regarding industrial developments in areas were the Act's operate therefore negating the very basis of the Acts, that is, the protection of the ecology and protecting flora and fauna. UKD then goes on to suggest that the medicinal plants found in the Himalayas will be given importance for their production sale and manufacture.

The UKD proposes that by building more hydro - electric projects, Uttarakhand could sell power to other states and earn revenue of around 5000crores annually. There should also be the development of micro-hydel projects. The issues of large dams is controversial and the UKD's advocacy of large hydel- power projects seems to put the UKD firmly in the traditional development paradigm, where the cost benefit analysis is seen nearly in terms of investments and returns of revenue. The social and ecological costs of such projects are not taken into

consideration either.

The UKD's plans on employment generation reflects upon the chronic unemployment problem in Uttarakhand. The UKD talks of establishment of a state public service commission through which 80 percent of the jobs will be reserved for the domiciles of the state of Uttarakhand⁴⁹. A long term plan to eradicate unemployment will be drawn up. Small, medium scale and cottage industries will be promoted state wide. Electronics as an industry will be given fillip. Industries in the state would have to be based on raw materials available in the region. Traditional cottage industries will be made more productive with the introduction of modern technologies. In lands that are barren, horticulture would be introduced. This is to be based on a long term programme. Under this unemployed youth would be given 5 acres of land necessary implements and interest free loan of Rs one lakh to develop the barren land into a horticulturally productive land. Employment would also be generated through afforestation programmes. Tourism as an industry will have to be developed to provide employment. Animal husbandry is another area of priority in the UKD agenda. The state will provide every rural family with one

49. *ibid*, pp26

or two milch cows to develop dairy industry. Under the Dairy Project a chilling plant will be built in all the blocks to store milk. In the sphere of education, apart from building numerous schools and colleges, the emphasis will be on employment oriented education and the universities will be encouraged to produce applied research. This will be particularly true for universities such as the G.B. Pant Agricultural University.

The horticulture scheme and the dairy scheme not only seem over ambitious but also seem to reek of electoral rhetoric. Though the sentiments are laudable the ideas are certainly unrealistic and skirt the fundamental issues by providing such overly simplistic solutions. On the whole UKD does not show that it has anything different to offer in terms of development perspectives from the present set up, except their pledge to decentralization. However it certainly goes to the credit of the UKD that the movement received an impetus in a more or less organized manner because of its efforts.

Uttarakhand Jan Sangharsh Vahini (UJSV)

The Uttarakhand Sangharsh Vahini, Uttarakhand Jan Parishad and Uttarakhand Pragatisheel Yuva Manch merged together in August 1989 to form the Uttarakhand Jan Sangharsh Vahini. The UJSV derives its inspiration from the

revolutionary zeal of Narendra Saldana, Shridev Suman, Badridutt Pande, Ram Singh Dhauni, Anasuya Prasad etc.

The UJSV legitimises the demand for separate state by relying a great deal on history, even though the socio economic factors are not ignored either. It traces the history of Uttarakhand back to the 6th century B.C. citing chalcolithic settlements in the region. Reinforcing the outlook of the UJSV, it claims that Brahminism and the associated inequalities were introduced with the arrival of Shankaracharya in 780 AD. Prior to his arrival the UJSV claims that Uttarakhand region was untouched by the Varna system, and was therefore different from the plains. The Katyuri dynasty later unified the various principalities in the region under one administration. The Katyuri dynasty disintegrated. Later due to the Gorkha invasion in 1791, the Paur ruler Pradyuman Shah sought British help to oust the Gorkhas, which came about in 1815. As part of the deal the British retained half of Kumaon and Garhwal, a portion of Garhwal was left for Raja Sudarshan Shah and the remaining areas became the 'non-regulation' areas. In 1901 the United Provinces were created and the Uttarakhand region was included in it. Later after 1947 the British legacy was continued.

The UJSV believe that it was the logic of British

expansionism that Uttarakhand be divided into Kumaon and Garhwal. History points to the fact that Uttarakhand was a unified whole in the past and therefore anybody who opposed the formation of Uttarakhand state on the ground of the separate identities of Kumaon and Garhwal are blind to history and are hollow in their rhetoric. The UJSV considers its formation historically significant because it has been created at a historical juncture when casteism, regionalism, social inequalities, unemployment, price rise and corruption are ruling the roost. The ruling elite and the ruling parties have systematically harassed and traumatised the people struggling for daily necessities and democratic ideals. A time when oppressive laws have been used to suppress any form of protest against the omnipresent evils. The UJSV considers itself as an organization that is pledged to fight these tendencies which have so steadfastly crept into the political milieu.

