

# Uttarakhand Separate State Movement from the Eye of Activists, Scholars, and Press

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## Abstract

The call for separate Uttarakhand state has persisted a question in the hilly districts of Uttar Pradesh ever since in the year of 1938 when it was initially rose at Srinagar Garhwal. But it had not been able to appeal significantly consideration of intellectuals. This is principally because up until recently i.e., mid of 1994 when the protestor was launched proceeding a large scale, the claim itself did not stimulate considerably eagerness. The Uttarakhand Kranti Dal which originated in existence in 1979 with the definite object of demanding a new small statehood continued a declining organisation as per it could not found its democratic advantage over the area.

In fact, Uttarakhand converted a subject for the political parties only subsequently a serious protest was hurled in 1994-95 in the aftermath of the implementation of the *Mandal commission formula* of 27 percent reservation for the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) by the then chief minister Mulayam Singh Yadav Government of Uttar Pradesh. It is perchance for this cause that not much effort has seemed on the Uttarakhand separate state movement. Maximum of the records, data and articles that had been available in the books, research journals, magazines, and newspapers contract with the ecological complications of the hill area, mainly the well-known Chipko and the Tehri Dam agitations concerning the anxieties of people.

**Keywords-** OBC, anti-liquor, chipko movement, reservation, separate state, hills

Uttarakhand's hill areas have in fact studied, considered more by the sociologists, the ecologists, and the demographers than by the political experts. Many researches, studies had consequently seemed moreover on transfer patterns, on the Chipko, anti-Tehri Dam, anti-liquor, women's hard work force and such further movements. The historic works confine themselves to the chronology of the Kings and the dynasties but some of the progressive historical works have taken care to study the politically charged reform movements like the *Kuli Begar* and the *Shilpkar* activities in Kumaon and *Praja Mandal* movements in the previous Tehri state.

Additional substance of the statehood which might have been predictable to attraction specific deliberation among women, assumed that the Uttaranchal hill area is perhaps the best recognized for being the land of the *Chipko protests* in the 1970s and early 1980s. Women contributed a main role in these struggles and approximately observers, such as Chandi Prasad Bhatt and Sunder Lal Bahuguna, had recommended that Chipko considered an argument of wellbeing and notions between men and women in

the local areas concluded the method in which the environmental premises must be exploited (Shiva, 1988). Nonetheless, this will temporarily claim the privileges made around the environment and growth throughout the provincial agitation and the variances and parallels articulated by both in relation to themselves.

Some others remained involved in the regional protest supposed to be convinced that the persons of the hills could achieve the hills well within a separate small state, with in relations of natural source supervision. Undoubtedly, this disagreement shaped fragment of the determination considered above to persuade the central government that a separate statehood for the county would make prosperous and stronger, rather than depreciate the Indian democracy. The eco-friendly description of the movement was from time to time related not only to improving progress in the hill region, but also to the Uttaranchal's promise to national integrity and well-being.

A well-known leader Kashi Singh Airy stated that:

*It is our responsibility to safeguard the environment of the Himalayan region for the rest of India. If the forest and the environment of the Himalaya are damaged it will result in disaster for the whole of India.*

The environmental struggle shaped greater portion of the remonstrance. Two of the demands commonly recorded in the movement were that the 3 to 4,000 cases listed under the Forest Conservation Act must be dropped, and that the Forest Conservation Act must be changed. The previous understandings, agitation and protests about the rapidity and kind of development in the hills formed a central part of the local determination, a substance which is non-divided from ecological viewpoint. But not for all is sure that a separate hill state would have an appreciated outcome on environmental society in the hill region.

