

West Bengal (India): We condemn the violence unleashed by the West Bengal Government in the Darjeeling Hills

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Radical Socialist condemns the violence unleashed by the West Bengal Government in the Darjeeling Hills, the wanton state murder of agitators, and the fraudulent charge of terrorism brought against the agitators. The struggle for Gorkhaland is not a struggle by just one party (GJMM) for its political gains, but a widespread popular struggle, in which all the Hill based parties are present. We firmly stand behind the popular demand of Gorkhaland and oppose any attempts by groups with vested interests to play around with it.

We do not take an abstract stance about what is good for people. In an abstract sense it might be argued that excessively small provinces are economically difficult to manage, etc. However, the core issue is the right of groups of people. While often vocal against Hindi domination, Bengali chauvinism has always been a problem with the Bengal upper petty bourgeois elite. This has been absolutely blatantly on display recently, with the entire care being on getting Bengali tourists back “safe” while the rights of the people of the hills do not matter.

Darjeeling has not been a historic part of Bengal. Annexed to the East India Company’s empire over the 1830s and 1840s, it was not a part of Bengal province. It was after independence that Darjeeling was merged with the province of West Bengal. The upper class British were replaced by the upper class Bengali babus, who have been accustomed to seeing the Nepali as the “bahadur” who is either a car driver or a security guard. It is of little wonder that an ethnic sentiment developed, uniting Indian Nepalis, Lepchas, and others against the Bengali chauvinism from Kolkata.

Radical Socialist supports the demand for Gorkhaland as a separate province, and condemns the attempt at creating ethnic divisions through hand-picked development boards and their subservient officials. Radical Socialist demands immediate punishment of the guilty police officers who ordered the shooting of unarmed protesters.

Radical Socialist