The reasons for the UJSV's supporting and advocating the demand for a separate state does not essentially differ from what has been often cited, viz, geographical reasons, economic reasons, including low agricultural productivity, unemployment and exploitation of its resources by outsiders. The UJSV however lays greater emphasis on the economic reasons for the demand of a separate

state. It points out that natural resources are being indiscriminately exploited by contractors. Industries which use forest resources like resin and wood and also minerals available in Uttarakhand are negligible. The result is that the capitalists from the plains benefit from the exploitation of Uttarakhand's natural resources, while its denizens are deprived of any share. The resources allocated through the plans never reach the people but fatten the purses of the bureaucracy, contractors and politicians⁵⁰. Alcoholism is the major source of marital and social strife in the Uttarakhand region. According to the UJSV alcoholism was not endemic to the region but was introduced by discharged soldiers from the army. The rapid spread of alcoholism is now related to the growing frustration due to unemployment and poverty. There is the existence of liquor mafias which sell spurious liquor in the name of allopathic and ayurvedic medicines. The result of this wide spread alcoholism has been the systematic destruction of health, of generations of youth. Liquor has made their bodies weak and unfit for the army, which incidentally is one of the largest sources of employment

50. GOSH NAPATRA (Manifesto), Uttarakhand Jan Sangharsh Vahini, DHAD, ed Suresh Nautiyal, 1994, pp125.

for the Uttarakhandis⁵¹. The issue of alcoholism is one aspect which makes the UJSV slightly different from other political parties and organizations. In other issues the UJSV seems to be following the same route of lack of infrastructure, exploitation by bureaucracy etc.

UJSV's Uttarakhand:

(1) Administrative and political setup: Defence, telecommunications, external affairs and finance will be with the centre. The other areas will be with the state government. The whole state will be divided into five autonomous provinces namely Garhwal, Kumaon, Sawain-Jaunpur, Jaunsar-Babhar, and Terai-Bhabar. Other tribes economically, socially and culturally distinct groups or communities will be given proportional representation. The UJSV in its division of the state into autonomous provinces has taken radical path, more or less on the lines of autonomous republics in the erstwhile USSR or autonomous provinces in present day China. The UJSV is undoubtedly influenced by the marxist credo.

There will be two houses in the legislature. The Lower house will have the representation by direct election with

51. Sharab aur Uttarakhand, UJSV pamphlet, 26 May 1992, (Hindi)

one representative per 50,000 people. Whereas the Upper house will have 20 representatives per region. For any bill to be passed it will be required to be passed by both houses. There will be proportional representation for the Dalits, Adivasis and religious and linguistic minorities will be given reservations in both the houses and in all self governing institutions down to the village level.

The reservation will be extended to all governmental, non-governmental jobs and educational institutions. Apart from this 30 percent in all the above mentioned areas will be reserved for women. In terms of autonomous administration, the lowest level will be the village, the block, the zilla and above all this the autonomous region and lastly the Uttrakhand state.

Objectives of the state of Uttrakhand :

- 1) To end the commercial exploitation or destruction of forests, minerals and human resources. And to develop industries which utilize the resources of the region.
- 2) To scientifically develop forests, floriculture, animal husbandry and agriculture.
- 3) To enforce land ceiling in the terai. To provide proper procurement prices to the farmers and to provide minimum wages to agricultural labour.
- 4) To develop a forest policy that will be beneficial to

the people.

- 5) Employment to everyone and wages according to work done.
- 6) Transport fares to be similar to that in the plains. Same fare for the same distance.
- 7) Guarantee of potable water and health at village level.
- 8) Dual educational policy to be scrapped and similar education to be provided to all.
- 9) Ending of corruption at all level through developing consciousness and popular struggle.
- 10) To end all kinds of nexus & mafias.
- 11) To participate in the national struggle for a new India.
- 12) To develop tourism as an industry and to link all villages with roads and also provide transport.
- 13) To develop proper programmes for Dalit upliftment and assure their proper implementation .
- 14) To guarantee the representation of religious and linguistic minorities.
- 15) To make provisions so that women be given equal rights to property.

Some of the objectives seem clearly unrealistic, and are more of a reflection of the ideological stand. The UJSV has not clarified as to what it means by the national struggle for a new India.

The objectives as mentioned above certainly give an insight into the ideological stand of UJSV. A clear commitment to the dalits and other minorities as well is apparent in their stand. This emphasis on minorities puts the UJSV on a different plane as compared to the UKD, which makes only a passing reference to them.

(B) Those organizations and parties whose demand for a separate state coincides with the demand for alternative model of development.

Indian People's Front (IPF):

The IPF deals with the Uttarakhand issue within the context of Indian political parties. It launches a scathing attack on what it calls "the Congress form of development", which was initiated and sustained by the Congress. The IPF claims that this sort of development is clearly anti-people. The BJP's demand for 'Uttaranchal' is politically motivated as its concept does not differ in any significant manner from the Congress. This argument of the IPF seeks to legitimise, by citing the role of the BJP led UP Government during the earth quakes in Uttar Kashi. The U.P. Government paid only lip service to the victims

of the quake thereby exposing its sincerity to the people of Uttarakhand. The IPF therefore, makes a case before the people of Uttarakhand to see through inherently exploitative nature of both the BJP and the Congress.⁵² The IPF Agenda spends a great deal of effort in trying to expose the national parties and their attitudes towards the region.

Outline of the IPF Concept of Uttarakhand State

The IPF begins with Agrarian reforms. 298659 hectares of barren land in Uttarakhand will be made agriculturally productive and distributed among the landless, unemployed and those who are willing to work on the land.⁵³ Land consolidation will also be taken up to make agriculture more productive. Check Dams will be created to improve irrigation. Farmers will be encouraged to create farming cooperatives. The IPF aims to reduce bureaucratic interference in agriculture and to educate the farmers and workers on democratic ideals and principles of co-operatives. To introduce new agricultural techniques to im-

52. Raja Bahuguna, *IPF National Conference, Vijayawada, 21st to 24th September, 1992.*

53. *Ibid.* p.6

prove productivity. To introduce environmentally sustainable high yielding varieties of crops in place of traditional low yielding crop varieties.