A village man in Tehri Garhwal who had been very concerned in the Chipko movement(s), told that:

*I am not in the favour of a separate State. The formation of the separate state would extremely exploit the forest (our so-called leaders would simply use the forests as a source of quick revenue. The separate State movement is completely politically motivated. It is a movement of politicians and leaders.*

Similar others a very well-known environmentalist, Sunder Lal Bahuguna had the matching argue about the separate state movement, this would not afford a outcome for the ecological complications of the hilly area as it would not encounter the contemporary important thought of advancement. According to him, that in all the Himalayan range states, whether Himachal Pradesh, Kashmir or Nepal, progress had purely been associated with economic development, and nature regarded as an output to be 'cashed in' to endowment that growth:

*In this way the leaders of a separate State would require, either taxes or production, but the people have less income. The people are not able to get property tax, or income tax or other such taxes. So, the only means of income for the Government will be selling natural resources, luxury*

*tourism, and now this damming of the rivers in order to sell the water and the electricity, and unluckily liquor. I think that the new State would utilize these things more.*

The notion of a separate smallstate rests on the prospect that women would have superior choice-making and controller inside it, at the villages, domestic, towns and state-levels. One of the eminent social and environmental activists Chandi Prasad Bhatt positions his declaration for appropriate development (mainly in relation to the environment) in the growing party-political skill and statement of women:

*Forests will be good under a separate State. Women of the separate state are more aware than earlier for their basic rights (they know in which way they must develop the area . . . women were essential part of The Uttarakhand movement. There was an 80% woman in the procession of the Chipko movement. As their participation is so pronounced now, I think their participation in the Government [of a separate State] will be strong too, and their interests will be tied to the villages.*

Several contemporary accounts of Uttarakhand were abounding with polity-socio-economic statistics which try to type a situation for separate State on account of economic deficiency, together in complete and comparative terms. A disparity with the now widespread Amartya Sen's significantly talked about Kerala Model and 'Himachal model of development', had become moderately accessible in prominence the shortage proposition. Subsequently, maximum works of current backgrounds spontaneously and commonly alternative to comparative stands on polity-socio-economic catalogues of these regions. Remarkably comparative facts is seldom obtainable per regard to the long-lasting portion of the current state of Uttar Pradesh in assessment of this situation various geography.

Meaningfully, 'unity with India' the 'theme' was an effort to conquest understanding, sympathy and backing from the Union Government besides the rest of the society and people of India. A vibrant portion of this was the representation of the state movement as 'non-threatening,' as the following slogan highlights: '*Bharat desh rahe akhand, lekin le karra henge Uttarakhand*' (India should not disintegrate, but we want Uttarakhand). On all banners the '*Jai Uttaranchal*' was written in one corner was harmonized by '*Jai Bharat*' in another (generally translatable as '*Viva Uttaranchal*' and '*Viva India*'). This mirrored the worries of the drives of the hilly people that the separate state movement be recognised as positive and not rebellious. Many opinions remained used to determine that the formation of Uttaranchal would advantage the people of the isolated hill area and of the country. For example, Shri Kashi Singh Aery stated that:

*The borders of Uttaranchal are international with Nepal and Tibet. We have the responsibility of safe-guarding the environment for the people of Uttar Pradesh and whole sub-continent of India. . . If the forests and environment of the Himalaya are damaged, it will result in disaster for the whole of India. .*

*..... If the people of the Uttaranchal are rich, they will be strong and they will be able to face the Chinese or other enemies. (Amar Ujala, 18 September 1994)*

The religiousness, spirituality of the pious hills was also used to highlight the historic and mythical harmony of Uttaranchal with the rest of the nation. As distinguished above, the pious hill region is one of the sanctified spaces in the geo-cosmography of Hinduism and methods one of the fundamental ideas of the body of great *Bharat Mata* (Mother India). This harmony with federal India was repetitively tressed. Just one example, Chandi Prasad Bhatt, of Chipko fame, claimed that:

*'The Uttaranchal region of the Central Himalaya which is the source of the Ganga and Yamuna along with dozens of other perennial North Indian rivers, is also the fountainhead of Indian culture and spiritually in which crores of Indian citizens have reposed their faith'*. (Nand and Kumar, 1989, p.15)

An honest perception, continuously raised up and encouraged was that of the mountainous people's trustworthiness, loyalty, and honesty to the Indian nation-state, particularly in terms of their military records. *Uttaranchali soldiers, it was widely claimed, were the first into Kashmir during the upheavals of Partition and independence. Were it not for them, it was said, India would have lost this state to Pakistan—a nice play on their commitment to India's unity as loyal citizens given their regional demands* (Sharma, G. (1990, pp.265-270).