It also talks of introducing in certain areas agro-based industries which are however, to be in the small scale sector.⁵⁴ In areas near orchards, cottage industries producing juice, jams and pickles will be encouraged. Similarly in areas producing medicinal plants, cottage industries to promote such medicines will be encouraged. Such industries will have to be linked to farmers' cooperatives and will have to be labour intensive. Animal husbandary will be made more scientific as it will have to be organized. The quality of cows will be improved and milk cooperatives will be developed. Sheep rearing and rearing Angora Sheep and Rabbits will be given impetus. Training for such development will be imparted to the farmers.

Minerals and Mining: The mining of minerals available in the area will have to be developed in an environmentally sustainable manner. There will have to be a ban on commercial exploitation of mineral resources. The Mining of

54. Hamara Uttarakhand, IPF Pamphlet, 21st June, 1993

minerals should fall within the purview of Uttarakhand state. Environmentally friendly industries which use these resources should be encouraged. At the same time there should be more exploration for minerals in the region.

Tourism : Scenic areas will be developed for tourism. Transport will also be improved to promote tourism along with building of hotels. Information bureaus will be set up to give information about Uttarakhand to the Tourists.

Education, Health, Entertainment and Sports: Introduction of interesting syllabi in educational institutions. Reorganization of primary education. It seeks to provide necessary educational equipments and teachers to all schools. To provide at least one primary school in all villages and one junior school within three kilometers of every village. Education till the intermediate level will be free. Environmental studies will be introduced as part of the syllabus. Employment oriented education will be given priority. The level and reach of higher education will be improved. Medical and Engineering Colleges will be set up.

In health the objectives of IPF include providing all encouragement to allopathy, homoeopathy, ayurveda, unani and other techniques of medicine and to make these techniques available to the masses.

As far as sports and entertainment are concerned the IPF advocates the use of street and folk theatre which it feels is closest to the people and which will be able to disseminate entertainment, and the message of health and hygiene. There will be a great deal of emphasis on creating a sports culture in the state.

In the agricultural sector the IPF differs from the other political parties and organizations in their emphasis on environmentally sustainable, high yielding seeds. Its barren land development project though laudable, may be far fetched, particularly as the IPF has not given any indications as to how it could or would make them agriculturally productive.

Education is another area where the IPF differs from others. It has given a considerable thought to the education in Uttarakhand state, from promising one primary

school to setting up of medical and engineering colleges. The IPF steadfastly has been taking the line of environmental protection with development. This is refreshing from the highly callous manner the other organizations take environment.

Uttarakhand Party

It is difficult to notice an ideological base for the Uttarakhand Party. Its demand for a separate state does not differ from that of other parties and organizations and there are no radical measures proposed. Its agenda is very much within the normal framework seen all across the region.

Uttaranchal Utthan Parishad

The Uttaranchal Parishad had its first meeting in June, 1971 in Nainital, where a demand for a separate state was voiced. The Uttranchal Rajya Parishad was formed in 1973 under the leadership of Indramani Baduni (who is now a leader of the UKD), the movement however died out after a while. The Uttranchal Utthan Parishad was later formed in July, 1988. The reason for calling the state they are demanding as Uttranchal is interesting to note. After the Chinese aggression, a new division was

created which included three districts namely Uttarkashi, Chamoli, and Pithoragarh. Therefore the word Uttarakhand would be confused with this limited area. Secondly according to the Uttranchal Utthan Parishad in 1969 the Northern districts of West Bengal were demanding a separate state which they called Uttarakhand. The name for the nine hill districts of UP would be called Uttaranchal to avoid the confusion.⁵⁵ Uttranchal should be created according to the UUP because it is strategically important to India's security. It is this point which is first in the UUP agenda. This issue has not been dealt upon in as much detail by any other organization as it has been by the UUP. According to the UUP, to maintain this strategically important region and to grant statehood as per the demands of the people of the region becomes imperative. Statehood to Uttaranchal will promote unity and solidarity in the country. Here the UUP talks of unity in diversity and the need to preserve the subnational identities of regions. Statehood becomes necessary for economic development. Whatever plans are made either in Delhi or Lucknow, the problems of the region require that their selec-

55. Bhagat Singh Koshiyari, *Uttranchal Kyon*, Uttranchal Utthan Parishad, Almora 1992 page 4.

tions be made by people who know the region and are based in the region. Development of industries will prevent the migration of manpower from the region. Forest resources of Uttaranchal are in abundance. By proper exploitation of this resource itself, Uttaranchal state can become self-sufficient. This would mean setting up of forest based industries, marketing of medicinal plant products, paper etc. Abundant water resources can be properly exploited not only to provide the whole region with power, but also to make nearly Rs 8000 Crores annually by the sale of electricity. The UUP's ideas on tourism and agriculture are the usual promises of development with no radical views that can make the UUP's programme unique.

The UUP being closely associated with the BJP has been toeing the official BJP line. The UUP in other words is almost a regional spokesgroup of the BJP. It does show scant regard for environmental issues, which never goes beyond that of tree plantation. Exploitation of the forests and rivers, forms a major part of their agenda. The UUP has not discussed the ills of the contractors nexus neither has it suggested any new approaches to solve the unemployment problem.

The political parties discussed above are only representative of the different voices that are at present clamouring for a separate state of Uttarakhand. The singular demand which dominates the thinking of an average Uttarakhandi is that for a separate state and identity which separates the hill districts from that of Uttar Pradesh. Even though all the organizations and political parties are aiming for a separate state, their approaches are different. While most have declined to even discuss a solution which offers something less than a state, some organizations have not been averse to the idea of an Union Territory status which they see as the first step towards statehood.

Some had toyed with the idea of an autonomous council on the lines of the Bodo land and Jharkhand Autonomous Councils. The latter solution was actively pursued by the Centre. There were two talks held between the former Home Minister Mr. S.B. Chavan and representatives of nearly thirty five organizations and outfits which claimed to be leading the struggle in the region. The talks were held

between January 18th and 20th of 1996.⁵⁶ The leaders at the talks expected an outcome. However there were allegations that several of the so called organizations were not genuine and were raised by the Centre to break the agitation.⁵⁷ The leader of the Uttarakhand Sainik and Ardh Sainik Sangharsh Samiti, S.R. Bahuguna said that there was definitely a lack of sincerity on the part of the Union Government.⁵⁸ Strong opposition from various organizations on any kind of dilution of the demand for the state meant that the autonomous council option was closed. There were some reports in News papers which suggested that leaders of the movement expected the government to announce a solution to the issue on the Republic Day. An expectation which was soon to crash.⁵⁹

The announcement of the 1996 Lok Sabha Elections was then sought to be used by the Uttrakhand Sanyukt Sangharsh Samiti (USSS) which is a platform of nearly 150 organizations fighting for statehood, as an opportunity to demonstrate its popular clout by not taking part in the Elec-

56. Indian Express, 21-1-1996, New Delhi.

57. The Times of India, New Delhi, 21-1-1996.

58. Business and Political Observer, New Delhi, 22-1-1996

59. The Times of India, Dehradun, 28-1-96.

tion and announcing a regionwide boycott of the polls. The threat of a boycott was initially meant to make the Central Government make amends for its masterly inactivity. The lack of organization on the part of the USSS was clear as the polling date of 2nd May, 1996 drew near. The boycott call was intended more as a threat rather than a sincere effort to stall the electoral process in the region. Moreover the divisions among the various organizations were exposed. The pro-BJP organizations did not heed the boycott calls and their superior organizational skill paid dividends. The USSS which had predicted less than 10 percent voting in the region as a whole had to concede around 50 percent voting. The verdict in the polls do to a certain extent reflect a mood which is not very different from what the USSS had wanted to portray. No political party which opposed the formation of a separate state gained any votes. The BJP was by and large biggest beneficiary of the mood of the people. N.D. Tiwari of the Congress (T) won the Nainital seat. His victory was almost a referendum on his stand on Uttarakhand which was perceived as the reason for him to part ways with the Congress (I). In the previous general election he had lost his traditional seat of Nainital when he toed the line of the Congress Leadership at the Centre. The

BJP with its superior organizational strength did well in the traditional BJP strong holds like Nainital, Dehradun, Uddham Singh Nagar. It could be said that the BJP has gained in areas where there is a higher percentage of migrants from the plains who do not identify completely with the hill people. The rural areas in contrast have shown a lesser voting percentage than the urban areas. The difference varies from 74 percent voting in Nainital Town to 20 to 25 % in the Rural Areas.⁶⁰ The voting in Garhwal was around 31 % and Kumaon 48.8%.⁶¹ The fact therefore remains by and large that the issue of Uttarakhand State remains still single most important issue in the minds of the people.

60. Amar Ujala, 3rd May, 1996, Moradabad, p.1 (Hindi)

61. Ibid. p. 1

CHAPTER FOUR

Development Perceptions

The first three, five year plans had implicitly hoped, that with the acceleration in the rate of growth, the problem of development of backward classes and backward regions would be solved or at least sufficiently eased by virtue of the 'trickle down' effect. No positive, explicit strategy for removing the imbalances in the growth of backward regions was proposed. During the fourth five year plan, the development of backward regions was considered a separate problem and certain steps were proposed for their development. The fifth five year plan (1974-79) had a separate chapter on 'backward and special areas including hill and tribal areas'. It noted that "the realization of the growth potentials of the backward areas should be taken up on a priority basis in order to give practical shape to the ideals of egalitarianism and social justice".⁶²

It asserted that the "development of backward areas represents a very complex problem".⁶³ The plan also noted

62. *Government of India, Planning Commission, Draft Fifth Five Year plan, Vol. II Pg. 282.*