Others pointed available that two mountainous army regiments were the first to fight the Chinese army in 1962 besides the fact that the then Chief of Staff was an Uttaranchali. While it is unlikely that the Uttaranchal would have ever perceived thoughtful armed insurgency (as in the North East, for example), it is noteworthy that this was very rarely even held out as a danger. This claim developed more significant later rumours spread that the separate state movement has been intruded by many national and international terrorist organisations, including Naxalites and the Pakistan secret service, Inter-Services Intelligence (Indian Express, 1994). One symbolic strategy was the usage of places and dates which were saturated with local, and occasionally nationwide, connotations. For example, in 1994 several intellectuals, NGO and *sarvodaya* workers and further leaders of the movement came together in the *Anashakti Ashram in Kausani*, Kumaon to converse the advancement of the movement and to approximately degree to attempt and readdress/association the movement. All of them recommended a list of events, dates on which the Uttaranchal movement must to unify certain protests. The unambiguously, provincial and national characters of these proceedings and statistics could be undoubtedly deliver to mention to characteristics of the current agitation.

Kedar Singh Phonia (1996) and other such scholars, authors have similarly formed wide-ranging dimensions giving a bird's eye opinion approximately several characteristics of the peaceful hill society. These works would be of interest to the general reader, interested to know about the dynamics of hill society.

The beginning of the movement for a separate state Uttarakhand in the awaken of the addition of the 27 percentage OBC reservations to the hills by the Mulayam Singh Yadav Government of Uttar Pradesh in 1994 furnished a boost to countless literatures on the Uttarakhand agitation, observing into the nature, geneses, and policies of it and defining the contests and problems previously it. Significantly of the literature that seemed in the last five to six years intentions at analysing the call for a separate state, and

in detail without a insufficient exceptions, mostly supports the demands for a small hill state for satisfying the long-esteemed imaginings of the people of this hill region. BJP leader and statehood activist Ravindra Jugran said *that*;

*In the formation of Uttarakhand, the women played an important role. The state was created mainly due to woman power and without their help the protest would have been ineffective. He also said that government has not done anything in favour of Uttarakhand's women as they suffered a lot during the agitation especially in 1994 during the Rampur Tiraha incident.*

Leader of Uttarakhand Mahila Manch, Nirmala Bisht said;

that the State was created mainly because of the efforts of women.

Avijit Pathak's observations on the movement are somewhat on different lines. He views it in the perspective of postmodernism. To him,

*It is a local movement for identity against the grand model of modernity, and is in line with several other movements such as those of the environmentalists, feminists etc.*

Harish Chandola's articles give an intense interpretation of the economic mistreatment of this hill region over the several years, and he actual analytically claims for the requirement to break this manipulative nature of its economic relations with the rest of the nation. The absence of elementary amenities in the mountains and the difficulties of the hill inhabitants are portrayed identical meaningfully in the articles.

P.C. Joshi, a well-known economist has written a series of articles on the several difficulties of the hill region which were published in last 15 to 20 years. One of these articles, '*Uttarakhand, and Indian Renaissance*', links the present claim for a separate political set up with the Indian renaissance in the pre-independence times. Joshi continues that just as the renaissance headship was conflicting to the burden of any alien (Britishers) model on Indian society, the present protest for a separate state in Uttarakhand pleads for freedom from any national model which has given rise to in the "colonization" of the hill region by the economy of the comparatively well-developed regions.

B.D. Pande's article deals further with the political characteristic of the problem and makes a strong durable case for separate political set up for the region on the base of the size of its small area and population which is slightly bigger than Himachal Pradesh. Maximum writings by Pradeep Kumar give a practical explanation of the movement between 1996 and 1998.

The articles contained within these accumulations have a identical varied range and cover nearly all characteristic of the movement for a separate state, positioning it in the background of political, social and economic profile of this region. Thus, matters covered comprise such miscellaneous themes as basis of a separate state, demographic features cultural profile, economy, anthropological and historical setting of diverse communities, outlines of

possessions, women, human resources, road transport, migration, massive agitation, and amplification of its support base etc., apart from a sequential account of all the developments and events in last few decades which consume predestined at demanding a separate state.