63. *Ibid.* p. 282

that market forces act in such a manner, that growth would tend to be attracted to the already developed areas. Further the economics of agglomeration, size and specialization tend to accentuate inequalities and imbalances between different areas. While the third plan only talked about programmes, for extension of the benefits of economic progress, to the development of backward regions; the fourth plan took a comprehensive view of the factors responsible for the backwardness. The fourth plan had suggested a 'multi-directional area development' approach, for accelerating the development of backward areas. It however mentioned that each backward area, represented a unique combination of factors. Therefore no uniform programme could be successfully conceived and imposed from the national level. The fourth plan had grouped backward areas into two broad categories for evolving proper policy frameworks and operational programmes: 1) Areas with unfavourable physical-geographical conditions, terrain, climate and regions, inhabited by people with typical cultural characteristics. These included hill areas, drought-prone areas and tribal areas. 2) Economically backward areas marked by adverse land-man ratio, lack of infrastructure or inadequate development of resource potential. For the hill areas in particular, the plan recognised that

there would be higher costs and poorer returns from investments. In view of the unfavourable factors, it was decided that special allocations be made to the hill states. The pattern of central assistance to hill areas in other states should be liberalised, so as to encourage them to allocate substantial funds from their own plan resources.⁶⁴ The pattern was that of 50% grant component in central assistance, accruing on account of expenditure incurred in these areas, as compared to 30% elsewhere. In some Himalayan border regions (which includes the Uttarakhand region), the pattern involved 90% grant and 10% loans. The fifth plan, apart from continuing to favour patterns of central assistance, made additional allocation of funds to supplement the execution of 'integrated area development plan' for these areas. The Sixth plan noted that the reduction of inter-regional gap, in the level of development, standard-of living and quality of life, must form an integral part of the general development strategy. It has also been observed, that the approach to 'backward area development' hitherto had been characterized by incentives for industrialization on the one hand and

64. D.D. Narula, *Strategy for development of hill regions and investment in infrastructure*, pg. 25.

problem oriented special programmes on the other. The extent to which these measures have succeeded in equalising levels of development was uncertain. It also observed that the "experience with large industrial projects located in backward areas suggested that organised industry is not necessarily the sort of growth catalyst the backward areas need".⁶⁵ The change in emphasis is to be noted by a sectoral approach. The eighth five year plan lays emphasis on: 1) Intensive efforts to prevent degradation of the hills. 2) Financial and physical monitoring of Hill Area Development Plan (HADP) by the concerned state governments, would help implementation of the plan. 3) Popularising afforestation programmes through community participation. 4) Application of scientific inputs to agriculture and allied sectors. 5) Productivity of pasture grazing to be emphasised. 6) Development of watersheds for meeting the water requirements of the people. 7) Wherever transport linkages have been sketched and local cultivation of food grains is not advantageous, Public Distribution System (PDS) should be strengthened. 8) Encouragement to Non-Governmental Organ-

65. *Government of India, Planning Commission, Draft Sixth five year plan.*

izations(NGOs) working in these areas.

The shift from the `traditional' paradigm of development is discernable in the 7th and 8th five year plans, where greater emphasis has been given to grass root level participation and ecological conservation.

The earlier methods failed to improve the socio-economic conditions of the target audience. A greater realization on the part of the government, on the importance of environment , had prompted debates on the consequences of development thrust from above and not from the grassroots. It did not take into cognisance the perceptions on development of the populace and the relatively lesser importance it gave to ecological factors. Even though the 8th plan has not completely or substantially altered its focus, a new dimension has certainly been added. The realization had dawned that the problem of development in the hill regions are qualitatively and quantitatively different from those of the plains. Land-man relationship in the hills are significantly different from those in the plains; this coupled with comparatively poorer soils. Therefore the pattern of development in the hills will have to be very different from the one introduced in the

plains. Though an apparent change in policy frameworks have taken place, the implementation of these policies are still predominantly within the same bureaucratic framework. A change in policy, does not necessarily produce a corresponding change in the bureaucratic procedure. The state apparatus as it were, seems too rigid to mould itself to the subtle changes which have taken place in terms of policy directives. The methodology of implementation therefore remains very much the same and as a result, much of what is envisaged does not take place in practice.

During the researcher's field trip to Uttarakhand from 25-4-96 to 7-5-96, 15 villages were covered in five districts of Uttar Pradesh, namely, Ranichauri, Khadi, and Jajal in Tehri-Garhwal district, Rathkhet, Masi, and Kedar in Almora district, Bajeeena, Suriakhet and Chacroti in Garhwal district, Aadigram, Parthola, and Gogata in Dehradun district and Rachani, Simura and Kalachauna in the Nainital district. It was a common complaint that the primary health centers did not have nurses or doctors. Many of the Primary Health Centers (PHCs) were nearly 10 to 15 kilometers from the villages. Further investigation at the PHCs revealed, that there were Doctors and nurses in the payrolls, but they did not attend the PHCs usually. Barring a few exceptions at Suriakhet and Masi, in most other

places the doctors usually visited the PHC only once or twice in a month. In Masi, the researcher was told that it was only after a visit from the district collector to the village and his discovering that the hospital staff was absconding, that any action against the erring staff was initiated. As a result, a doctor now resides in the village. Most of the villages in Uttarakhand are so remote, that they are not as fortunate as Masi. The villagers are forced by the lack of medical facilities to rely on traditional faith healers and bone setters.

Government programmes like the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana etc. seem to have a 'road centric bias'. In other words only those villages which are either connected by roads or are relatively close to one, have derived benefits from the programmes. The five villages namely Aadigram, Kedar, Parthala, Jajal and Basora were on an average, at least 3 kilometers from the nearest road. They were relatively untouched by the various programmes of the government.