Furthermost of these edited writings narrate the current state movement to the several mass movements in the years, additional predominantly the environmentalists' Chipko movement and the anti-liquor protest, maximum of which were principally controlled and reinforced by the women of the region, remained carried out at the grass-root levels and were totally impetuous without actuality led by any recognized political parties. The gunfire happenings at Mussoorie, Pauri, Khatima, Srinagar Garhwal and Rampur Tiraha (Muzaffarnagar) in 1994 and 1995, which given rise to in the demise of several youths of the hills and later demonstrated to be a whirling point in the politics of the movement, find symbolic accounts in many of these collections. Nearly every sacrifice to the reason of the movement has been stated by their name.

Apart from these articles available in many edited volumes, the regional press contributed a lot by way of recording each little authentic detail of the mass movement and printing broadly on the themes, the articles underwritten by the intellects of the region. The Hindi dailies Amar Ujala and Dainik Jagran which have widespread network of "journalists" and correspondents in nearly every big or small town and villages of the area printed a sequence of articles on the theme talking to every significant person of the region. In fact, it was during the progression of the remonstrance that they brought out their Dehradun versions to come nearer to the mass movement. The other newspapers which publish frequently on the theme included, Himalaya Darpan (Dehradun), Nainital Samachar (Nainital) also a multitude of small newspapers printed from several townships of the area. The involvement of magazines worth mentioning include those of Parvat Vani (Uttarkashi), DHAD, Himalaya Times (Dehradun) and Pahar (Nainital).

The political background of several provinces in India gives sufficient evidence of quicker development of those regions where public have interpreted their political and economic lack and social unhappiness into a regional consciousness proficient of demanding a restructuring of primacies. This has frequently given rise to in creation or consolidation of regional characteristics. The Uttarakhandi distinctiveness has arisen out of the understandings of the nineties has progressed later exceeding the regional and caste orders have been weakened to some scope. Although the Brahmin-Thakur contentions continue around and the dalits (the Shilpkars) continue to remain slightly on the border of the mass movement, the agitation has inclined to underemphasize these issues. There has been a political consciousness to recognize the obligation of discouragement these alterations to place up a cooperative struggle.

On the negative side the movement has gradually apparently frittered away after reaching its peak between 1994-1996. No movement which claims to be massive and spontaneous can maintain the high level of mobilisation for a very long time. After reaching the highest peak, one cannot stay there for long. Yes, it does not mean the "frittering away" indeed. There are ups and downs which often result in

changed priorities of the masses. The time frame of the sustainability of a highly charged movement can never be too big. The movement was compared to an “unrestrained bull” which needed to be controlled ultimately in its own interest. More than damaging others, an unrestrained massive movement has the

potential of damaging itself unless made to see restraints posed by a democratic system which tends to make the process of change slow, and sometimes even painful.

What has yet the possible of ultimately divert the mass movement is the catastrophe of its rational control to keep the sentimentality active? In the nonappearance of a persistent wake by a dedicated group of protesters, the movement has the risk of sliding into the controls of the proficient politicians. Now destiny of the condition is that though a pan-Uttarakhandi population has been made accessible by the mass movement, the concluding has futile to throw up a consistent leadership. The requirement to prompt the people of the strongminded goals of the mass movement is extreme. This might be repetitive again that the call for a new state was not intended at hitherto alternative addition to the prevailing set of states.

This intended at reformation the political-socio-economic direction of a area where the peoples have little opportunity but to living in harmony with nature, at this time there has been a slightly long background of impulsive democratic mass movements has been mostly procedure grass-roots lacking professional political representations, where subtle ecology does not license repeat of a development models so fixed away and where the mobilisation has completely been inside the agenda of centripetalism politics without any suggestion of a “nationality” declaring vis-a-vis the conventional nationalism. In other confrontations, the main contest nowadays is not to get a state but to formulate its blueprint, working beyond producing harmony on capital townships.

The utmost challenge before the mass movement, still, remains that of channelising the brilliant political alertness and sentimentality engendered for a new Uttarakhand state. It is easier to permit it to stay dissipated away without removing somewhat durable long period political, social and economic grains. If only the party-political responsiveness of the common people might be kept at an appropriately high level, alone possibly would do miracles in a new state. These are the arguments which have shaped inconsequential gaps in the mass movement at a period when the perceptibility of the movement is at its lowest phase.

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