The first Jawahar Rozgar Yojana programme for building a village road in Basora was in 1996, mainly because of the efforts of an NGO working in the area. The others were yet to receive benefits from government programmes. On the other hand the villages near the roads have in com-

parison a larger share of the programmes. Most of the villages have periodically utilised funds from different government schemes in their village. At least six boast of panchayat-ghars. The benefits of accessibility are also reflected in the educational status, particularly those of the women. The villages unlinked by roads had a larger population of illiterate women than those linked by roads. In Aadigram and Kedar some women who were educated upto high school, were running 'bal wadis' for children. Interestingly, in both the villages, these women were married into the village and belonged to other villages and towns linked by roads.

In terms of perceptions on development, a clear urban-rural divide is revealed. The differences between the villages are negligible in this respect. The villagers in general, advocated the need for cottage industries which would utilise their skills. Large scale industries do not appeal to them. This is because, they are aware that they do not possess the skills required by such industries. In villages where NGOs have been active, environmental degradation had also been cited as a reason to disfavour large scale industries. The rapidly drying up water sources cause concern for the villagers who are farmers. People in rural areas understand quite well that tree felling and

drying up of water sources are linked processes.

The perception in the towns however varies-that, progress in Uttarakhand can be brought about, only through setting up largescale industries. In fact, one of the main planks prevalent was that the central and state governments have prevented and discouraged large scale industries. The backwardness of Uttarakhand is weighed by the average man on the street in terms of industries and large showpieces of development like dams etc. Awareness on environmental degradation is gaining ground. The perception is yet to find a fertile breeding ground in the urban outlook towards development.

Studies and suggestions have been made for a more sustainable form of development in the hill regions, given the environmental fragility of the area. The impact of these new ideas on the popular perceptions is suspect. Except for a few people the vast majority are uninitiated into the ideas of alternative models of development. This is significant. Though there is a link between the environment and the people of the hills and movements in the past and present have focussed upon the environment, viz, Chipko and Tehri dam ; alternative strategies for development have not recieved the popular approval. During the researcher's field visit , Sunderlal Bahuguna was on his

hunger strike against the Tehri dam. But the people in Tehri did not seem interested in Mr. Bahuguna's hunger strike and many actually supported the building of the dam. The only form of support for Bahuguna within Tehri was seen when a few people holding flaming torches, marched through Tehri in support of Mr. Bahuguna. As seen earlier political organizations and political parties stay clear of any discussions on alternative strategies for development.

Alternative strategies for sustainable development

The realization of the environmental and geo-strategic position of the Himalayas, development in the Uttarakhand region cannot but be in tandem with the protection of the environment.

The impact of deforestation in the hills has tremendous ecological significance. The hill forests have acted as a homogenous force between different rock strata which together make a hill range. But in the past few decades, hills have fallen prey to mining operations. Due to dynamite blastings for ore and limestone, the hills have become barren. The natural hill forests have been exposed to a hollowed, unstable and trembling rocky structure

worsened by landslides and duststorms. The entire socio-economy in the hills is based on forest exploitation. Unthoughtful protection without appropriate legal actions will only aggravate the agony of the helpless hill people. Due to largescale operations of mining the high concentration of stone particles in the air besides vitiating the atmosphere have been responsible for the rise in temperatures. Such a phenomenon along with the loss of green cover has disturbed the monsoon pattern⁶⁶. In the hills of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh water has become a perennial problem. The hill resorts are being deprived of their scenic beauty as well as their climatic characteristics. The mining operations have affected the Doon valley and Solan in Himachal Pradesh and many other hilly areas.

To maintain the ecological balance with reference to hill areas, the Forest (Conservation) Act of 1980 was formulated. The Act lays down that no state government or any authority shall issue any order without the approval of the central government, to permit forest land or reserve forests to be diverted for non forest

66. D. S. Mushram and R. P. Barial, *Echoes of doom*, Hindustan Times, 8th September 1994.

products. Several state governments expressed unhappiness regarding the Act. The Act was proposed to be amended in 1982 by which the central government could not withhold its approval for forest felling for public utility services such as roads, drinking water schemes, telephone and electricity lines. The amendment further envisaged that schemes approved by state governments when sent to the central government for its approval should be disposed of within 15 days of their receipt. The amendment was not carried through for want of wider dialogue and more detailed information on the implementary aspects of the Act. The forest policy seems to be based on the premise that forests must be protected from dwellers. The 1980 Forest Bill increased the list of offences to include gathering of forest produce which were being collected by the forest dwellers. The punishment was stringent and stiff with three years imprisonment or fine upto Rs 5,000 or both.

The rather high handed approach to the forest policy has led to a feeling of alienation amongst the people of the region. The forest policy has not changed its character from the days of the British raj. A demand for a more people friendly Forest policy has been gaining ground. Political organizations demanding separate statehood for

the region, have given the amendment of the forest policy a relatively high priority in their agenda.

Given the topographical difficulties of Uttarakhand, new and innovative technologies have to be developed to solve problems in the region. Much of the failures of the government programmes in the region has been attributed to the inability of conventional technology being unable to cope with the geographical peculiarities of the region. The new technologies need not necessarily be high-tech, but a better understanding of traditional innovations could go a great way in solving many complex problems. There have been successful attempts at innovating technologies to suit local needs.

The KASSER trust (an NGO working in the Kumaon hills) has shown through its programmes a method of watershed management at the lowest levels. The KASSER trust's experience of over 25 years in environmental and development programmes has only reinforced the view that for a permanent solution and effective management of water resources, the people in the villages will have to be educated in the benefits of such management. For the first time in 1986 the Kasser Trust was able to install handpumps high above rivers on mountain slopes. This was not done through advanced technology but by a village

programme which involved indigenous skills. The work is done entirely through local village level trainees called 'Jal Karmis' and the work organised through village level samitis. The villagers are directly involved and therefore realise that the underground water source is very small, in the order of half a litre per minute and hence understand its criticality. They realise that the source has a catchment area, and a forested catchment is better and this leads to afforestation programmes.⁶⁷ Other methods employed by Kasser Trust are being experimented in various parts of the region. Ferro-cement tanks to collect rain water runoff from roofs and other built up areas, poly-tanks which collect rainwater and also water from seasonal rivulets and basins. These are observed to be methods of water conservation which are being propagated through NGOs, working in the region.⁶⁸

Agriculture is an area of utmost importance considering that nearly 80 percent of the population in the Uttarakhand hills are dependent on agriculture. Modern agri-

67. D.G.T. Rees, *Rural level management of water resources in Kumaon*. pg. 73.

68. Observed at INHERE (NGO working in the watershed area) during the researcher's field trip to Masi, March 14-21, 1996.

cultural science and advances in technology have played a big role in increasing the intensity or efficiency of production per unit area . The technology of the green revolution is not applicable in the hill areas due to the lack of irrigation facilities, climatic and edaphic factors. Moreover the technology of the green revolution has come under scathing attack from environmentalists. Vandana Shiva⁶⁹ argues that the long term damages of the green revolution are long term and the benefits are extremely short term. The long term consequences of such technologically dependent agricultural intervention are permanent in terms of their ill effects. Shiva even suggests in a cost-benefit analysis between the traditional varieties and the high yielding varieties in terms of fodder grain production, the traditional varieties fare better than the hybrid HYV. It is argued, that the green revolution is unsustainable. Field reports, apart from the ones quoted by Vandana Shiva, do corroborate her views. It is common knowledge now that the fertilizer inputs into farms with HYV have been increasing without a corresponding rise in production. A general loss of soil fertility has also

69. Vandana Shiva, *Violence of the green revolution*.pg 52.

been noticed. S.L. Shah⁷⁰ advocates a mixed cropping pattern to increase yields. The livestock component of the farming income has also to be given greater importance. There have been attempts made to improve the milch cows in the Uttarakhand region, particularly in the Almora district. Under the auspices of the Indo-German Agricultural development project, Jersey cows were sought to be introduced. It was noticed that the local varieties were low milk yielders, only 1-2 kgs per day. However even Jersey cows which were given to farmers did not give more than 6 kgs per day, when they traditionally give twice that amount. INHERE found that the local cow-sheds were small, cramped and ill-ventilated. With the introduction of better ventilation and proper feeding troughs, the milk yield rose.⁷¹ The livestock component provides 20 to 30 per cent of the farm income but suffers from various constraints like the lack of good milch cows/buffaloes or the facilities to upgrade the local varieties by artificial insemination. The farmers lack the knowledge of the right feed for good milk production and maintaining breed-

70. S.L. Shah, *Agricultural Development in Uttarakhand : concepts and comments*, pg. 107

71. *Annual Report of INHERE, Masi, Almora dist; 1994-95*, p.12.

ing schedules. Veterinary services and medicines are poor. Fodder is scarce during winter and post summer months. Eventhough there has been some improvement in the marketing of milk due to milk co-operatives, this has been confined to areas in and around large towns like Dehradun and Nanital. The vast hinterland has been untouched, due to their remoteness and inaccessibility.

There is a general tendency to compare Uttarakhand with Himachal Pradesh and as a natural corollary the apple orchards in Himachal Pradesh are cited as a method of improving the agricultural incomes of farmers in Uttarakhand. Considering that the climatic condition of Himachal and Uttarakhand are similar the proposition for orchards in Uttarakhand is not unrealistic; however most fruit trees have a long gestation period before they are of any commercial value. "Most fruit trees start fruiting in 6-8 years. The initial fruiting has no commercial value. The peak production is achieved in 16-20 years. The average economic life may be around 40 years. Some investments are required every year. Thus it is a capital intensive programme.⁷² In Uttarakhand given the subsistence nature

72. S.L. Shah; *Agricultural development in Uttarakhand*. pg. 110

of farming, it is quite obvious that the kind of capital necessary for such orchards simply does not exist. Secondly, an economically viable orchard has to be at least be above 2 hectares, which a very small number of farmers have and even these are not consolidated but scattered holdings. Thirdly, there is the lack of infrastructure in the region for the storage, processing and marketing for the already available fruits in the region.

There have been alternatives suggested in the growing of indigenous fruit tree species, instead of apples which are not indigenous to the Himalayas and create environmental problems like creating high acidity in the soil and also in the process discouraging the formation of humus; which in turn prevents the soil from replenishing the lost nutrients. The packaging of apples is largely done in wooden crates. The wood for which comes from the neighbouring jungles.

The indigenous fruit trees apart from being nutritious help in balancing the ecology and can be used to fence the fields. "Few of such trees are Kafal (*Myrica Esuelenta*), Bhamora (*Benthamida Capitata*), Walnut (*Juglam Regla*), Chestnut (*Cast Sativa*), Almond (*Prunus Any gola-*

tus) and bushes like Kilmora (*Berberis Asiatica*), Raspberry (*Rubus elliptica*) etc. There are also trees that yield edible oil of excellent quality, like the wild apricot or cheelle (*Prunus Communis*) which yields 6-10 kgs of cooking oil of good quality every year. Several villages in Tehri-Garhwal are self-sufficient in cooking oil as they own several Cheelle trees on their land.⁷³

These trees, along with other trees which provide fuel and fodder on a day-to-day basis should be grown on slopes where cultivation is not possible or would be environmentally disastrous. As Bahuguna put it "The farming can be a way to heal tree wounds to Mother earth inflicted by the plough share over the past thousand years of agriculture. This will give an opportunity to human-beings, animals and birds to survive together in health".⁷⁴ Apart from this there have been many researches conducted on the medicinal plants of the Himalayas, many of which are facing the danger of extinction due to the population pressure on land and the pattern of afforestation with

73. Vir Singh, *Tree culture : an alternative to slope farming*. pg. 165

74. Sunderlal Bahuguna, *Plant wisdom to restore eroded earth, Future*, 1987-88, pg. 3-5.

commercially viable trees. Many of these plants are claimed to have medicinal properties and some promise to be the cures for cancer and many other ailments. Conservation and growing of such plants could be made economically remunerative for farmers. Their conservation would also mean the conservation of a habitat that is fast disappearing.

In almost all parts of Uttarakhand one finds a common string that binds the disparate views together. In that, most people tend to see the continued existence of Uttarakhand with Uttar Pradesh is detrimental to the development of the region. The views vary from those who see Uttar Pradesh as a main cause for the lack of industrial development in the region. Statehood or autonomy is seen by the people as a probable solution to the backwardness of the region. There are of course a minority, who feel that even under a new state things may not change drastically. The general opinion is that politicians in any state are the same and one should not and cannot expect miracles. Despite the apparent differences in perceptions on development within the movement at large, the hope of a brighter and better Uttarakhand is fuelled by the dream of self government. Desire to control their own destinies, rather than see it being dictated to them from some where

far away and by persons who do not represent the wishes of the people of Uttarakhand.

CONCLUSION

Struggle in Uttarakhand is not a modern phenomenon. It has been manifest in various form over history. A common bond links all these movements, and can be seen as a much larger mass movement which has evolved over the ages. There is a continuity that exists in all the various form that the movement has taken. From Dhandaks in the British days, to Chipko (which has been characterised as a peasant revolt), to the present day demand for a separate state of Uttarakhand. This is undoubtedly the political embodiment of the coming of age of Uttarakhandi political consciousness. Socio-economic factor which have caused the struggles in the past, have not shown any decline instead the factors have only multiplied.

Uttarakhand's uniqueness is apparent in the contradiction it presents in analysing its socio-economic development. In terms of social development, Uttarakhand is by no means backward. On the other hand indicators on economy give just opposite results. Even demographically Uttarakhand stands apart from the rest of the state. It is probable that the higher social development has provided the impetus for the struggle for the Uttarakhand state. Vibrant political dynamism is evident through the

plethora of organizations which espouse various shades of one common demand, that of the state of Uttarakhand. The greater level of education in the region has helped in spreading of the propaganda of political organizations. The migrant population of Uttarakhandis, apart from sending home moneyorders bring along new ideas and greater consciousness of the economic under development in the region. The lack of interest in the development of the region, of the powers that be is apparent by the haphazard developmental plans drawn up for the region. "The forces operating and mechanism working at the political and cultural levels that had acted as a bridge between local concerns and national concerns and that have to maintain a continuing dialogue and two way communication between the people of the region and the national elite/nation state have broken down or have been allowed to break down. The power-elite, at the top have in the new era shown less and less interest in regions like Uttarakhand which do not constitute major vote banks".⁷⁵ A situation which has led to the feeling of alienation among people of Uttarakhand. This is amply reflected in

75. P.C. Johshi, Uttarakhand : Issues and Challenges, New Delhi, 1995, p. 23

the revulsion of main stream political parties in the region except those parties which espoused the cause of Uttarkhand.

The paradigm of development within the hills have been detrimental to the ecology of the region. Movements such as Chipko which apart from being social movements are intencsically a comment on the development prospective in the region. The later Tehri Dam Andolan carries through a legacy of Chipko. However Tehri Dam Andolan's success in attracting popular support is suspect. The two movement have nevertheless proved a point, in that, the need for an alternative model of development for the hills is being felt, though its expression is still evolving.

The Uttarakhand state that is envisaged is one that does away with those factors which are seen to be the cause of under development in the region. The demand for state of Uttarakhand is the common chord that unites the disparate groups within the region. The movement can be called a true mass movement because of the extent to which the support of the cause has percolated. Even in remote villages the demand for a separate state reverber-

ates.

The struggle for a separate state is therefore an expression of the need for a greater say in the administration of their lives. The need for a more humane, understanding and responsive bureaucracy. The movement has although been one which demanded rights within the Indian state. The hope that the legitimate rights of the people will be granted.

This is our land
In the lap of the Himalaya
But India is our country
We have none to fear anymore.

Gaurda (1872-1939)

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